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EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION OF COGNITIVE STRATEGIES: THE CASE OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' LISTENING ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted at providing a strategy-based way of teaching listening in Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) classes because a dichotomy between teaching listening and testing this skill was blurred in English classes. The study aimed at finding whether strategy-based listening instruction significantly affects EFL learners' listening comprehension achievement. To this end, two groups of Iranian EFL learners were selected based on availability sampling procedure in Aryanpour Language Institute in Tehran, Iran. They were instructed in the form of experimental (N=30) and control (M=30) groups to conduct the research to see if students listening proficiency will improve after teaching cognitive strategies explicitly. There were thirty upper-intermediate students in each group. Results from groups' pretest and posttest were analyzed through independent sample t-test. Findings of the study revealed that strategy-based listening instruction significantly had positive effect on EFL learners listening comprehension.

KEYWORDS: Cognitive strategies; Explicit instruction of strategies; Learning strategies; Strategy-based instruction; Strategy use

INTRODUCTION

According to Mendelsohn (2006:75), "much of what is traditionally misnamed listening should in fact be called testing listening. The distinction that is being made is that when you teach, by definition, you teach the learner of anything how to do something, whether it is planning a piece of wood, driving a car, developing a roll of film, or learning to listen. On the other hand, when you test a learner, you do not show them how to do it but rather, simply have them do it".

In the other place, Mendelsohn (2006) claims ironically that in second language classes teachers ask learners to listen and answer to some questions related to the audio or video (generally listening parts) they listened. This happens while there is no instruction from teacher to teach how to go about it and how to comprehend it. Listening and then answering to some related questions is just a form of a substantial amount of listening and somehow practicing listening. In

fact, there was and there is no attempt at training learners the ways of getting at the meaning.

Sheerin (1986) also clarifies the difference between teaching and testing listening comprehension. She states that listening comprehension lessons are just like listening tests. For testing listening, teachers play tapes and then some exercises like answering questions, checking pictures, filling blanks and other kinds are attempted by the learners, after that a feedback is given in the form of the 'right' answer. She added that, the way listening comprehension is tested is the same as the way it is taught. She also proposed some ways to teach listening rather than testing.

Grffiths and Oxford (2014:3) referred to some researchers such as Chamot (2004) and Oxford (1989) and argued that "even if it is partly successful, strategy instruction is an important part of the language teacher's role. A corollary to this argument is that it is both possible and necessary to continue identifying success factors within any type of strategy instruction."

Moreover, Mangubhai and Lal (2000) contended that introducing different strategies to learners is upon language teachers. Therefore, teachers can make learning language more effective for language learners by teaching learning strategies for them. Also teachers can provide different opportunities to help the learners use and practice those strategies consciously.

Four tips were introduced by Richards and Burns (2012) to improve effective listening strategies through pondering on the nature and use of strategies (meta-cognitive strategies) and by establishing ways of adapting with the content of listening texts (cognitive strategies):

Help learners to compare effective and ineffective strategies: learners can be asked which strategies they use to understand the recording because some strategies will be more effective than others. Therefore learners can be made aware of them. Different studies show that listeners listen in different ways. Some of the listeners think that they should not miss even one word of the listening part, thus this makes them frustrated. Learners should be aware of language strategies to be successful; therefore, learning strategies are suggested to be taught. Some theorists (like, O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, cited in Richards and Burns, 2012) believe that strategies should be taught explicitly and directly to make learners aware of their strategy use toward learning. Strategies should be modeled for learners, practiced, and evaluated. These are some hints that *a teacher should know*. Teachers are required to know appropriate strategies for different kinds of listening tasks and activities. Teachers must consider learners' proficiency level and help them to identify effective listening strategies. These are some things that teachers can do.

Teach students how to use meta-cognitive strategies: thinking about the processes of learning is called meta-cognition. There are different ways that a learner can think about their listening comprehension processes and applying useful meta-cognitive strategies can make learners proficient. Meta-cognitive strategies involve three steps of planning, monitoring and evaluating in listening. Listeners can plan for a listening activity, and control his or her performance during a listening activity then evaluate how she or he carried out the listening task or activity. Teacher

does not need to use such a term (meta-cognitive) to discuss the strategies. Listeners can be taught to use these strategies to improve their learning and listening comprehension.

Teach students how to use cognitive strategies: these strategies can assist learners to cope with the nature and content of a particular task or text. For example, if learners cannot understand the listening part, it may be due to not knowing much about the topic. Demands of listening tasks first should be recognized and then listeners should be provided to deal with the demands of the text in every phase of listening (before and after listening).

Model strategy use and give students regular practice in using strategies: there are two steps in using strategies. First one is upon teacher to instruct and clarify different kinds of strategies to listeners or learners. The second one is to prepare frequent chances for learners to practice those strategies. Effective listeners are active ones and think about the processes of listening and listen to get whatever they wanted to hear. Learning strategies assist learners to be more self-controlled, goal-directedness and autonomous. Practical examples and demonstrations can help learner the notion of strategies which is abstract and difficult to understand. What teachers can do is to encourage learners to discuss in pairs and groups and share listening strategies and also teachers can show the practical benefits of strategy use in language learning.

Brown (2001) provided some other ways to teach listening. He believes that strategies can be taught:

Teach strategies through interactive techniques: technique and strategy are different. Strategies can be practiced and prompted through techniques. Brown clarified the distinction by giving an example from Oxford (1990). Teacher can ask listeners to listen to a conversation and then fill in the grids of information in groups (to find and write the names, profession, address, age and appearance of the speakers in grids with blank). This task is called information gap listening technique and also includes direct strategies such as guessing, practicing naturalistically, learner interaction and taking note.

Use compensatory techniques: these are some techniques that are provided for the purpose of compensating style weaknesses and overcoming learners' problems. Here are some style problems and techniques to solve them:

_ "Low tolerance of ambiguity: brainstorming, retelling stories, role-play, paraphrasing, finding synonyms, jigsaw techniques, skimming tasks

_ Excessive impulsiveness: making inferences, syntactic or semantic clue searches, scanning for specific information, inductive rule generalization

_ Excessive reflectiveness/caution: small group techniques, role-play, brain-storming, fluency techniques

_ Too much right-brain dominance: syntactic or semantic clue searches, scanning for specific information, proofreading, categorizing and clustering activities, information-gap techniques

_ Too much left-brain dominance: integrative language techniques, fluency techniques, retelling stories, skimming tasks" (Brown, 2001, P. 219).

Administer a strategy inventory: a list of strategies for language learning can be introduced to learners according to their learning styles and learning preferences which are identified through using "a self-check list and formal style tests in the class" (Brown, 2001, P. 219). "Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)" promotes learners' strategy awareness and can be applied as an instrument in the class to assist language learners to learn successfully (Brown, 2001).

Make use of impromptu teacher-initiated advice: "learners can benefit greatly from teachers' daily attention to the many little tricks of the trade that teacher can pass on to them" (Brown, 2001, P. 219).

White (2006) provided the goals for teaching as well as learning listening skill and strategies as follows:

- "understanding short utterances on a literal semantic level involving knowledge of phonology, stress, intonation, spoken vocabulary, and spoken syntax.
- understanding longer or interactive discourse involving knowledge of discourse features such as markers, cohesion and schemata.
- understanding the function/illocutionary force of an utterance.
- Interpreting utterances in terms of the context/situation involving knowing how different socio-linguistic groups use language, so involves knowledge of dialects, cultural references, degrees of formality, power relations and so on.
- resolving comprehension problems by seeking help from the speaker.
- remembering input, monitoring and evaluating how well one is understanding" (p. 127).

THE PRESENT STUDY

The purpose of this study is to help teachers understand the process of listening, the role of strategies, especially cognitive ones, in listening comprehension development, clarify the difference between teaching and testing listening then how to teach listening in an effective way. The study focuses on teaching listening which can motivate and assist learners to improve listening skill in language classes. There are different strategies which were proposed by different researchers and linguists to provide a condition for EFL learners to experiment with different approaches to use while listening. Among all, cognitive strategies and the use of them in teaching language and then in learning how to listen are followed and investigated in this study to see their impact on second language learners' listening comprehension achievement.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ: Does strategy-based listening instruction significantly improve Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension achievement?

Due to controversies in literature, a null hypothesis was accordingly proposed for it.

METHODOLOGY

Every study has its own limitations which the researcher is forced to surrender to them. In the case of this work, limitations were as follows:

Because of the lack of time and resources, the researcher could not go to other cities in Iran besides Tehran, observe the classes in these cities, and give them the research treatment.

Due to subject availability problems, the researcher had to choose the experimental group participants from the institute where she teaches (Aryanpour Language Institute in Tehran).

Ideally speaking, such research projects should be over an extensive time. However, the researcher had to implement the research over only one term. Research was delimited in two ways:

- 1: Participants of the study were all chosen from the upper-intermediate level;
- 2: All participants of the study in both control and experimental groups were female.

Participants

This study applied accidental or availability sampling which refers to a sampling strategy where the researcher selects whoever is available and willing to participate in the study (Farhadi, 2007). Consequently, participants were selected non-randomly. 60 female upper-intermediate English language learners were chosen. They were between 16-25 years old. Their native language was Persian. 30 of them were assigned to experimental and 30 to control group. Individuals of experimental group had enrolled in fall term lasting for two months in Aryanpour Language Institute in Tehran. Actually, the experimental group members were among researcher's students in the institute. They attended the classes two times a week (Sundays & Tuesdays) and 45 minutes of every session were allocated to teaching listening and presenting the treatment. Members of control group had also registered in the same institute but attended the classes on even days and were instructed by a friend of the researcher. The researcher had made sure that in the control group there was no strategy instruction for listening skill.

Instruments and Materials

Interview

To admit the researcher's claim based on testing listening skill in place of teaching it in Iranian EFL classes, researcher designed a structured interview protocol (**appendix A**). There were four questions in the one to one interview protocol. 20 teachers (each about 20 minutes) were interviewed informally in different suburban language institutes of Tehran by the researcher and her assistant. Interview took the researcher about two weeks to be conducted. Teachers' experience range was from 4 to 19 years of EFL teaching. Their academic background and field of education was diverse but mostly EFL teaching. Most of them graduated from university and were qualified teachers in intermediate, upper-intermediate and advance levels. Interviewees' words were written in the interview protocol sentence by sentence and were tabulated by the researcher (**appendix B**).

Pretest

Before giving the experimental treatment, pretest was administered to both experimental and control groups to see if the groups were equal or homogeneous because researcher wanted to know whether the difference existed, if there was any difference, between two groups after giving

treatment was due to the treatment not other extraneous factors. Listening diagnostic paper pretest was chosen as this study pretest from Debora Philips's book (2001), Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL Test. Pretest validity and reliability has been already established. This book has been written to prepare learners for the TOEFL tests and includes the computer and paper format tests of TOEFL for four skills. Lack of facilities in the institutes made researcher select the paper format. Philips's listening comprehension or diagnostic pretest demonstrated the learners' level of listening proficiency or ability to understand spoken language.

There are three levels (A, B and C) of the test. Level of difficulty increases from part A to C. Based on the research purpose and research participants' level, part A was chosen to administer. Part A included 30 listening comprehension test items about short conversations. Test was given under the time pressure of the actual test which Philips determined, i.e. it too approximately 35 minutes. Each correct answer was given one score. The total score was 30.

Posttest

Posttest was given to both experimental and control groups. Posttest determines the degree of changes in dependent variable, in comparison with the pretest. Because the purpose was to measure the learners listening comprehension achievement, the study posttest was the achievement type. Since the material has been taught during the study was the Expanding level of Tactics for Listening by Richards, the achievement posttest was a pre-established valid and reliable test from the teacher's book of Tactics for Listening by Richards, 2003. The tests included in this book were designed for midterm and final evaluation of students' mastery. Midterm test was chosen because first twelve units of the student's book were covered during the study. Test was composed of four listening comprehension question parts. The test total score was 100. The time allocated for the test was 10 minutes.

A list of listening cognitive strategies

The list of listening cognitive strategies was provided by Vandergrift (1997, reproduced by permission of ACTFL and mentioned in Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Topic of the research was narrowed down from learning strategies to listening *cognitive* strategies and the impact of their instruction on listening comprehension achievement; therefore, just the cognitive strategies were presented to experimental group as the study treatment. Refer to **appendix C** to see the list.

Tactics for Listening (Richards, 2003)

This book was used as part of supplementary teaching materials for experimental group during the study. Based on the characteristics of the book that matched with the purpose of the study, researcher concluded that the best material to practice the listening strategies was this popular textbook since it provides chapters which are thematically based and focus on different sub-skills of listening.

Procedure

First, both experimental and control groups were pretested to see if they were homogeneous in listening comprehension. Tests were scored according to the test scoring criterion. The results showed that they were not significantly different in terms of proficiency level. Second, researcher

started to give the treatment. A list of cognitive strategies along with their pedagogical implications was selected as the study treatment. To give a whole picture of learning strategies, teacher gave a copy of the list of listening strategies to each participant in the experimental group. After two sessions, Tactics for Listening (Richards, 2003) as the teaching material came along. In each part of the book, useful related strategies were chosen to practice. There was no cognitive strategy instruction, and treatment in the control group. They practiced the listening parts of Tactics for Listening book in a traditional way, i.e. listening was tested rather than taught. Third, the posttest was administered. Test papers were rated by the researcher according to the test scoring rules.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it mentioned before, the listening section of a sample paper and pencil TOEFL test was given to both control and experimental groups as a pretest in order to check the homogeneity of their listening proficiency. Tables 1 and 2 below show the descriptive and inferential statistics of two groups' scores on listening pretest.

Table 1: Independent T-test Comparing Results of Pre-test between Experimental and Control Groups

Group Statistics

pretest		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experi.	1	30	58.8889	9.06906	1.65578
Cont.	2	30	59.8890	9.11747	1.66461

Table 2: Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Pretest									
equal variances assumed	.004	.948	-.426	58	.672	-1.00011	2.34788	-5.69990	3.69968
Equal variances not assumed			-.426	57.998	.672	-1.00011	2.34788	-5.69990	3.69968

As the results of table 1 illustrate, the mean scores of two groups are very close to each other (58.8889, and 59.8890). As the P-value (.67) is bigger than the standard error (0.05), therefore, groups could be called homogeneous and there was no meaningful difference between the groups.

In order to test the proposed hypothesis another independent t-test was implemented on the post-test results for the control and experimental groups.

Table 3: Independent T-test for Comparing Results of Post-test between Experimental and Control Groups

Group Statistics

	list.strat	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Exp.	1	30	83.9667	8.01070	1.46255
Cont.	2	30	72.2000	7.35504	1.34284

Table 4: Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Pretest equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed	.293	.59	5.926	58	.000	11.76667	1.98551	7.792	15.741
			5.926	57.582	.000	11.76667	1.98551	7.791	15.741

The results of this analysis indicated that the P-value (.000) is bigger than the standard error (0.05), and it indicated that there is a significant difference between the control groups' performance in the posttest and pretest. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The results of this study supported a number of other findings and claims of researchers in the field which are presented next.

As Cohen and Weaver (1998) mentioned learning strategies help learners to be more autonomous and self-directed to direct the process of their learning and to recognize the strength and weaknesses of their own learning. The main discussion is the explicit strategy instruction and its effect on second or foreign language listening comprehension. in accord with Vandergrift's claims (2011, cited in Aponte-de-Hanna, 2012) it is believed that not only listening skill is the most used skill in both real situation and language class, but listening ability can have an important role in developing other language skills. To achieve this goal, teachers can increase strategy knowledge of listeners.

In this study, experimental group outperformed control group. This difference between pretest and posttest of experimental group showed that strategy instruction (treatment of the study) had a positive impact on listening comprehension achievement (dependent variable). In contrast, there was not any significant difference between pretest and posttest of control group because there was no treatment (strategy instruction) in this group.

There are different Iranian scholars who conducted experimental researches investigating the effect of the instruction of learning strategies, in general, and teaching metacognitive strategies, in particular, on listening comprehension achievement such as Rasouli, Mollakhan, Karbalaee, (2013), and Hariri (2014). Although cognitive strategies influence on listening comprehension was not investigated, the overall attention of the studies was on strategy instruction and its influence on language learning improvement, in general and listening comprehension achievement in particular. Moreover, they concluded that teaching learning strategies has positive effect on listening comprehension achievement.

It is claimed that listening skill is of paramount importance among other skills. However, it is difficult to acquire and on the other hand is the least researched one. Although this research tried to find the direction of listening strategy instruction influence, some other issues can be considered into account during developing strategies.

As the place of listening skill and teaching it in second language learning was investigated, it became clear that at first listening skill was ignored and focus was on the reading and translation. By the development in linguistics researchers found that listening strategy is the most essential and necessary skill to learn a second language. They believed that to communicate with others, first comprehension is required. Without understanding spoken language, communication is not possible.

It was believed that by understanding grammar rules and the principles of putting words beside each other, parsing, listener can understand the spoken language, i.e. purely bottom-up processing model. An example of the activities is a text with some missing words in the blank spaces which should be filled up by students after listening to the spoken text. Consequently, listening exercises were more like a test of the listening skill not a means of improving it. Moreover, cognitive perspective of listening process may help instructors to design strategy-based lessons by which learners' autonomy can be raised. There was a shift from Krashen's (1981) theory of second language learning in which teachers used to provide comprehensible input for listening and then ask the listeners to answer a set of questions to answer them after listening. This can be assumed as testing listening rather than teaching it. Certainly, second language learners are looking for a way to improve their listening ability. To achieve this goal, learning second language was viewed from the cognitive learning theory. Cognitive learning theory empowers the learners since it teaches them how to distinguish between sounds, recognize and sentence structures, "interpret stress and intonation, retain and interpret this within the immediate as well as the larger socio-cultural context of the utterance" (Wipf, 1984: 345). Cognitive view of learning also provides the tool to design and implement lessons for listening in classroom to develop practicing listening instead of testing (Mendelsohn, 2006).

In accord with Rost's (2006) claim, the process of listening comprehension does not involve either top-down or bottom-up. Both process models should interact to perform listening task. When to use or how to use each depends on listeners' knowledge of language and the predetermined purpose of the listening. Researches concerning cognitive psychology have indicated that listening comprehension is not merely getting meaning from incoming speech, but also it is a

process of matching speech with the topic. Therefore, if listeners know the topic and the context of spoken text, the comprehension process may be facilitated since listeners can activate their schemata or prior knowledge and make related inferences which can be important for message comprehension. Cognitive strategies and being aware of them can help learners to practice this strategy for facilitating listening comprehension. Teacher is the person responsible for activating schemata, helping listeners to make predictions (that is one of the strategies among cognitive ones) or guess from the context of listening and prepare them for listening. Except for the context and using it to get the meaning of listening task, having a purpose for listening is the other issue to be taken into account. Both utilizing context and purposeful listening are two components of cognitive strategies. Listening to and understanding every word of the spoken task or text is not possible. Therefore, second or foreign language listeners should listen selectively. Having a purpose before listening task can determine listening type and way of handling task.

Despite the fact that it was considered that like a child, listening skill can be improved by great exposure to spoken language and different listening recordings and the cognitive theory of language learning is ignorable the realities on the ground indicate otherwise. Learning listening skill through practicing can be time-consuming for language learners who have different purposes and time limitation to accomplish learning a second language. Thus, it was the actual time for researchers to investigate students' personality characteristics, learning and cognitive styles, and the particular strategies used by effective vs. ineffective learners and offer second and foreign language learners a convenient, quick and conscious way of learning *how to listen*. Real life and authentic listening was combined into communicative approach and then learner-strategy approach tried to make learners independent to make their own language learning decisions and to try and choose specific strategies according to their own needs, wants and characteristics.

This complex skill needs to be developed consciously. Researcher established a situation for learners of the study to learn learning strategies consciously to select the specific one among all to overcome particular listening comprehension task. In addition, the process of learning listening skill can be facilitated greatly through strategy use.

CONCLUSION

The concluding remarks as well as pedagogical implications for teaching and learning, and suggestions for further research concludes this article.

"Cognitive strategies are used during the execution of a task to facilitate comprehension or production. Examples of cognitive strategies are elaboration, or use of prior knowledge, grouping or classifying items to be learned, making inferences while listening or reading, and taking notes of information to remember" (Mendelsohn, 2006, p. 80). All these strategies seem to improve listening comprehension. However, the issue that should be mentioned here is that the moment instructor taught strategies, learners should be required to put them into practice and do a lot of authentic listening.

It was found that teaching learning strategies can have positive effect on listening comprehension achievement and make learners have control on their own learning. Once learners become aware of cognitive strategies, they consciously choose specific strategy to overcome listening tasks' difficulty and comprehend spoken language. Learners do not know innately whatever effective listeners do; therefore it is concluded that teachers have the responsibility of sharing the knowledge of strategies, making learners aware of them and creating a convenient environment for the listeners. Once the learners' awareness is raised, their performance in second language process is increased.

The present study supports many scholars and researchers' ideas like Annevirta et al. (2007) who claims that many research endeavors which have been conducted on the strategy instruction and its influence, generally on language learning and particularly on listening comprehension, concluded that increasing the knowledge of strategies can pave the way for language performance.

Although it is concluded that teaching learning strategies can facilitate listening and help learners to comprehend the received message, some factors involving the listeners' level of proficiency, characteristics of the learning strategies, and factors affecting strategy choice or use should be taken into consideration by teachers while instructing strategies in EFL contexts.

Implications

The present study attempted to find whether strategy instruction has any positive or negative impact on second language listening comprehension. Once it was confirmed that strategy-based listening instruction significantly affected L2 learners listening comprehension achievement, the study automatically provided some implications for different individuals such as second language learners and teachers and syllabus designers.

As mentioned and quoted in first chapter, listening skill is the most important and most-used skill among all. However, it is difficult for second language learners to learn, and comprehend spoken text easily and sometimes learners are not interested in listening tasks because they assume it a burden on themselves to deal with. Therefore, learners need a way to help them listen, and to facilitate listening comprehension and make it effective for the learners. Since L2 learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes for enhancing L2 learning, learners can make use of them to improve their L2 listening.

This study enables teachers, who test listening skill rather than teaching it, to teach how to listen using learning strategies. In addition, it is suggested to teachers to teach learning strategies explicitly in the classroom because explicit teaching makes learners intellectually aware of the functions that each performs. Teachers are the only people who know their students, thus they can introduce learning strategies and provide a convenience environment in the class to ask them practice listening tasks through utilizing learning strategies. The reason why learners are not able to use or find related strategies to use to tackle the specific problem in learning can be faded away. If teachers assist learners to report the strategies they use to develop a task, learners will be able to be aware of the kinds of strategies they use and improve their skills.

Findings of the present study can serve as a useful reference for syllabus designers in language institutions, schools and universities to diagnose the learning problems of learners and to assist them to tackle these difficulties effectively with regard to learning strategies. As it is obvious, Iranian EFL institutions select teaching materials in which learners practice listening; therefore, syllabus designers of language institutions should choose materials which take learners level of proficiency and their need into account. Moreover, authentic materials are emphasized for strategy learning and teaching. Listening materials can be chosen among which allow learners practice listening through using strategies, i.e. materials which support strategy instruction like the one the researcher applied in this study.

Suggestions for Further Research

Researcher made her effort to find the effect of strategy instruction on listening comprehension achievement. However, there are some issues and variables which were not investigated in this study. These factors can provide useful variables to investigate and ponder on for researchers and further researches.

First, this study was conducted on upper-intermediate English language learners, thus, future researches can be done with other different levels of language learners to see the effect of strategy instruction on their listening comprehension achievement.

Second, because of lack of available subjects, this study just chose 60 participants to investigate the issue. Other studies can be conducted using large amount of subjects.

Third, as it was mentioned in delimitations of the study, participants of the study in both control and experimental groups were selected among females. It is suggested to use both genders to do future researches.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Date of interview:..... Started at:..... Ended at:.....
Interviewee's Name :.....(real name here for data analysis purposes only)
Teaching experience:.....years
TTC/TEC/TDC courses passed? Yes/no local/international when?
Academic major:.....
Fresh man/ sophomore/ junior/ senior/ graduate/ A.d/ B.A/ M.A/ Phd
Teaching Level:
Elementary / pre-intermediate / intermediate / upper inter/ advanced

1. What is your attitude toward listening skill? How important is it in teaching?
2. How do you teach listening skill?

3. How should listening skill be taught?
4. How is listening skill tested?
- 5.

Appendix B

Summary of Teachers' Interview

L2 teacher (LT)	Teachers attitude toward listening skill	How does teacher teach listening skill?	How should this skill be taught?	How is listening skill be tested?	
LT 1 9 Years of Exp.	-The most important skill among all; -The best input to learn a second language.	-Learners are asked to listen then repeat the sentences or tell the summary.	-Teacher agrees with the way she teaches.	-Audio part is played once and learners answer the questions related to the audio part.	
LT 2 16 years of Exp.	-65 percent of class should be assigned to it; -The basic and important skill for learning a second language.	-Pre-listening activities are done, then learners listen; -Learners are asked to speak about the listening part.	-Teacher agrees with the way she teaches.	-In testing listening, teacher doesn't help learners to comprehend the text. Teacher just tests.	
LT 3 3years Of Exp.	-The basis of teaching and learning a second language.	-First learners listen, there is no comprehension at first; -Listening is done for the second time; -Teacher helps learners to comprehend; -Learners listen for the third time and repeat the sentences then teacher writes unknown words and idioms on the board.	-Teacher agrees with the way she teaches; -Teacher claims that nobody has taught us the way of teaching this skill.	-There are some questions on the paper that should be answered after listening to the audio part.	
LT4 5 years Of Exp.	-It should be taught more and more; -A strong input; -The basis of learning and teaching a second language.	- Audio part is played; -In the case of no comprehension, it is played again; -Then learners repeat the sentences and teacher writes unknown words and idioms on the board.	-First, new vocabularies should be taught; -Then listening should be done, because not knowing vocabularies results in no comprehension.	-Learners listen once and answer different kinds of questions like fill in the blanks, checking true or false sentences and numbering pictures.	
LT5	-Basis of learning and teaching a	-First learners listen, then they are asked to	-Teacher agrees with the way she	-Teacher does not help learners in the	

5years Of Exp.	second language.	repeat the sentences word by word; -Learners listen three times; -If there is no comprehension, learners listen while looking at the script of the listening part to get it more.	teaches; -Teacher does not know the other ways of teaching listening.	part of testing; -Audio part is played once and learners are asked to tell the summary or answer the related questions to the audio part.	
LT 6 11 Years of Exp.	-The importance of the skill is the same as the other skills.	-Audio part should be played two or three times; -Learners are asked to tell what they understood; -The source of teaching listening is important, i.e. what should be listened. -Students are asked to listen at home to be prepared for the class practices.	-Teacher agrees with the way he teaches; -Teacher believes that there should be a way to teach it.	Testing listening does not show the real proficiency of the learners, it should be tested in real situations.	
LT 7 4 years of Exp.	-An important factor for teaching and learning a second language; -An important skill to be taught and learnt.	- Learners should be ready before class; -Learners listen in the class and then take note, after that they tell the summary of what they heard.	-Teacher agrees with the way he teaches.	-Different questions related to the audio part are answered after listening.	
LT 8 5 Years of Exp.	-It is not more important than other skills but it should be learnt first.	-Sources are important to teach and practice listening; -Pre-listening activities are done as warm-up; then listening is done; -Learners answer the questions related to the listening part or tell the summary.	-Teacher agrees with the way she teaches.	-Teacher cannot help student to understand, just teacher tests to see if learners comprehend or not.	
LT 9 6 years	-Is the most important skill among all;	-First audio is played once then learners are asked about what they	-Teacher agrees with the way she teaches.	-Teaching is the interaction between the knower and the	

of Exp.	-Like a new-born child, at first she/he listens and then starts speaking.	understood; -Audio part is replayed and learners are asked some questions about the audio part.		learner and testing is to get how successful we have been in teaching by asking learners to listen then answer to the questions.	
LT 10 8 Years of Exp.	-To speak well, learner should know how to listen; -The complementary of the other skills.	-Audio part is played then learners are asked what they understood; -Sentences are repeated word by word; -Source of listening should include news, film, audio and video.	-Listening should be practiced; -Practicing is more important than teaching.	-The chance of understanding is low in part of testing because audio part is played once then learners are asked to answer the questions.	
LT 11 4 years of Exp.	-The most important skill; -As important as speaking.	-Listening is not taught in the class; -Listening should be understood; -Audio part is played several times and then learners are asked to repeat.	-Teacher agrees with the way he teaches; -Teacher is looking for a useful way to teach the skill.	-Testing is played once and there is no repetition in testing. Learners just answer the questions related to the audio part or tell the summary.	
LT 12 37 Years of Exp.	-The most essential skill for learning a second language; -Interviewee claims that he himself had learnt the second language by listening.	-Practicing, practicing and practicing; -Listening and listening and listening then making perfect; -Teacher just helps learners understand the listening part better.	-Just practicing listening can make a learner proficient; -Teacher agrees with the way he teaches.	-Testing is evaluating learners to see if they understand the spoken language or not so they are asked to answer the questions related to the audio part.	
LT 13 17 Years of Exp.	-The basis of teaching a second language.	-Sources are important to practice and teach listening; -Audio part is played, then they are asked what they got(grasp); -Then sentences are practiced word by word; -There is no fixed method for teaching listening.	-Teacher agrees with natural situation approach, it means to listen to a real and a authentic listening part; -Teacher agrees with the way he teaches.	-The context of testing is not as convenience as teaching context. Audio part is played once and teacher does not help learners to answer the questions because teacher wants to know the level of their achievement or proficiency.	

LT 14 3 Years of Exp.	-The basis of learning and teaching a second language.	-First learners are asked to listen at home and take script; -Then audio part is listened in the class and learners are asked what they got; - Audio part is listened again to check the new words and idioms.	-There can be a better way to teach listening; -There is no special way to teach this skill (i.e. it should be practiced).	-Testing and teaching this skill are the same.	
LT 15 5 years Of Exp.	-After speaking, it is the next important skill; -To speak well, it is necessary to understand well.	-First audio part is listened then learners are asked what they understood; -Listening part is played for second time then new words and idioms are practiced.	-It should be practiced rather than taught.	-Learners might be stressful because of the context of testing in which audio part should be played once then related questions are answered without teacher assistance.	
LT 16 5 Years of Exp.	-The basis of teaching and learning a second language.	-First learners are asked to listen at home and take script; -learners are asked to tell what they got; -Listening part is played for second time and learners are asked to repeat the sentences.	-Teacher agrees with the ways she teaches.	-Audio part is played then learners are asked to answer the questions.	
LT 17 3 years of Exp.	-The most important part of teaching a second language.	-First listening and then asking learners to repeat the sentences.	-Teacher believes that there should be a better way to teach listening.	-Teaching listening is the way of preparation for testing it. Teacher tests to know if the learners comprehend. Audio part is played then learners are asked to answer the questions related to that part.	
LT 18 2 Years of Exp.	-The main skill among all; -50 Percent of the class should be assigned to listening.	-First warm-up activities are done; -Then listening part is played then learners are asked to tell the	-Teacher agrees with the way he teaches and will welcome to any new useful strategy.	-Testing is just asking learners to answer the question related to audio part without helping them.	

		summary of that part and repeat the sentences after listening.			
LT 19 6 Years of Exp.	-It is an important skill to learn a second language fast.	-Learners listen for several times then repeat the sentences.	-Pre-listening activities should be done; -Teacher agrees with the way she teaches.	-The same as teaching, asking learners to say what they got is testing this skill.	
LT 20 6 Years of Exp.	-Listening is the most important skill among all; -First listening then speaking.	-First learners are asked to practice at home; -Then audio part is listened in the class and learners are asked to repeat what they listened to.	-Listening and then speaking about what they got is the best way of teaching listening skill; -There is no clear strategy to teach listening skill; -Listening should be practiced more and more.	-Testing is asking learners to answer the questions related to an audio part.	

Appendix C

A List of Cognitive Strategies with their pedagogical implications by Vandergrift (1997)

Strategy	Focus on the Learner	Focus on the Teacher
Inferencing		
-Linguistic inferencing	Guessing the meaning of unknown words by linking them to known words.	Before a listening task, the teacher writes some difficult vocabulary on the board so as to draw attention to these words. The teacher then plays the tape and asks students to listen for the new vocabulary and try to guess the meaning from their understanding of the whole text.
-Voice inferencing	guessing by meaning of the tone of voice	The teacher focuses the learners' attention not on what is said but on how it is said.

-Paralinguistic or kinesic inferencing	Guessing the meaning of unknown words by referring to paralinguistic clues.	Teacher discusses with the learners how certain features of the speakers' actions in the video can help them guess the meaning of the message.
-Extralinguistic inferencing	Guessing based on other clues, such as what is required in the task.	The teacher informs the learners that they will listen to a long stretch of speech. The teacher then writes some questions on the board to direct the learners' attention.
-Inferencing between parts	Making use of certain words in the text that may not be related to the task to get more information about the task.	The teacher points out that the information at the beginning of the text will help the learners understand the later sections of the text.
Elaboration	Focus on the Learner	Focus on the Teacher
-Personal elaboration	Learners use prior personal experience to comprehend the task.	At the beginning of a lesson, the teacher asks learners to talk about any experiences they have had that relate to the topic.
-World elaboration	Learners use their world knowledge to comprehend the task.	At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher activates the learners' schemata on certain topics by asking general questions about atopic.
-Academic elaboration	Learners use knowledge gained during their formal learning experiences.	During a listening task, the teacher can ask learners if they have encountered similar experiences in other disciplines, such as knowledge of countries in their geography lessons.
-Questioning elaboration	Learners question themselves about what they do know, and what they do not know.	The teacher sets up brainstorming sessions before, during, or after a listening task for learners to question themselves about what they know about the situation.
Creative elaboration	Learners try to adapt what they hear to make the story more Interesting to themselves.	The teacher has learners' brain storm, different endings of a story and then listen for the real ending.
-Imagery	Learners use mental imagery to create a picture of what is happening.	The teacher asks learners to keep their eyes closed while listening to a story and try to picture what is happening.
	Focus on the Learner	Focus on the Teacher

Summarization	Learners make a mental or written summary of what they hear.	The teacher asks the learners to give an oral summary to each other, or to write one sentence to summarize what they have listened to.
Translation	Learners translate from the first language verbatim what they hear in the second language.	The teacher asks learners to talk with each other in the L1 and try to translate what they have listened to. Or, if the teacher is bilingual, the learners can translate what they heard for the teacher to check.
Transfer	Learners use knowledge about their first language to facilitate listening to the second language.	The teacher could draw student's attention to words in the L2 that are similar to words in the L1.
Repetition	Learners repeat words they listen to so that they become familiar with the sounds.	The teacher sets up a shadow listening task. In this task, the learners look at the text while listening to a story. While listening, they read the text quietly to themselves.
Resourcing	Learners use any resources to aid them in their understanding (e.g., dictionaries, diagrams, notes, peers)	When appropriate, the teacher focuses the learners' attention on artifacts that will help them understand the task. For instance, "Look at the diagram before you listen to the story."
Grouping	Learners group words together based on common attributes.	The teacher activates the learners' schemata on certain areas so that they are aware that the information they hear will have something in common with their previous knowledge.
Focus on the Learner		Focus on the Teacher
Note-taking	Learners write notes as they follow some spoken text.	The teacher assists the learners in making notes that will help them comprehend the messages skeleton form or free. These notes can be in form.
Deduction/Induction	Learners apply rules they have learned or have developed themselves to follow a text.	The teacher either explains the rules of a particular part of speech or has learners guess what the rules are by listening to a text.
Substitution	Learners substitute words they	The teacher asks students to give a

	know to fill in gaps in their listening to see if their overall comprehension makes sense.	variety of words or expressions to compensate for certain parts of the text they listen to. For instance, "The man said 'Could you close the door?' What else could he have said?"
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CONCEPTUALIZATION OF 'FACE' IN PERSIAN COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Iran is one of the guiding nations in the Middle East that has an enlightenment history both in culture and civilization, but has not received much attention in the area of communication. Face is a central concept in communication and the concept of face relates to the picture that people project of them to the world. According to Erving Goffman (1972), it is their most intimate and valuable possession, the source of their security and pleasure, but it does not belong to them unconditionally. It is lent to them by society on condition that they behave in ways appropriate to the face they project. He also spotlights the protective of one toward the speaker's own face and toward the face of others, which is frequently simultaneous, even in the case that one of them may be more predominant at times. In Persian, politeness has a very strong normative aspect and Iranian's face has two main aspects and managing polite communication in Persian needs consideration for both aspects and for both interlocutors: Shakhsiat: personality, social standing, self and others respect. Âberu: respect, credit, prestige, honour. Although the concept of face is claimed to be universal (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Spencer-Oatey 2000), research has revealed significant cross-cultural dissimilarities in the nature and the commonness of the concept (e.g., Hill et al 1986; Ide 1989; Matsumoto 1988). Brown and Levinson consider face in the context of politeness, and identify two aspects, positive and negative and this paper is going to argue that their model of politeness cannot account satisfactorily for the Persian data collected for this research and that a more broad-ranging frame needs to be conceptualized to present a picture of Persian notion of Face.

KEYWORDS: Face, Shakhsiat, Âberu, Ehteram, Tarooif

INTRODUCTION

The idea of this investigation has been formed by seminal politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and 'face' concept. This research set out to discover whether, and to what extent, the notion of 'face' applied to Persian communication.

The method for this research is ethnographic tradition, and my sister was asked to tape-record spontaneous conversation in an acquaintance gathering for the duration of 3.5 hours in Tehran, Iran. The data had been transcribed and analyzed. The participants belonged to a different range of ages and educational and professional backgrounds.

In case of data analysis, a complicated picture of Iranian politeness and face came up, in which certain features of Brown and Levinson's theory appeared to have little relation in Iranian face

notion in communication. But the more important issue that should be considered is that Persian face comprising two interrelated aspects, *Shakhsiat* and *Ehteram* (also referred as *Aberu*).

Although the first one is more individual based and the second is more dynamic, but both should be counted into full realization in interaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of 'Face' in the Literature and Iranian Culture

Goffman's (1972) concept of face can be applied to the description of face in Persian communication, as it described 'face' as an individual's 'most personal possession and the center of his security and pleasure'. Although face belongs to the individual, it 'is only on loan to him from society'; it will be taken away from him if he, through inappropriate behavior, shows he is unworthy of it (Goffman, 1972:322).

An individual's position in society places certain limitations on behavior, in order to manifest face, a person is expected to live up to their self-image, to show self-respect and not to carry out actions or take part in activities that are out of keeping with that self-image (Goffman, 1967:7). Such limitations in behavior stem from pride ('from duty to himself' Goffman, 1967:9) or honour and, in effect, render the individual his own 'jailer', albeit in a cell of his liking (Goffman, 1972: 9-10). In the same way that an individual is concerned with his or her own face, s/he is also expected to show consideration for others' faces and to work towards upholding their faces because s/he identifies emotionally with them and their feelings (Goffman, 1972: 9-10).

Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) seminal politeness theory turning to Goffman's ideas, defined as 'the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself'. On the basis of this universal theory, face consists of two aspects, negative and positive face, defined respectively as a model person's 'want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded,' (Brown and Levinson, 1987:129) and '[his] perennial desire that wants (or the actions/ acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable' (Brown and Levinson, 1987:101). In polite communication, strategies applied to redress interlocutor's negative or positive threatens face.

Although Goffman was not concerned with politeness, his 1959 work introduced the concept of face, which became the basis of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) most influential and comprehensive theory of politeness. Goffman conceptualized 'face' as a person's 'most personal possession and the center of his security and pleasure', which, however, 'is only loan to him from society' and 'it will withdrawn unless he conducts himself in a way that is worthy of it' (Goffman, 1972:322).

Similar to Goffman's pride and honour, Persian face consists of two sides: *Shakhsiat* ('personality', 'character', 'self-respect', 'social standing') and *Ehteram* ('respect', 'esteem', 'dignity'). It was argued by Koutlaki (2009) that *Shakhsiat*, despite some differences, is similar to Brown and Levinson's notion of positive face. The main difference is that Brown and Levinson's

notion of positive face refers to an individual's want to be desired, respected and liked, and his want shared by others; in other words, it is rooted in the individual (Koutlaki, 2009). Conversely, the Iranian concept does not detach of the group and pick up the real meaning in connection with it. However, it is worthy to mention that *Ehteram* is almost ever-present in Iranian interaction and it is often, although not always, dependent upon a person's *Shakhsiat*. In other words, a speaker addressing an interlocutor of a high social position or educational background (high perceived *Shakhsiat*) will show a high degree of *Ehteram* too. Though, this does not mean that a person of a lower social standing will not receive *Ehteram*. Koutlaki (2009), postulate that *Ehteram* is one of the primary inspirations behind polite behavior in Persian.

Face can be threatened, lost or enhanced in interaction and, following on from Goffman's description of face, every rational person is interested in maintaining or enhancing an interlocutor's face in order to have his face similarly maintained or enhanced and the greater the risk of face loss involved, the higher numbered strategy will be chosen by a speaker. Face-threatening acts (FTAs), acts that inherently damage the face of the addressee or the speaker by acting in opposition to the wants and desire of the other, are at times inevitable based on the terms of conversation.

Negative face-threatening acts

When negative face is threatened, freedom of choice and action are impeded. For example an act that affirms or denies a future act of the hearer creates pressure on the hearer to either perform or not perform the act. Examples: orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminding, threats, or warnings. Or those acts that expresses the speaker's sentiments of the hearer or the hearer's belongings. Instances: compliments, expressions of envy or admiration, or expression of strong negative emotion toward the hearer (hatred, anger, lust). Offers and promises can also be FTAs if the pressure has been put on the hearer to accept or reject the act and possibly incur a debt.

Positive face-threatening acts

Positive face is threatened when the speaker or hearer does not care about their interlocutor's feelings, wants, or does not act what the other wants, positive face threatening can also cause damage to the speaker or hearer. When an individual is forced to separate from others so that their well being is treated less importantly, positive face is threatened. For example, an act that expresses the speaker's negative assessment of the hearer's positive faces or an element of his/her positive face. The speaker can display this disapproval in two ways. The first approach is for the speaker to directly or indirectly indicate that dislikes some aspects of the hearer's possessions, desires, or personal attributes. The second approach is for the speaker to express disapproval by stating or implying that the hearer is wrong, irrational, or misguided. Examples: expression of disapproval (e.g. insults, accusations, complaints), contradiction, disagreements, or challenges. Those acts that expresses the speaker's indifference toward the addressee's positive face. The addressee might be embarrassed for or fear the speaker. Examples: excessively emotional expressions or the speaker indicates that he does not have the same values or fears as the hearer: disrespect, mention of topics which are inappropriate or in the context. Belittling or boasting when the speaker indicates that he is willing to disregard the emotional well being of the hearer.

The speaker increases the possibility that a face-threatening act will occur. This situation is created when a topic is brought up by the speaker that is a sensitive societal subject. For example, topics that relate to politics, race, religion. The speaker indicates that he is indifferent to the positive face wants of the hearer. This is most often expressed in obvious non-cooperative behavior. Instance: interrupting, non-sequiturs.

FTAs can be either accidentally or intentionally: the speaker misidentifies the hearer in an offensive or embarrassing way. Generally, this refers to the misuse of the address terms in relation to status, gender, or age. Example: addressing a young woman as “ma’am” instead of “miss”.

In polite communication, every act that potentially threatens face is usually accompanied by strategies directed at redressing interlocutor’s negative or positive face. After several criticisms made by researches of different cultures (de Kadt 1998; Hill et al., 1986; Ide, 1989; Koutlaki, 1997; 2002, Mao, 1994; Matsumoto, 1988; 1989; Nwoye, 1992), at the notion of negative face, ongoing thoughts favour the revising and reconsidering of Goffman’s concept of face (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2003), which, being dependent on others, ‘is only realized in social interaction’ (Watts, 2003: 107) and is therefore mutually constructed (de Kadt, 1998: 176) or co-constituted (Arundal, 2006: 196) rather than being rooted in the individual, as Brown and Levinson postulate.

METHODOLOGY

The approach applied for this study, ethnography approach, initially employed by researchers of anthropology, which means direct observation of linguistic practices of a community without any intervention on the part of the researcher. Ethnographic approach adopted through recording of naturally-occurring conversations in an acquainted family gathering in Tehran. The speakers represented different range of backgrounds and ages.

In this study, I was not present in the gathering, where the participants being aware they had been recorded on their normal interactions. The focus of this study has not been gender or age differences in politeness patterns, but in some examples some information relating to the interlocutors gender and age has been supplied, so the reader can have a clear picture in the mind. Analyzing the conversations, have led into the description of the notion of *Taroof*, some issues of social values in Iranian community, the perception of face and politeness system, and the analysis of the components of Persian face.

Taroof

Several authors have noted the importance of the notion of *Taroof* in Persian, as an applicable communicative strategy (Koutlaki, 2002; Hodge, 1957; Hillmann, 1981; Asdjodi, 2001; Assadi, 1980; Eslami Rasekh, 2005). *Taroof* can be regarded as a cultural schema that forms a large part of everyday social interactions in Persian. “Its realization in conversations may be in the form of ‘ostensible’ invitations, repeated rejection of offers, insisting on making offers, hesitation in making requests, giving frequent compliments, hesitation in making complaints, etc. (Sharifian,

2011)”. Even in a single conversation, all the parties may use of a combination of these realizations in different degrees, although it can be not a genuine communicative act. That is why speakers constantly ask each other not to engage in *Taroof*. The following extract is from the tap-recorded data from an acquainted gathering in Tehran, Iran, (note: H stands for host and G stands for guest):

H: *Az in salad ham befarmayin.*
From this salad eat:polite.form
‘Please test this salad as well.’

G: *Mamnoon sarf shodeh.*
Thanks I have.had
‘Thanks, I have had some.’

H: *To ro khoda befarmayin, ghabel-e shoma ra nadareh.*
For God’s eat:polite.form , worthy-of you it.is.not
‘For God’s sake have some. They are not worthy of you.’

G: *Sahebesh ghabel-e, dast-e-toon dard nakoneh.*
The.owner worthy-is, hand-of-your pain doesn’t
‘You are worthy, thanks.’

H: *Shoma k chizi nakhordin, befarmayin, namk nadareh.*
You nothing eat, eat:polite.form, salt doesn’t have
‘You eat nothing, please have some, it has no salt’.

G: *Taroof nemikonam, kheyli khordam.*
Taroof don’t-I, eat a lot-I
‘I don’t do Taroof, I eat a lot’.

H: *Ye ghashogh be oonjaha nemikhoreh.*
One spoon is not too much
‘One more spoon wouldn’t be that much.’

G: *Chashm, dast-e-toon o kootah nemikonam.*
Ok hand-of-your marker short will-not-I
‘Ok, I won’t turn down your offer.’

Sharifian (2011), explained the general aim of the cultural schema of *Taroof* as “to create a form of social space for speakers to exercise face work and also to provide communicative tools to negotiate and lubricate social relationships”. Besides, the interlocutors have chance to construct certain identities and social image, for example as a welcoming, helpful or open-handed and sociable.

Various labels had been used to describe *Taroof* concept in English, “including ‘communicative routine’ (Koutlaki, 2002: 1741), ‘ritual courtesy’ (Beeman, 1986:56), ‘ritual politeness’ (Koutlaki, 2002:1740), and ‘polite verbal wrestling (Rafiee, 1992:96), cited in Sharifian, 2011: 145.

Taroof is closely tied to the concept of *Shakhsiat*, which has been translated into English as ‘character’, ‘personality’, ‘pride’. Koutlaki (2002:1742) defined *Shakhsiat* as “a complex concept which could be rendered as ‘personality’, ‘character’, ‘honour’, ‘self-respect’, ‘social standing’”. She relates *Shakhsiat* to politeness and believes who observe politeness is considered to have *Shakhsiat*. It is also depending on variables such as family background, level of education, social status, financial level, etc. *Shakhsiat* ties to *Taroof* in the sense that applying *Taroof* as an appropriate communicative strategy is an indication of heightened *Shakhsiat*. Unlike *Aberu*, which, is conceptualized as a social image and status of person and/or family and friends/ social norms/ relationship and networks, *Shakhsiat* is constructed as a result of individual endeavor at constructing socially acceptable image of person in the eyes of others. By exercising appropriate communicative strategy, *Taroof*, one can gain *Shakhsiat* and by not applying it correctly, one can lose it. So, *Shakhsiat* is a dynamic concept.

Koutlaki (2002) quoted that giving *Shakhsiat* “to an addressee has to do with society’s injunctions about paying face, and also with group face wants.” As it is recognized by her, *Shakhsiat* is something that a speaker can give or get from the addressee. Following is an excerpt from the leave-taking conversation in the mentioned gathering, in which the interlocutors tried to keep up their own *Shakhsiat* by also maintaining the other interlocutor’s *Shakhsiat* too.

G: *Bebakhshid zahmat dadim.*

Forgive trouble gave-we
‘Sorry for giving you a trouble’.

H: *In che harfiyeh, Khahesh mikonam, inja manzele khodetone.*

What statement, please, here house yours-is
‘Do not mention it. Please, it is your house.

G: *Merci babate zahamat-I ke baray sargarmi bache-ha keshid-id.*

Thanks for troubles-the that for entertainment kids went.through-you
‘Thanks, for entertaining the kids’.

Ham-e ja ro ham be ham rikhtan, jamojuram nakardim.

Everywhere mess up-they, tidy-up-too not did
‘They did mess everywhere, I didn’t even help you tidy up’.

H: *Ey baba, bache-an dg, bebakhshin age bad gozasht.*

Oh, kids they-are, you forgive if bad passed
‘Oh, no problem. They are just little kids. I am sorry if you had a bad time’.

Az kadoye ghashangeton ham kheyli mamnoon.

From present nice-of-you very thanks

'Thank you for your lovely present'.

G: *khahesh mikonam, in ghabeli nadare, khahesh mikonam.*

Request I-do, this worth not, has request I-do
'You are welcome, it was nothing really, you are welcome'.

H: *Zahmat keshidin.*
Trouble you took
'Thank you for coming'.

G: *Zahmat dadim, Shoma ham tashrif biarin.*
Trouble we-gave, you anyway honor you bring
'Sorry for the trouble, but you will also come'.

H: *bashe, enshallah.*
Let-it-be, God willing
'Okay, hopefully'.

G: *Khob dg, Khoda hafex.*
Well, God protector
'Well, bye then'.

H: *B-e salamat, khosh omodin.*
In good health, well come-you
'Goodbye, you are welcome'.

Very many apologies developed by the host and the guests in utterances, which set up a complex facework sequence. Guests expanded superficial apologies for the trouble they have given for their visit. The hosts also expressed nominally apologies for the bad time the guests have spent with them. The net result of this compounded interaction is that all participants tried to pay face both to the other interlocutors and themselves at the same time.

Other various politeness strategies applied simultaneously by Persian interactors to develop and keep face. The example provides from the extract of the taped- conversation, when the hostess asked the guests to join for the dinner:

H: *Befarma-id sar-e miz ta az dahan nayoftadeh,*
Please-you to the table since it mouth not-fall
'Please start, since it does not become cold,'
Albatte be ghazaha-ye Nasim joon k nemireses.
Surely at foods Nasim dear does-not reach.
'Surely this is not as good as dear Nasim's cooking'.

G: *Ekhtiar darid, ma-ro sharmandeh mikonid.*

Freedom have-you, us embarrass do-you

‘You are free to say anything you like, but what you say embarrasses me’.

H utterances can be regarded both as praise and a practice of apology because she presents the guest’s cooking as superior to hers and exhibit her humility. The motive behind this utterance is to raise the guest in deference and expecting the enhancement of both (the guest and her own) faces. Consequently, the guest’s response reflects the host satisfaction in function.

In Persian, even though a speaker humbles himself by elevating an interlocutor, he does not expect the interlocutor to confirm the compliment. In this occasion the same occurs on behalf of the interlocutor: he also elevating the speaker by humbling his self.

A very usual response to such a compliment is *ekhtiar darid* which means “you are free to say anything you like, (but the compliment is not true)”. The interesting point is that Iranians characterize a speaker haughty and impolite if he accept a compliment and says thanks!

CONCLUSION

The present work tried to illustrate important triads of Persian facework. The Persian face is realized and worked out through verbal behaviors, which had been taped-recorded in an acquaintance gathering in Tehran, Iran. The discussion is based on Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) theory due to the fact that it is the most complete account of politeness theory, which, unlike previous theories, it also recognizes politeness as intrinsically related to ‘face’, which defined as ‘the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself’ (1987:61).

As cited in Koutlaki (1997), the fact that politeness is closely linked with face considerations has been confirmed by research on many cultures like Chinese (Gu, 1990, Chen 1993, Mao, 1994), Japanese (Matsumoto, 1988, 1989, 1989, Ide, 1989, Hill et al, 1986), Greek (Sifianou, 197, 1992, 1993) and Igbo of Nigeria (Nwoye, 1992). Brown and Levinson’s ‘face’ construction is deeply generated in an individual’s desires, while Persian face (*Shakhsiat*) does not only rooted in one’s individual positive or negative face wants. Persian face recognized as “collectivist” by Koutlaki (1997), since it underpins all social relationship and communication among speakers. So, it also includes group face wants, which can be maintained, enhanced or lost through adherence to agreed social conventions.

As it has been shown in extracts, in Persian, some speech acts which have been characterized as Face Threatening Acts (FATs) by Brown and Levinson function as Face Enhancing Acts. According to Brown and Levinson acts like offers, compliments, expression of thanks, unwilling offers, and apologies threaten the addressee’s or speaker’s face. But it is not the case in Persian. These acts are used to maintain interactants’ and their extended group’s face.

One of the most important verbal ritual politenesses in Persian is *Tarooof*, which has been examined in this paper, attend to a speaker’s face, his family and group’s face, and also very

importantly, to an addressee's and his family/group's face simultaneously. That's why the discussion of Iranian face corresponds to Goffman's (1967) views, in which he described face as two-sided. As it has been shown in the extracts, the Persian participants in the conversations operated with consideration towards their own face and at the same time other's face. So, as an individual tries to maintain his face, he is also aware that he is expected to try to preserve other's faces. The other side of the face based on Goffman's (1967) conceptualization of face is related to a person's face that is on loan to him from society: "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact". Iranian society is a collectivist society. So, it is rational to accept the fact that the individual cannot hold on to his face and others without adhering to social norms and avoiding blame worthy behaviors. Thus, Persian native speakers experience politeness by adhering to social conventions and attending to both an individual's and group face wants. Positive and negative face wants are not beginning and end of Persian face. Rather it is established by conformity to the social norms and correct socialization.

This research has been conducted on a small scale, so it may not be able to show a wider picture of politeness in Persian communication and different Persian social classes. Some aspects of Persian pragmatics have only been mentioned and not dealt with any details. For example using Tarooof between intimates, acquaintances and strangers, or gender and age differences. It would be interesting to discover whether such differences in Persian communication exist at all.

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SYNTHESIZING EFL LEARNERS' TRAITS: MI, LEARNING STYLES AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT

Multiple intelligences and learning styles are important factors in learning a foreign language. It appears that, discovering the relationship between these variables is a relatively new issue which has recently become important and has drawn the attention of English teachers. In a bid to address this issue, this study was conducted to investigate the relationship between multiple intelligences, learning styles, and EFL learners' language proficiency level among the Iranian candidates. In fact, the attempt was made to explore the extent to which they correlate. To fulfill this objective, a 140-item language proficiency test, a 70-item multiple intelligence questionnaire, and a 30-item learning styles questionnaire were distributed among 132 Iranian students. Pearson correlation coefficients were run to analyze the data. The results indicated that the nature of styles is different from intelligence since contrary to the relationship between language proficiency and multiple intelligence, learning styles don't have such connection with language proficiency. Further studies on the nature of these main variables including multiple intelligence and learning styles in isolation and mixed besides the issue of the nature of each constructs are suggested.

KEYWORDS: Multiple Intelligence; Learning Styles; Language Proficiency

INTRODUCTION

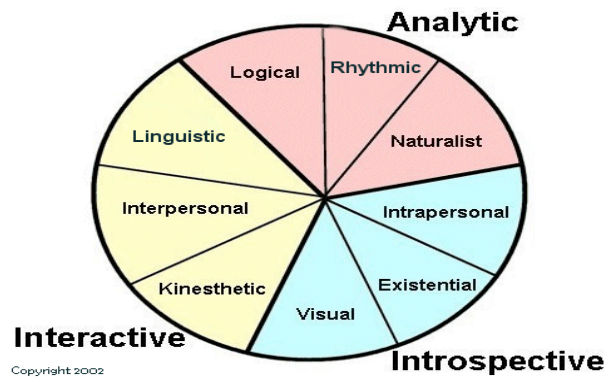
The term 'intelligence' is traditionally described as intelligence quotient (IQ) measured via individuals verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences (Hajihashemi, 2011). However, Gardner (1983) challenged the belief that intelligence could be objectively measured and reduced to a single number or "IQ" score and claimed that the IQ test does not provide information on other kinds of intelligences. He stated that each individual has a multitude of intelligences quite unaffiliated of each other. In this regard, he defined intelligence as "the ability to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings" (2006a, p. 48), which entailed in the suggestion of his Multiple Intelligence (MI) Theory. According to him (1983), each individual has varying levels of intelligences and each individual has a unique cognitive profile composed of verbal-linguistic, musical-rhythmic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, naturalist and existential intelligences.

Educationally speaking, MI theory motivates teachers to acknowledge that all students have strengths and that each individual is unique (Carreiro, 1998; Teele, 2000). Lazear (1991, 1992) regards MI theory as a solid platform based on which the learners' needs, learning strategies, and intelligence models can be studied. It is concerned with the way people process information, and it accommodates dimensions of cognitive and developmental psychology, anthropology, and sociology to explain the human intellect.

According to Gardner (1990), all human beings have all different intelligences in varying degrees and each individual shows different levels of these varied intelligences, and thus each person has a unique "cognitive profile"; all human have all variant intelligences in different amounts; each individual possess an incompatible composition; different areas of the brain include varying intelligences and can either work independently or together. According to him, man can improve his education by utilizing multiple intelligences, and man's species may be defined by these intelligences.

Domains of multiple intelligences

According to (McKenzie, 2002), multiple intelligences have three domains including the analytical, introspective and interactive, all working as an organizer for understanding the mixed relationship of the intelligences and how the intelligences work with one another. Figure 1 Dimensions of MI (McKenzie, 2002).



Gardner (1983) offered that all individuals possess personal intelligence profiles that include combinations of seven different intelligence types. He, then, (1999) added natural and existential intelligences to that list, as illustrated in figure 2.



The schematic presentation of the nine types of intelligences (Smart, 1999)

Learning styles

In addition to MI theory as “the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior” (Cornett, 1983, p. 9), learning styles have been extensively discussed in the educational psychology literature (Claxton & Murrell 1987; Schmeck 1988) and specifically in the context of language learning by Oxford and her colleagues (Oxford 1990; Oxford et al.1991; Wallace and Oxford 1992). This notion has been interpreted differently based on the understanding of the researchers of what constitutes learning styles (Zou, 2006). Oxford, Hollaway and Horton-Murillo (1992) described learning styles as the general approaches used by learners, while Honigsfeld and Dunn (2006) described it as a biological and developmental set of personal characteristics that can be effective for some learners and ineffective for others. Peacock (2001) called styles as students’ preferred mode of learning. Within the area of learning styles, each individual reflects sensory style dimensions (visual/auditory/hands-on) and social style dimensions (extroverted/introverted). Every person also has preferences along cognitive style dimensions, among which are concrete-sequential/abstract-intuitive, closure-oriented/open, detail-focused/holistic (sometimes called particular/global), and analyzing/ synthesizing (Oxford, 2003).

In terms of learning English, a number of researchers suggest that mismatch between students’ preferred learning styles and instructors’ preferred teaching styles has entailed undesirable effects on students’ learning and attitudes in the class and to English in general (Cortazzi, 1990; Felder & Henriques, 1995; Jones, 1997; Oxford, Hollaway & Horton-Murillo, 1992; Stebbins, 1995; Reid, 1987), while any correspondences would lead to an increase in motivation and learning (Griggs & Dunn (1984); Smith & Renzulli (1984), and Wallace & Oxford (1992).

Knowing students' learning styles is important and beneficial to teachers as it will allow them to tailor their way of teaching so as to accommodate the learning style preferences of their students (Hinton, 1992). Oxford (2003) regards learning styles and strategies as being among the main factors that help determine how and how well the students learn a second or foreign language, and indeed different students will tend to favor different learning styles. For example, Reid (1987), Melton (1990) and Jones' (1997) investigations with Chinese students and Sharifah Azizah and Wan Zalinay (1995) and Hariharan and Ismail's (2003) studies with Malaysians are all in support of variety of styles used by them. In the same vein, Ellis' (1989) work with German learners and Willing's (1988), as cited in Tabanlıoglu (2003), research on immigrants are all proofs to the fact that not only do learning styles vary among the learners but they are also effective in the way learning happens.

Language proficiency

Richards and Schmidt (2002) defined Language Proficiency as "the degree of skill with which a person can use a language, such as how well a person can read, write, speak, or understand language" (p. 292). Briere (1972, p.322) described proficiency as: "The degree of competence or the capability in a given language demonstrated by an individual at a given point in time independent of specific textbook, chapter in the book, or pedagogical method". According to Farhady (1983), language proficiency was refereed to many factors and which encompasses educational background. On the other hand, Richard (1985) defined it as: ".....the degree of skill with which a person can use a language"(p.159). All of the above cited definitions center on same explanations and are the subject of criticisms.

Karim Hajhashemi, Kourosh, Akef, and Neil Anderson (2012) conducted a research in regards of the relationship between multiple intelligences and reading proficiency of Iranian EFL students. The findings revealed that there is a relationship between reading proficiency of Iranian EFL pre-university students and MI. Moreover, it was found that low achievers have a higher musical-rhythmic intelligence and diligent readers may be more intelligent 'musically' than they more proficient counterparts. Nahid and Zohreh Kasaeian (2010) suggested that more intelligent university students learn a foreign language with more success than their less intelligent peers.

Surprisingly enough, Razmjoo (2008) found that there is no significant relationship between language proficiency and multiple intelligences as a whole factor. He also found that based on the multiple regression analysis, none of the intelligence type could predict the language proficiency. Aliakbari (2012) investigated the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' learning style preference and their gender, proficiency level and achievement score. The results revealed that there was a low association between participants' learning style preference (LSP) and proficiency level. According to Heidari Soureshjani and Naseri (2011), the proficiency level of learners significantly affects the learning style preferences of language learners. In another study, they (2012) also found that sensory styles are the most preferred learning styles for beginning learners, personality styles for intermediate learners, and finally, degree-related styles for advanced-level learners. Mohammadi (2009) conducted a study on the relationship between learning strategies and EFL learners' level of proficiency. The results of his study represented that participants' use of learning strategies in their study had correlation with their English proficiency level. Adel Abu

Radwan (2011) concluded that there is a relationship between language proficiency level and the overall strategies used by learners and also strategy choice. Moreover, the same results were achieved in a study conducted by Hayati Samian and Tavakoli (2012).

Definitely, all discussions on the mentioned variables so far revolve around their role in skill acquisition. Given the significance of reading skill among the other skills of language, this study was delimited to investigate the relationship among the target variables and reading skill. In the light of this literature, it can be perceived that multiple intelligences, learning styles, learning strategies, and language proficiency are important factors in learning a foreign language. There has been a wide range of studies conducted in the relationship between two of these variables. However, the extent to which these variables relate and affect skill acquisition is still blurred. It appears that discovering the relationship between these variables is a relatively new issue which has recently become important and has drawn attention of English teachers in the era of stylistic and strategic education.

In order to address the synthesis or integration of these traits of EFL learners, four research questions each addressed through respective null hypothesis, were raised which address the relationship among them synthetically or interactively. Statement of the questions is left to the statistical analysis subsection as follows. Generally speaking, the main question is read if there is any relationship among EFL learners' multiple intelligence, learning styles, learning strategies and language proficiency.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1. Is there any statistically significant difference between EFL learners' language proficiency level and multiple intelligences?

Q2. Is there any statistically significant difference between EFL learners' language proficiency level and learning styles?

Q3. Is there any relationship between EFL learners' multiple intelligence, learning styles, and language proficiency?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In order to run this creational research in design 132 EFL learners from Tehran, Iran were selected based on their performance in TOEFL PBT. They then were divided into two levels (i.e. advanced & upper-intermediate) based on their standing position on the normal distribution curve and the standard deviation measures.

Instrumentations

The data required for the study was collected through a language proficiency test (TOEFL PBT), and also two separate questionnaires measuring MI (i.e., Gardner's MI Inventory), Raid's (1087)

Perceptual Learning Styles Preference. To make sure of their reliability and validity indices, the K-R21 formula was run to estimate the former as their ratios are shown in the following table:

Table 1: K-R21 Reliability Indices

Pretest MI	Pretest 0.67,	Pretest Learning Style 0.69,	Pretest PBT 0.67,	Posttest MI 0.72,	0.82,	Posttest Learning Style 0.69,	Posttest PBT 0.75
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As to the latter characteristics; validity, given its relative and context-boun nature, the construct validity of each instruments was estimated through running factro analysis and varimax rotation.

Table 2: Factor Loadings

	Component		
	1	2	3
Pretest PBT	.862		
Posttest PBT	.838		
Posttest L Style		.972	
Pretest L Style		.971	
Pretest MI			.987
Posttest MI			.972

Procedure

In order to collect the data required for the fulfillment of the objectives, the questionnaires were administered to a total of 186 students. Then, they were asked to take the TOEFL PBT test after a break. Subsequently, a final number of 132 participants, who were considered to be tailored enough to participate in the test, were divided into two language proficiency groups based on their performance on the TOEFL PBT test and the way they answered the questionnaires.

Data Analysis and Results

The data collected by the questionnaires were examined along with the TOEFL PBT scores. The Pearson correlation coefficients were applied in order to probe any significant relationship between EFL learners' multiple intelligence, learning styles, learning strategies and language proficiency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing Assumptions

Four assumptions should be met before one decides to run parametric tests (Field 2009)); 1) the data should be measured on an interval scale; 2) the participants should be independent that is to say their performance on the test is not affected by the performance of other students, 3) the data should enjoy normal distribution and 4) the groups should have homogeneous variances (Field; 2009). The present data are measured on an interval scale and the participants perform independently on the tests. The assumption of normality is also met. Since as displayed in Table 1, the values of skewness and kurtosis are within the ranges of +/- 2 (Bachman 2005).

Table 3: Normality Tests

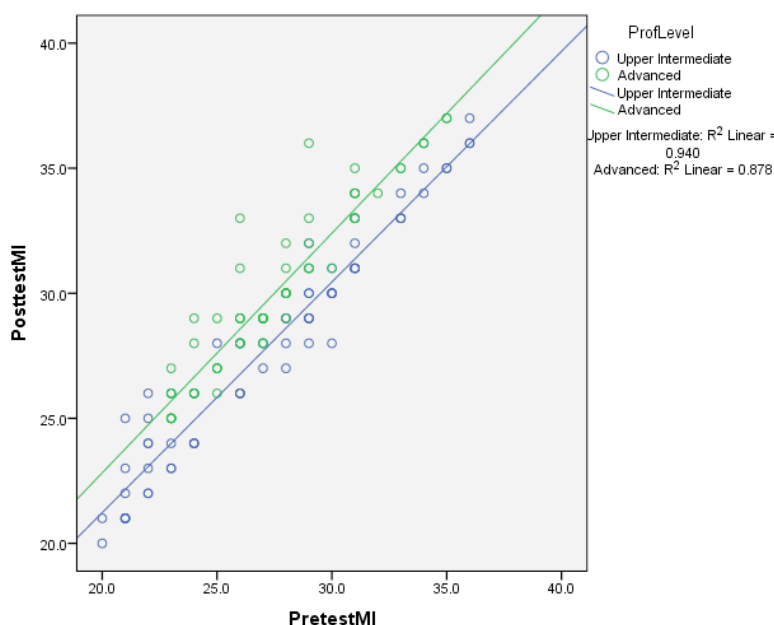
	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Pretest MI	132	.194	.211	-.727	.419
Pretest Learning Style	132	.647	.211	-.188	.419
Pretest PBT	132	-.092	.211	-1.192	.419
Posttest MI	132	-.044	.211	-.573	.419
Posttest Learning Style	132	.734	.211	.317	.419
Posttest PBT	132	.070	.211	-.686	.419

The assumption of homogeneity of variances will be discussed when reporting the results.

Addressing the Research Questions

The First Research Question

In order to address the first research question, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run to compare the advanced and upper intermediate students' mean scores on posttest of multiple intelligences while removing any possible effects of their multiple intelligences as measured through the pretest. ANCOVA requires observation of three more assumptions, i.e. homogeneity of regression slope, linear relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable and homogeneity of variances. As displayed in Scatter Plot 1, the assumption of homogeneity of regression slope is met. Both upper intermediate (upper line) and advanced students (lower line) show the same regression slopes. The R-squared values for the two groups are .94 and .97 (as appeared on the left side of the plot), respectively.



Scatter Plot 1

Homogeneity of Regression Slope Posttest of multiple intelligences by Proficiency Levels with Pretest

The second assumption, i.e. linear relationship between the dependent variable (posttest of multiple intelligences) and covariate (pretest of multiple intelligences), was examined within the

main table of ANCOVA results. The F-observed value for the effect of covariate is significant ($F(1, 129) = 1425.64$, $P = .000 < .05$; Partial $\eta^2 = .91$, which represents a large effect size). Based on these results, it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the dependent variable and covariate. Thus, the second assumption is also met.

Table 4: ANCOVA Posttest of Multiple Intelligences by Proficiency Levels with Pretest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest MI	1855.401	1	1855.401	1425.647	.000	.917
Prof Level	113.813	1	113.813	87.452	.000	.404
Error	167.886	129	1.301			
Total	113257.000	132				

And finally the third assumption, i.e. homogeneity of variances, is also met. As displayed in Table 5, the Levene's F-value of .067 ($P = .796 > .05$) is not significant.

Table 5: Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances

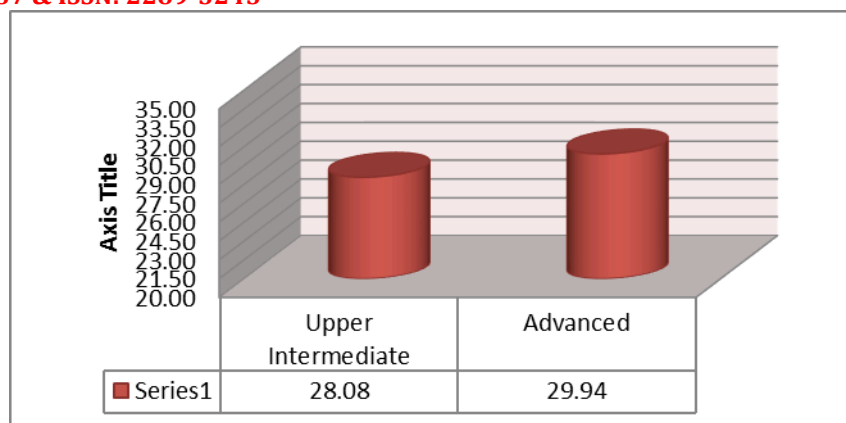
F	df1	df2	Sig.
.067	1	130	.796

The F-observed value for the effect of the independent variable (proficiency level), as Table 4 shows, is significant ($F(1, 129) = 87.45$, $P = .000 < .05$; Partial $\eta^2 = .40$ which represents a large effect size). Based on these results it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the advanced and upper intermediate students on the posttest of multiple intelligences after controlling for possible effect of their entry ability as measured through the pretest of multiple intelligences. Thus, the first null-hypothesis as there is not any statistically significant difference between EFL learners' language proficiency level and multiple intelligences **is rejected**.

As displayed in Table 6 and bar Graph 1, the mean scores for advanced and upper intermediate students on posttest of multiple intelligences are 29.93 and 28.07, respectively. The advanced group outperformed the upper intermediate students on the posttest of multiple intelligences.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics Posttest of Multiple Intelligences by Proficiency Levels

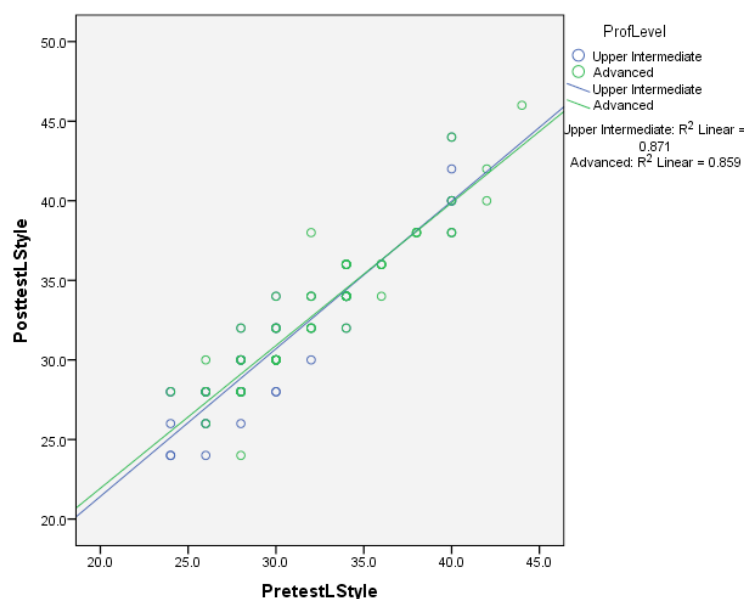
Prof Level	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Upper Intermediate	28.078	.141	27.800	28.356
Advanced	29.937	.141	29.659	30.215



Graph 1: Posttest of Multiple Intelligences by Proficiency Levels

The Second Research Question

In order to answer the second research question, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run to compare the advanced and upper intermediate students' mean scores on the posttest of learning style while removing any possible effects of their learning style as measured through the pretest. As displayed in Scatter Plot 2, the assumption of homogeneity of regression slope is met. Both upper intermediate and advanced students show the same regression slopes. The R-squared values for the two groups are .85 and .87 (as appeared on the left side of the plot) respectively.



Scatter Plot 2: Homogeneity of Regression Slope Posttest of Learning Style by Proficiency Levels with Pretest

The second assumption, i.e. linear relationship between the dependent variable (posttest of learning style) and covariate (pretest of learning style) was examined within the main table of ANCOVA results. As Table 7 shows, the F-observed value for the effect of covariate is significant ($F(1, 129) = 824.55$, $P = .000 < .05$; $\text{Partial } \eta^2 = .86$, which represents a large effect

size). Based on these results it can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the dependent variable and covariate. Thus, the second assumption is also met.

Table 7: ANCOVA Posttest of Learning Style by Proficiency Levels with Pretest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest Learning Style	2057.346	1	2057.346	824.559	.000	.865
Prof Level	.846	1	.846	.339	.561	.003
Error	321.866	129	2.495			
Total	137628.000	132				

And finally the third assumption, i.e. homogeneity of variances, is also met. As displayed in Table 8 the Levene's F-value of .007 ($P = .936 > .05$) is not significant.

Table 8: Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variances

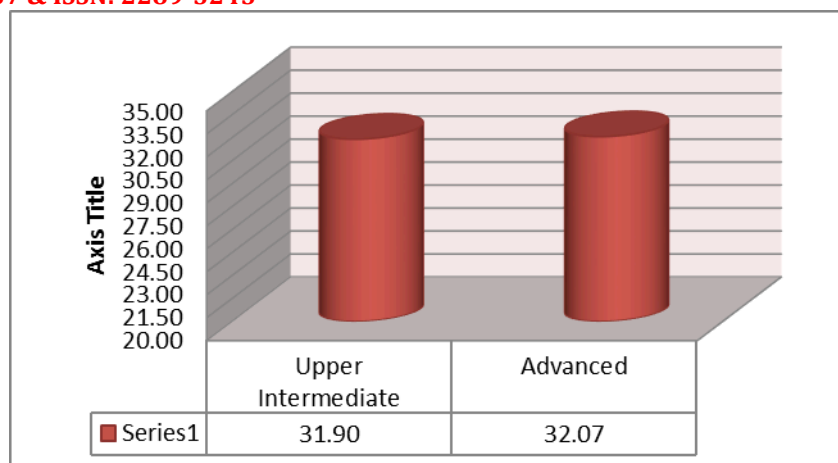
F	df1	df2	Sig.
.007	1	130	.936

The F-observed value for the effect of the independent variable (proficiency level) is not significant ($F(1, 129) = .339, P = .561 > .05$; Partial $\eta^2 = .003$, which represents a weak effect size) (Table 5). Based on these results it can be concluded that there is not any significant difference between the mean scores of the advanced and upper intermediate students on the posttest of learning style after controlling for possible effect of their entry ability as measured through the pretest of learning style. Thus, the second null-hypothesis as there is not any statistically significant difference between EFL learners' language proficiency level and learning style **cannot be rejected**.

As displayed in Table 9 and bar Graph 2, the mean scores for advanced and upper intermediate students on posttest of learning style are 32.06 and 31.90, respectively.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics Posttest of Learning Style by Proficiency Levels

Prof Level	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Upper Intermediate	31.901	.199	31.508	32.294
Advanced	32.068	.199	31.675	32.461



Graph 2: Posttest of Learning Style by Proficiency Levels

The Third Research Question

In order to address the third question, the Pearson correlation coefficients were run. Based on the results displayed in Table 13, it can be concluded that;

- A: There is a significant relationship between EFL learners learning style and proficiency ($r(130) = .36, P = .000 < .05$, which represents a moderate effect size).
- B: There is a significant relationship between EFL learners multiple intelligences and proficiency ($r(130) = .28, P = .001 < .05$, which represents an almost moderate effect size).
- C: There is not any significant relationship between EFL learners learning styles and multiple intelligences ($r(130) = .082, P = .353 > .05$, which represents a weak effect size).

Table 10: Pearson Correlation

		Posttest Learning Strategy	Posttest Learning Style	Posttest PBT
Posttest MI	Pearson Correlation	.194*	.082	.282**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.353	.001
	N	132	132	132
Posttest Learning Style	Pearson Correlation			.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000
	N			132
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Three separate Pearson correlations were run to probe a single research question, the False Detection Rate (FDR) analysis (Filed 2009) should be run to reduce the inflated error rate caused by multiple application of a single analysis to probe a research question. Although four of the Pearson r-values are reported as significant in Table 10, based on the results displayed in Table 14, it can be concluded that there are only three significant r-values, i.e. relationship between Learning strategy and learning style and multiple intelligences with proficiency.

Table 11: False Detection Rate

	Pearson R	P-Value	P-Corrected	Conclusion
L-Style with Proficiency	.364	.000	.010	Significant
Proficiency with MI	.282	.001	.013	Significant
L-Style with MI	.082	.353	.050	Non-Significant

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study addressed the relationship between EFL learners' multiple intelligences, learning styles, and language proficiency. Regarding the correlation between EFL learners' learning styles and language proficiency, the results revealed a significant relationship, which lends support to Toh Peng Yeow, Mark Kiak Min Tan, Li-Cher Loh and Julia Blitz's (2010) findings. Moreover, on the relationship between EFL proficiency and multiple intelligences, the obtained data with P-value of 0.001 and r-value of 0.282 indicates a meaningful relationship. In other words, the proficient English learners maintain a more developed intelligence type or types. This finding lends support to the research conducted by Nahid and Zohreh Kasaeian (2010), who found that more intelligent university students learn a foreign language with more success than their less intelligent peers.

Surprisingly enough, in contrast with the aforementioned findings, Razmjoo (2008) found that there is no significant relationship between language proficiency and multiple intelligences as a whole factor. He also found that based on the multiple regression analysis, none of the intelligence types could predict the language proficiency. Lastly, the respective results revealed the presence of no notable relationship between learning styles and MI, contrary to what was found by Tee, Tze Kiong and Widad, Othman and Yee, Mei Heong (2009) indicating that most of the students prefer to utilize different learning styles with emphasis on Intrapersonal Intelligence for the excellent level and Verbal-Linguistic for the low level.

Putting together all the findings, language instructors are recommended to take over the responsibility of a researcher as well in order to recognize not only their students' individual differences, but they should also know how to supply the needs of their learners.

Limitations of the study

Unfortunately, like most studies, this research also encountered some obstacles during the time it was being conducted. The main barrier to this study in Iran's context was that some institutes were reluctant to cooperate with the researcher. Moreover, gathering sufficient participants was arduous. Additionally, the validity of questionnaire as a data collection instrument is controversial. On the other hand, the study was limited to the respective centers and participants from Tehran, which is a threat to the validity of the study. Another limitation of the study was that individual characteristics of students were not taken into account while identifying and analyzing their multiple intelligences and learning styles.

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THE INFLUENCE OF ASYNCHRONOUS COMPUTER-MEDIATED VERSUS CONVENTIONAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON TWO IRANIAN LEARNERS' WRITING ACCURACY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study is to investigate the effects of asynchronous computer-mediated versus conventional corrective feedback on learners' writing accuracy. Two pre-intermediate female students aged 21 and 23 participated in the study. Both were asked to write one composition per week for a month. Only errors regarding English articles were treated using highlights and comments features of word processor for the first participant receiving e-mail, and red pen for the second participant receiving hard copies. Direct corrective feedback was provided for both electronic and print students. Results revealed that the learner who received feedback via e-mail showed more absorption of the grammatical feedback. The results of this study can be used by teachers and researchers interested in investigating various types of written corrective feedback strategies.

KEYWORDS: Corrective feedback, Asynchronous computer-mediated feedback, Conventional feedback

INTRODUCTION

The role of written corrective feedback (henceforth WCF) in the process of acquiring a second language (L2), has been an issue of notable controversy among theorists and researchers (eg. Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010; Ferris, 2003, 2006; Krashen, 1984; Lee, 2009; Truscott, 1996, 2004). While corrective feedback (CF) has been widely used as a pedagogical means, practical and theoretical objections have been raised to its effectiveness (e.g. Truscott, 1996; 1999; 2004; 2007; 2009).

Teachers of second or foreign languages and researchers have long been maintained that written corrective feedback can help students learn the targeted linguistic forms and gives them the ability to increase the correct use of target structures. Hence, they continuously attempt to find an effective way to provide written WCF to give students opportunity to improve their writing accuracy.

In the process of learning target language, learners possibly make syntactic errors and mistakes. When learners make mistakes, teachers usually try to give students appropriate feedback as to guide them towards the target language. By providing appropriate corrective feedback, teachers can effectively cope with the failure learners indicate between what they receive as input and

what they produce as output (Campillo, 2003). Providing students with corrective feedback facilitates the process of experiencing the effect of what they have produced as a guide to their future output (Brown, 1998). Lightbown and Spada (1990) defined corrective feedback as any indication teachers made to help learners understand that their use of the target language is in error and needs to be corrected.

Traditionally teachers have provided hand-written corrective feedback on students writing, however through the past few years computers have paved the way to educational environments, and after introducing the Internet, attentions were attracted to the benefits technology can bring into educational system, and more specifically language learning. Therefore, studies were conducted to investigate the effects of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and computer-mediated corrective feedback. At the end of the 20th century, computer-mediated communication (CMC) and the Internet have remolded the language learning processes. Besides information processing, computers were used as a means for communication (Gundez, 2005). Hiltz and Turoff (1978) first coined the term CMC when experimenting on computer conferencing as a tool of communication on the Internet. They defined CMC as a medium for generating, understanding, transmitting, decoding, and encoding information. Barnes (2002) also viewed CMC as a broad range of technologies that have been integrated into human interaction and sharing of information with the use of interconnected networks including e-mail, discussion groups, and real-time chat.

Conventionally CMC is divided into two modes: synchronous (SCMC) and asynchronous (ACMC) (Pfaffman, 2008). Warschauer (2001) provides a definition for different modes of CMC as: (1) "Synchronous computer-mediated communication, by which communication happens in real time via chat or online network; (2) Asynchronous computer-mediated communication, by which communication takes place in a delayed manner for instance by e-mail; and (3) The reading and writing of documents online" (p. 207). Asynchronous CMC (ACMC) provides opportunities for both interlocutors to review, revise, or even drop the communication before sending information (Heisler & Crabill, 2006). This feature of ACMC involves learners in the process of critical thinking, and problem solving (Lee, 2004), since learners focus on more purposeful communication. Lee (2004) also pointed that ACMC provides opportunities for learners to take notice of erroneous structures, and therefore, output modification such as self-repairing can happen. Moreover, as adopted in language learning and teaching, CMC is considered to have more positive impacts on learners, since students feel less bored in a more interesting environment compared to class restricted one. Results obtained from research in recent years indicated that learners hone their writing accuracy in specific targeted areas when teachers provided written corrective feedback (e.g. Ellis et al, 2008; Bitchener, 2008).

Studies which have been done on e-mail communication confirmed that electronic tools are beneficial for learners' productivity as measured by the number of words they produced (González-Bueno, 1998; González-Bueno & Pérez, 2000). St. John and Cash (1995) conducted a research on an adult learner exchanging e-mail with a native speaker, and found out that the learner improved his language ability because he studied new vocabularies and grammatical structures when receiving e-mails, and uses them to improve the content of his letters. In the

same vein, Nagata (1993, 1997) reported positive findings in her study of 14 second year Japanese students' acquisition of Japanese particles. Students were divided into two groups: one receiving online metalinguistic feedback by means of online particle exercises, and the other receiving translation feedback on the same online particle errors. The result of the study showed that the group which received metalinguistic electronic feedback outperformed those of translation group. Similarly, Sauro (2009) also in a study reported that asynchronous and synchronous CMC are perfect environments for both teachers and learners, since they facilitate the occurrence of noticing, and increases the learners' awareness of their errors. Another study by Razzaghifard and Razzaghifard (2011) examined corrective feedback in a computer-mediated communicative setting, and indicated that students who received computer-mediated corrective perform better than the students receiving no feedback.

As has been noted, although many studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of different types of WCF, there is still a matter of controversy over what types of WCF is more beneficial to students' writing accuracy. As Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005) stated, further research is needed to examine the influence of different types of corrective feedback with less advanced learners, therefore; the present study aims at investigating the effects of asynchronous CMC in comparison to the conventional pen-and-paper approach on students' writing accuracy to find out which of these two types of feedback is more helpful in retentiveness of targeted item.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there any significant difference between learner's writing performance receiving asynchronous computer-mediated corrective feedback and learner's writing performance receiving conventional feedback?

METHODOLOGY

This case study was conducted with two adult Iranian students learning English as a foreign language. Before the study begins, Oxford Placement Test (2007) was given to the students, and the results showed that they both were pre-intermediate learners. The study was done considering direct corrective feedback in two different contexts, namely asynchronous and conventional to investigate which one is more effective to enhance the writing accuracy of the learners.

Design

The focus of this study was on correcting students' written work. The researcher targeted English articles as a grammatical category and made correction on errors related to this element. This target structure was chosen because students belong to different English language proficiency levels experience difficulty in using English article system (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron. 2005; Butler, 2002).

Participants

Two adult EFL learners participated in this study. They were randomly chosen among a number of students, and according to Oxford Placement Test (2007) they were identified as pre-intermediate learners. Both were female and Persian native speakers.

Procedure

Participants of the study were randomly assigned to one of the two types of error treatment method. Asynchronous computer-mediated corrective feedback was applied using e-mail, and errors were corrected directly using word processor comments and highlighting features. Conventional corrective feedback, on the other hand was applied using red pen, and error correction was provided directly. The study was done during four sessions, each lasted about 40 minutes. During each session students were given pictures and were asked to describe what was happening in the pictures. Picture one was showing a beach scene, picture two a camping scene, picture three a mountain scene, and picture four a picnic scene. Pictures were chosen because students were obliged to describe people and objects, and therefore; they needed to use articles. Participants were supposed to write a minimum of 150 word composition in 40 minutes. While researcher was correcting the compositions, only errors related to the targeted structure were treated until the last session. A week after each session, compositions with correction on targeted structure were delivered to students.

Treatment

One of the students was chosen randomly to send and receive her compositions via e-mail. Errors related to the targeted structure were provided using highlights and comments. The other student participated in the study was asked to hand her compositions in hard copies, and to receive them in hard copies as well. Errors related to the targeted structure were treated using red pen.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To analyze the data, obligatory contexts for articles were determined by an educated English native speaker. The categorization model of articles used in this study was that of (Nassaji & Swain, 2000). They provided a model in which, they categorized articles into four types: a- an-the- 0 (zero). Table 4.1 shows the number of obligatory contexts as well as the number and percentage of correct instance of articles used by two students in each of the four compositions. There were significant differences between the performances of the two students across their four compositions. Although both students were recognized as pre-intermediate learners, according to the Oxford Placement Test (2007); they were different regarding their knowledge of English articles. The conventional feedback student produced more correct instances of articles in the first composition than the asynchronous feedback student (77.4 vs. 65.3).

Table 1: Students' performance in using English articles

	obligatory context	correct instances	% correct instances
Asynchronous Feedback			
Comp 1	26	17	65.3
Comp 2	29	22	75.8
Comp 3	24	21	87.5
Comp 4	21	19	90.4
Conventional Feedback			
Comp 1	31	24	77.41
Comp 2	28	27	96.4
Comp 3	16	13	81.2
Comp 4	25	16	72.0

While in the first composition, conventional feedback student outperformed her asynchronous counterpart in using articles (77.4 vs. 65.3), eventually; the asynchronous feedback student had better performance her counterpart and improved her accuracy by the forth composition, and outperformed the conventional feedback student (90.4 vs. 72.0).

Accordingly, it is believed that asynchronous corrective feedback via e-mail can be an advantageous way of correcting students' errors, since students will have opportunity to relate to their previous errors, and the corrected forms conveniently by using their e-mail account. They also might have less problems reading their instructor's handwriting; and therefore, can understand the given feedback effortlessly. Results obtained from the present study support the findings of a study conducted by Schultz (2000) and Tuzi (2004) who found that the writing ability of their participants improved better in an on-line environment.

CONCLUSION

The data analysis of the study indicates that asynchronous computer-mediated corrective feedback was more effective regarding the improvements of learners' writing accuracy. The learner who received asynchronous computer-mediated corrective feedback showed less accuracy in using English articles in her first composition than the other student who received conventional corrective feedback. However, as they reached their fourth composition, students had a rather opposite performance. Asynchronous feedback student displayed more accuracy in the use of articles in her last composition. Results of the study are in line with a the results of a study conducted by Yeh and Lo (2009) which indicated that the participants who received online corrective feedback performed significantly better than those who received the paper-based error correction feedback on recognizing writing errors.

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