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SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS IN POLITENESS THEORY: EMPHASIZING ON DISTANCE IN THE CASE OF JANE AYRE AND THE PERSIAN TRANSLATIONS

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Abstract

Politeness refers to the activities which aim at the social and cultural norms of linguistic communication. The current study investigates the politeness strategies used in the "Jane Ayre" novel by Charlotte Brontë (1847) and the Persian translation by Mehdi Afshar (2005), emphasizing on sociological factors. The factors mentioned here are distance, power and imposition of rank by focusing on distance. According to this article it seems there is another factor in addition to the preceded factors which leads to expressing some especial utterances. By considering the culture, sociological factors and the situation in different parts of the story it has been clear that "character" is important in utterances as well. The achievement is that "character" can also lead to using politeness as other factors. Investigating the utterances indicates that the relationship between politeness theory and distance is reciprocal. That is, not only does distance cause politeness but also sometimes politeness is used to make distance. This paper examines how politeness is used to make distance between two characters.

1) INTRODUCTION

Linguistics and literature have been claimed to have a difficult relationship and some research have been done in this regard. Since one of the debating subjects in linguistic studies is politeness theory, recently it has been considered as one of the raising issues in stylistic analysis of literature, as well. Many researchers have investigated politeness theory from different viewpoints but the most significant one of all is Brown and Levinson's (1987) study. The current study consists of two parts; first part attempts to take a look at Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness in the case of sociological factors- power, distance and ranking of the imposition. The second part consists of the considering "Jane Ayre" novel by Charlotte Brontë (1847) and the Persian translation by Mehdi Afshar (2005), in order to examine the relationship between sociological factors and politeness theory.

2) Brown and Levinson's theory of Politeness

One of the key concepts of Brown and Levinson's theory is model person (MP) who is a fluent speaker of a natural language. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:84), "our MP is a reasonable approximation to universal assumptions". MP's properties are "rationality" and "face". The theoretical concept is borrowed from Goffman (1967:306), who defines it as "the image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes", and therefore as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself." Hence the related notion of 'face -work', which designates all the actions taken by an individual to behave consistently with face. Goffman (1967) believes that face can be threatened, maintained or enhanced.

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory face is the public self-image that each member claims for himself. The concept of face is culture bound, but they emphasize that the mutual knowledge of members' face and the social context that necessitate them choosing special utterances in interactions, are universal.

Face in this definition is divided into two types:

- (i) Negative face: the want of every 'component adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others.
- (ii) Positive face: the want of every member that his wants be desirable to some others.

In this theory most speech acts which intrinsically threaten the face of both hearer and the speaker are known as face threatening acts (FTAs).

Politeness theory refers to redressing these speech acts that causes keeping the hearer/speaker's face in an interaction.

- a) Acts that threaten the hearer's negative face
 - (1) Acts that predicate some future act by hearer (H) and put pressure on H: e.g. orders, requests, suggestions, warnings and threats.
 - (2) Acts that predicate some future acts by the speaker (S) toward H. they put some pressure on hearer: e.g. offers and promises.
 - (3) Acts that predicate some desire of S toward H or H's goods: e.g. compliments and expression of envy or admiration.
- b) Acts that threaten the hearer's positive face
 - (1) Acts showing that S evaluates negatively H's positive face: e.g. expressions of disapproval, criticism, or ridicule; challenges or disagreements; and accusation.
 - (2) Acts showing that S does not care about H's positive face: e.g. expression of violent emotions, irreverence, and mention of inappropriate or taboo subjects.
- c) Acts that threaten the speaker's negative face
E.g. expressing debt, acceptance of thanks, and justifying previous or future action.
- d) Acts that damage the speaker's positive face

E.g. apologize, acceptance of compliments, and break down of physical control over body.

2.1. The sociological factors and politeness theory

To appraisal the suitable action toward the hearer, the speaker needs to consider three important sociological variables.

- i) The “sociological distance”(D) between S and H
- ii) The “relative power”(P) between S and H
- iii) The “absolute ranking of impositions”(R) in the particular culture

As it was mentioned before, “rationality” is one of the properties of MP. It is practical reasoning, through which the speaker selects the best utterance in a particular situation to reach his/her means.

This practical reasoning underlies S’s evaluation of D, P and R. in this way, the S can decide to what extent an act can threaten or keep the face of S or H.

Both S and H consider a composition of these social factors inherently in interaction. Depending on the situation and culture Distance evaluation varies.

Distance evaluation varies from culture to culture and from situation to situation. Power is a value attached to the role or role-sets an individual takes part in. imposition varies in value; e.g. to ask for a small amount of money is easier than to ask for a large amount.

3) Methodology

The current study tries to investigate the politeness theory through the expressions of the novel “Jane Ayre” by Charlotte Brontë (1847) and the Persian translation by Mehdi Afshar (2005). In this regard, some utterances between two main characters (Jane Ayre and Mr. Rochester) of the story have been selected to be compared with the translation in the case of social factors in politeness theory.

4) Data collection and analysis

Jane is the main character of the story, who is an orphan and lives with her aunt and her cousins in a large house. She has a lot of problems. They are cruel toward her after a while her aunt sends her to a school. She has difficult days there and after some years she starts to work there as a teacher but she is not satisfied with the situation. Then she leaves the school and works as a governess in Mr. Rochester’s house. During her settlement in his house, they engage in a romantic relationship and they decide to get marry. On their wedding ceremony, Jane understands that Mr. Rochester has married before but his wife has mental problems. Therefore, she leaves him. Meanwhile Jane inherits a lot of money from her paternal uncle. In the same time Mr. Rochester’s wife fire his house and this accident cripples him for his life and he loses everything. Afterward, they meet again and get marry.

The selected utterances are divided into three parts. First those which are related to the beginning of their acquaintance that Mr. Rochester has power over Jane because she is in charge of him. The second part consists of those sentences which refer to the time that they start their romantic relationship and are closer to each other. The last part composes of the utterances of the end of the story that Jane has superiority over Mr. Rochester because not only he is poorer, but also disable.

EXAMPLES OF FIRST PART:

1) O: "if you are hurt, and want help, sir, I can fetch someone either from Thornfield Hall or from Hey."

"Thank you I shall do: I have no broken bones-only a sprain."

T: "اگر صدمه دیده اید و کمک میخواهید می توانم بروم و از تورنفلد یا هی برای تان کمک بیاورم." متشکرم به کمک احتیاجی نیست. می توانم راه بیفتم، استخوانی شکسته فقط یک زمین خوردگی است."

The first visiting is on the road. Two characters do not know each other. Therefore, they speak as strangers. There is no imposition of distance or power. In this case, the translation regards the original source.

Gradually, the power appears in the next conversations. In original text, Mr. Rochester speaks politely in redressive sentences.

O: "I should think you ought to be at home yourself."

T: "فکر میکنم شما در این ساعت باید در خانه تان باشید."

As a whole, a tinge of power can be seen in the translation, and both characters keep their distance.

In the end of the conversation Mr. Rochester finds out she is the governess of his adopted daughter, he inculcates the power by imperative sentences.

3) O: "Now make haste with the letter to Hey, and return as fast as you can."

T: "حال نامه را بردارو با عجله به هی برو و هر چه زودتر برگرد."

This sentence is negative face threatening for Jane but imposition of power for Mr. Rochester. In the translation, the sentence is more informal so the speaker is trying to show his power and make the distance less. So referring to the speakers, the sentences have different meanings and effects in their viewpoints.

4) O: "let Miss Eyre be seated."

T: "دوشیزه ایرفرماید بنشیند."

In the first meeting at home, Mr. Rochester regards the distance very much and he is trying to show the territory by this on record sentence. Referring to the translation it is less polite.

5) In the next sentence Jane uses positive politeness strategy and tries to keep the negative face.

O: "I should be obliged to take time, sir, before I could give you an answer worthy of your acceptance."

T: "برای اینکه پاسخ منطقی به شما بدهم نیاز به وقت و اندیشیدن دارم."

In the original text Jane wants to keep her boss' negative face, but in the translation she is trying to keep her own negative face, therefore Mr. Rochester's negative face is threatened in this way.

6) O: "you are not so unsophisticated as Adèle: She demands a 'cadeau' clamorously, the moment she sees me: you beat about the bush."

T: "شما به نا آگاهی ادل نیستید. او شیفته وار خواهان یک کادو است و از زمانیکه مرا
 "دیده از من کادو میخواهد شما که او را در گرفتن کادو تشویق نکرده اید! کرده اید؟
 In the translation Mr. Rochester is trying to humiliate Jane, and it seems the climax of
 the power inculcating. In the original text Mr. Rochester is giving face and power to
 her.

7) In the following of the conversation, in the sentence:

O: "The men in green all forsook England a hundred years ago."

T: "مردان سبز پوش حدود یکصدسال پیش در انگلستان فراموش شده اند."

Jane is defending her territory and tries to keep her positive face. She speaks as
 seriously as Mr. Rochester had done.

8) In the middle of the story, the style of the speaking of Mr. Rochester becomes more
 intimate and he breaks the distance and decreases the power. In this sentence, the
 translation shows the breaking of the distance (increasing the intimacy), as well.

O: "Come, Jane-come hither. My bride is here, because my equal is here, and my
 likeness. Jane, will you marry me?"

T: "عروس من اینجاست."

برای اینکه او کسی است که با من برابر است و شبیه خود من است. جین آیا با من
 ازدواج میکنی؟

9) In the end of the story, we would have the climax of the intimacy by both characters.
 As it is obvious in the current examples.

O: "Can you see me?"

"No, my fairy: but I am only too thankful to hear and feel you."

T: "میتوانید مرا ببینید؟"

"نه فرشته کوچولوی من. اما خدا را شکر میکنم میتوانم صدایت را بشنوم و وجودت را حس
 کنم."

Here in the sentences there is neither a track of power nor distance. The sentences are
 on record. The translation carries the intimacy.

10) O: "Am I hideous, Jane?"

"Very, sir; you always were, you know."

T: "جین، من زشت و مهیب شده ام؟"

"خیلی آقا، شما همیشه زشت بودید و این را هم میدانستید."

11) In the current sentence:

O: A crippled man, twenty years older than you, whom you will have to wait on?"

T: this sentence is not translated explicitly.

Mr. Rochester completely threatens his negative face but Jane tries to keep his negative
 face by the next sentence. This part has not been translated.

12) O: "To the finest fiber of my nature, sir."

T: "آقا با همه ذرات وجودم شما را میخواهم."

It seems the translation could cope with that and indicates the intimacy and breaking the distance from Jane too.

In their last meeting, before they get married, although Jane is richer and in a better statue than Mr. Rochester, there is more intimacy in Rochester's utterances. He mostly uses informal sentences but on the other hand Jane uses more formal utterances; for instance, the word "sir" almost can be seen in all of her sentences, even when they are too close to each other. Referring to the interactions and utterances it is explicit that it is the character of Jane that drives her to use the word "sir" as a habit, because she grew up like this. According to the definitions, "character" can be one more factor for politeness in addition to the other factors including: "distance", "power" and "imposition of rank". Following are some examples:

O: "what, Janet? Are you an independent woman? A rich woman?"

"Quite rich sir. If you won't let me live with you, I can build the house of my own close up to your door, and you may come and sit in my parlour when you want company of an evening."

T: رنپس تو یک زن مستقل هستی؟ یک زن ثروتمند؟

ج: کاملاً ثروتمند آقا، اگر اجازه ندهید که با شما زندگی کنم می توانم در کنار خانه شما خانه ای بسازم و شما می توانید هر زمان که مصاحبت مرا خواستید به اتاق نشیمن من بیایید و در آنجا بنشینید.

O: "you are altogether a human being, Jane? You are certain of that?"

"I conscientiously believe so, Mr. Rochester."

و می پرسید جین تو به راستی از پوست و گوشت و خونی چون دیگر انسانها؟
و جواب می دادم: من که اینطور فکر می کنم.

When Mr. Rochester suspects that Jane might be fallen in love with St John, he changes his mode of speaking, using formal utterances to make distance.

Here is their conversation:

R: "well, you can leave me ma'am: but before you go you will be pleased to answer me a question or two."

J: "what question, Mr. Rochester?"

J: "I beg your pardon, it is the literal truth: he asked me more than once, and was as stiff about urging his point as ever you could be."

R: "Miss Eyre, I repeat it, you can leave me. How often am I to say the same thing? Why do you remain pertinaciously perched on my knee, when I have given you notice to quit?"

J: "because I am comfortable there."

R: "... Jane leaves me: go and marry Rivers."

ر: شاید بهتر باشد که دیگر روی زانوی من ننشینید دوشیزه ایر؟ و قبل از رفتن اگر میل دارید به این دو سوال من جواب بدهید.
ج: آقا راجستر سوالتان چیست؟

ج: No translation

ر: "دوشیزه ایر باز هم تکرار میکنم، شما میتونید مرا ترک کنید. چند بار باید یک حرفی را برای شما تکرار کنم؟ چرا همچنان لجوجانه روی زانوی من نشسته اید، در حالیکه به شما تذکر میدهم که از روی زانوی من بلند شوید؟"

5. Discussion and Conclusion:

The study has concerned itself with the politeness theory and the related factors including "distance", "power" and "rank" by emphasizing on the "distance". On the one hand, the article has considered the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987). On the other hand, the relationship between the two main characters, Mr. Rochester and Jane, in the novel "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Brontë (1847) and the Persian translation by Mehdi Afshar (2005) has been studied, in regard to social factors.

The study of Brown and Levinson proved that there is a relationship sociological factors and politeness. The politeness appears in the "face", as negative and positive face. Negative face and positive face are divided into threatening and keeping by the speaker or the hearer.

Considering different parts of the story, reveals that "character" as another factor is involved in the politeness theory. By this rule, what causes the special kind of discourse in some situations is "character". As in the story Jane uses the word "sir" in different situations for Mr. Rochester.

Important factors for politeness:

1. Distance
2. Power
3. Rank
4. Character

The other case is that, according to the examples in the story, there is a symbiotic relationship between distance and politeness. It means that sometimes speakers may use politeness strategies to keep the distance with the hearer.

* distance  politeness

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METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS OF READING STRATEGIES: A TRIANGULATED STUDY

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to investigate metacognitive awareness and perceived use of specific reading strategies of university students when reading a text in English. To this end, a questionnaire called Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS) which classifies reading strategies into three categories of global, problem solving, and support strategies, was administered to 194 undergraduate students across three universities in Tehran, Iran. In addition to the questionnaire, a semi-structured interview was conducted to either highlight questionnaire data or/and discover the probable strategies that learners may use but have not been included in the questionnaire. The findings demonstrated that undergraduate students are moderately aware of reading strategies and the most frequently used strategies were found to be problem solving strategy, followed by global, and then support strategy. The study reaffirms the effectual role of the context of the study in learners' strategic behavior, and concludes with the importance of encouraging the use of more global strategies among students.

Keywords: Metacognitive Awareness, Reading Strategy, Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS)

1. Introduction

Of all the four skills, reading appears to be the most important channel for English language learners to learn the language and communicate with an English language society both in academic and non-academic contexts. In non-formal educational system and self-study situation, reading plays a critical role for learners' life-long

learning and its efficient use will enhance learners' progress and achievement (Anderson, 1999, p. 1). Also, in all academic fields, in order for the students to gain access to more knowledge and explore areas of science and technology, they do need to know how to read in English. This is also emphasized by Grabe (1991), who maintains that reading is the most essential skill for people who learn English as a second or foreign language in the academic setting. The importance of reading is highlighted by Strevens (1977) viewing its importance due to two reasons. 1) Reading provides an opportunity for the learners to be exposed to a great quantity of language use; 2) It offers the safest way for learners to continue their educational task. In EFL contexts- countries where English is not widely spoken- reading seems to be the most attainable language skill for students (Dubin, 1982). In such contexts, since English is a nonofficial language which is rarely spoken in social communities, and there are not many native speakers of the language, and also English multimedia is not as prevalent as those in ESL contexts, reading becomes the main tool for foreign language learning through which learners step the paths of language learning endeavor by being provided with huge amounts of language input. So, the importance of reading in EFL contexts doubles and more thorough research and studies on reading and its related variables become crucial.

During reading, some amateur readers face some difficulties that hinder their understanding and consequently block further progress. To name a few of the major weak points for such unsuccessful readers, we can refer to the inability in keeping attention on their progress when going through the text, and dealing with problems when it becomes difficult to make sense of the passage. Such learners are not so adept in exploiting reading techniques that boost comprehension, and carrying out a reading activity seems too complicated and challenging for them. Also, they often select ineffective and inefficient strategies with little strategic intent (Wood, Motz, & Willoughby, 1998). So, it seems that the main problem with reading difficulties of the students is their lack of strategic knowledge or even in case of being aware of some strategies, they do not know when and how to use them. Some experts believe that there is a distinct lack of focus on reading skills (Grenfell, 1992, 1995; Erler, 2002). Therefore, the problem could be overcome by consciousness-raising activities over reading strategies. The purposeful, cognitive practices that readers apply while reading to get a better comprehension of the text and also adopting appropriate techniques to keep information in mind are defined as reading strategies. Being a skilled reader necessitates being aware of reading strategies and monitoring the process of reading comprehension. This conscious awareness over the cognitive processes and using specific strategies during reading is referred to as metacognitive awareness. Many studies support the fact that there is a positive correlation between students' awareness of their reading processes and strategies that they use in reading and their reading proficiency (Alderson, 1984; Carrell, 1991). Increasing awareness over reading strategies results in more frequent use of them by non-strategic readers, more efficient use of strategies by other students, and all contribute to improvement in reading comprehension (Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989).

So far we have put much emphasize on reading in EFL contexts, and the importance of reading strategies to gain improvement in this skill. However, we have not found

influential studies on surveying the degree of university students' familiarity with reading strategies and on distinguishing the strategy that is applied much more than other strategies. The purpose of this study is to assess awareness of reading strategies or metacognitive awareness in reading among undergraduate students who have been studying English in academic setting for at least two years in Iran. In Iranian universities, reading is the main skill for academic studies both for the students who follow English related majors like English literature and English Translation and those students whose English courses are just a couple of mandatory courses. The English courses in Iranian universities are all introduced through some text books filled in with reading passages, vocabulary lists, and grammatical points with little or no concern on other skills. Also, students have gained their background knowledge in English from reading textbooks rather than speaking with native speakers or listening to English language programs or broadcasts. In such setting where other skills are almost entirely ignored, English language students rely on reading as the main skill in obtaining knowledge and establishing connection with international knowledge bases. So we intend to know to what extent learners are aware of their reading strategies or are metacognitively aware and what is the frequency of the used strategies reported in their questionnaires and interviews.

1.2 Reading Strategies

As a dynamic process, reading is constructing meaning through the interaction among the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language and the context of the reading situation (Songsiengchai, 2010). The process of changing a written message into comprehended data on learners' mind is so complex, and this had made researchers to reflect more on reading process rather than the ultimate product. The emphasize on reading process necessitates understanding the way learners cope with the text, make sense of it, and send information to their long term memory. It means that the pendulum of reading considerations have moved toward reading strategies and the mental operations that help readers make sense of the text. Drawing on works in cognitive psychology, reading strategies are deliberate, conscious techniques that readers employ to enhance their comprehension or retention of the textual information. Cohen (1990) defined reading comprehension strategies as "those mental processes that readers consciously choose to use in accomplishing reading tasks" (p.83)." Reading strategies indicate how readers conceive a task, what textual cues they attend to, how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they do not understand (Block, 1986).

To diagnose learners' weak points in comprehending a reading text, discovering the reading strategies learners use and their conscious control over the strategies is a prerequisite. To achieve this purpose, there have been many attempts to determine reading strategies of the students some of which include questionnaire, think aloud, and interview methods. Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) developed an instrument named the Survey Of Reading Strategies (SORS) designed to measure metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of L2 readers engaged in reading academic materials. In the present survey, we have adopted SORS which consists of three categories of global, problem solving, and support strategies.

Global strategies refer to those intentional strategies which are utilized before, during, and after reading activity. They are usually carefully planned strategies carried out to monitor reading process, and are aimed at setting the stage for the reading activity. Examples include having a purpose in mind, noting text characteristics like length and organization, previewing the text before reading, evaluating what to read or ignore, predicting text's content, noting text characteristics, and checking how text content fits one's primary purpose.

Problem-solving strategies are localized, focused repair strategies used when readers are working directly with the text and encounter problems in understanding. These strategies enable students to process the text skillfully and get most of the meaning out of it, especially when the text becomes difficult. Checking one's understanding upon encountering conflicting information, guessing the meaning of unknown vocabulary from the context, and re-reading for better understanding are some of the examples of problem-solving strategies.

Support strategies are support mechanisms which are applied to sustain the responsiveness to reading. Using reference materials like dictionaries and other support systems, taking notes, underlining or circling information are some of the examples of support strategies.

1.3 Metacognition

Metacognition is learners' knowledge about learning and their ability to self-control, understands, and regulates their own cognitive processes. It also refers to planning, monitoring and evaluating ones' progress during learning process. Flavell in the mid 1970s invented the term and defined it as active monitoring and consequent control of learning process which is carried out in relation to the cognitive objects or data intended to achieve a concrete goal (Flavell, 1981). The difference between cognition and metacognition is worth being clarified here. While cognition alludes to those skills one utilizes to perform a task, metacognition is the awareness and conscious control over the performance of those skills that becomes essential when one wants to know how the task was performed. (Garner, 1987). Based on O'Malley and Chamot (1990 p. 8) "students without metacognitive approaches are essentially learners without direction or opportunity to plan their learning, monitor their progress, or review their accomplishments and future learning directions". When students are aware of metacognitive approaches, they would be able to weigh up their learning progress and think of appropriate strategies to complete a task.

Flavell (1979) classified three important categories of metacognitive knowledge that are knowledge of person variables, task variables and strategy variables.

Person knowledge is concerned with factors related to the characteristics of individuals i.e. cognitive and effective factors such as age, language aptitude, and motivation that may have an effect on learning. They are regarded as metacognitive knowledge when learners are aware of such factors and know they play important role in their learning.

Task Knowledge is learners' attentiveness of the purpose of the task they are engaged in and the usefulness of the task for their language learning needs.

Strategic knowledge refers to awareness of the learners over different learning strategies that aid learning process. It includes why and how strategies are useful and also when to use them.

Anderson (2002) have classified metacognitive strategies into five primary components: (1) preparing and planning for learning, (2) selecting and using learning strategies, (3) monitoring strategy use, (4) orchestrating various strategies, and (5) evaluating strategy use and learning. They are the primary metacognitive activities carried out during learning that along with cognitive activities can ensure the most effective language learning attempt. In order to promote metacognition, it is necessary to familiarize students with the reality of metacognition strategies, to tell them how to use the strategies, and assure them that they will be useful for their language learning. However, the point is whether metacognitive strategies should be applied consciously with thorough attention of the student or be carried out automatically when learners are trying to understand the meaning of the passage. Baumann, Jones, and Seifert-Kessel (1993) view metacognition as knowing if comprehension is occurring, and the *conscious* application of one or more strategies to correct comprehension; however, Pressley, Borkowski, and Schneider (1987), state that good readers *automatically* employ metacognitive strategies to focus their attention, to derive meaning, and to make adjustments when something goes wrong. While making learners aware of metacognition is useful for its further application and it can encourage their thinking over learning activities, metacognition greatly helps individuals in learning a language or other subjects when it is carried out subconsciously and automatically. The encouragement of metacognitive awareness in the classrooms should be directed toward learners' automatic use of them in a way that conscious attention of the students is on making sense of the text rather than being replete with the use of strategies.

In the present study we have surveyed metacognitive awareness in *reading* where metacognition plays a prominent role. Carrell (1989) sees the importance of metacognitive strategies in their potential to reveal the way readers manage their reading while interacting with the text and the relationship between strategies and reading comprehension. During reading comprehension, when readers monitor and control their understanding, raise their awareness of specific reading strategies, and evaluate their achievement, they are called metacognitively skilled readers. Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) see the reader's metacognitive knowledge consisting of an awareness of a variety of reading strategies that greatly influence the cognitive enterprise of reading. "Skilled readers . . . are more able to reflect on and monitor their cognitive processes while reading. They are aware not only of which strategies to use, but they also tend to be better at regulating the use of such strategies while reading" (ibid).

Pressley, Warthon and Mc Donald (1997) believe that strategic readers are those who are very metacognitive readers and are fully conscious of the ongoing reading process, and also know how to deal with the difficulties of the text. In conclusion, many scholars consider metacognitive awareness as one of the critical elements of the reading process which is closely related to reading proficiency (Auerbach & Paxton, 1997; Carrell et al., 1989).

Empirical studies conducted by Chamot and Kupper (1989), and Baker & Brown (1984) show that successful L2 readers are aware of how to use appropriate strategies to enhance text comprehension, in other words, they are more aware of metacognitive strategies, while poor readers are not so metacognitively aware learners. Fan (1993) conducted a meta-analysis on 41 metacognitive strategies instruction studies, from 1979-1991. The writer reported that readers generally improve more in comprehension (effect size of .56) than in vocabulary (effect size=.23).

Nevertheless, Wirotanan (2002) working on metacognitive awareness of Thai graduate students, found that during L2 reading, both the high and low proficiency EFL readers used strategies, but the way the students used them made the two groups different. One significant study on the relationship between proficiency level and metacognitive strategies was conducted by O'Malley et al. (1985). They reported that development in proficiency level of the students make them more metacognitive. It was revealed that intermediate ESL students use more metacognition than beginners. Their study further implied that more proficient students are more aware of reading strategies while performing a reading task than those less proficient learners.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The participants of the study were selected from six intact classes in three universities across Tehran, Iran. A total of 194 freshmen English-major undergraduate students with age range of 19-35 filled out the questionnaire and 16 volunteers were decided on to attend the interview sessions. The students majored in English Literature and English Translation studies and all were Persian native speakers. Concerning the selection and assignment procedures, the sampling was of probability type in which researchers randomly selected the EFL reading classes from among different classes available, and they are judged to be representative of the target population which is all Iranian EFL students at university level.

2.2 Instrumentation

Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS): A 30-item questionnaire based on a 5-point likert scale developed by Mokhtari and Shoerey (2002) was administered to determine the perceived use of the type and frequency of strategies. SORS which is a revised version of Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) (Mokhtari, 1998-2000) is used for both native and non-native speakers of English to discover the reading strategies of students at university level in comprehending and acquiring the academic text. SORS measures learners' awareness of reading strategy and also offers suggestions for improvement in reading skills. SORS classifies the strategies into three categories of Global Strategies, Problem Solving and Support Strategies, which help the readers to control, evaluate and manipulate the reading materials during the process of reading. The internal consistency reliability coefficient calculated by Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire is 0.93 which seems to be reliable enough and the details for the subcategories are: global (.92), problem solving (.79), and support (.87).

2.3 Procedure

After selecting the classes, the students and instructors were informed of the purpose of the study and instructed how to fill out the questionnaire. The SORS was administered at the last 15 minutes of each class and the students were asked to answer the questions honestly and were told that there were no right or wrong answers. Having collected data, they were transferred to SPSS version .18 and descriptive statistics was performed on the data. To validate the questionnaire data and obtain in-depth information about students' reading strategies, an interview was conducted in a semi-structured format so that the participants could not be restricted within the confines of the interview questions and could openly discuss the reading strategies they utilize. Before starting the interview, each student was given a reading passage, which was taken out from IELTS examination papers published by Cambridge ESOL examinations, to read it without being under the pressure of time limitation. Having read the passage, each student was questioned over the reading strategies they had used to make sense of the text while their voice was being recorded. After the interview session, the recorded voices were transcribed and coded for ease of analysis. Then based on our questionnaire classification, the responses which supported the questionnaire data, as well as some other strategies pointed out by participants but not included in the questionnaire were identified and translated into English. It should be pointed out that since the data acquired through interviews are quite qualitative, other interpretations might be plausible, but we have tried to classify the strategies based on how the three categories of our questionnaire are explained by the designers so as to have the same categories for both questionnaire data and interview.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Questionnaire Data

As mentioned before, the questionnaire used for obtaining information about the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies consists of three content areas that are global, problem solving and support strategies. To investigate the frequency of use for each category, descriptive statistics was employed. Three levels of strategy use are suggested based on calculating the means, high (3.5 or higher), moderate (2.5 to 3.4), and low (2.4 or lower) (Oxford, 1990). The average for each sub-scale in the questionnaire show which group of strategies is used most or least.

Table 1- Descriptive Statistics of Reading Strategies

Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
Global	3.3751	.56827
Problem-solving	3.5346	.54177
Support	3.2184	.72355
Total	3.3760	.61119

Table 1 shows that among the three categories, the most frequent one is problem-solving strategy with the mean of 3.53, followed by global strategy (Mean=3.37), and then support strategy (Mean =3.21). Evaluating the overall mean (3.37) against Oxford (1990) level definition, it is found that the students are moderately aware of metacognitive strategies and can be considered moderate strategy users. What is clear from the frequency data and the standard deviations is that numbers are so close to each other and there is not a sharp difference between the use of the three kinds of strategies so there might be some changes in the frequency of the strategies by changing some of the variables which may have an effect on the strategy use such as age, proficiency level, and personality.

Here we have presented the mean of the students' answers to questionnaire items that are distinguished by their types of strategy not their numbers in the questionnaire. About global strategies (Table 2), comparing means of responses to the individual strategies reveals that *having a purpose in mind* and *using tables, figures, and pictures before reading* with means of 3.95 are the most frequent global strategies employed during reading, and almost 70% of the participants usually or always are aware of them. On the other hand, students did not show much interest in *deciding what to read closely or what to ignore* (Mean = 2.83); only 30% of participants usually or always use put this strategy in their mental repertoire.

Table 2 - Response frequency for global items

Global strategies	Item	Mean
I have a purpose in mind when I read.	1	3.95
I think about what I know to help me understand what I read	3	3.08
I preview the text to see what it's about before reading it.	4	3.19
I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.	7	3.33
I skim the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization.	10	3.11
I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	14	2.83
I use tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase my understanding.	17	3.95
I use context clues to help me better understand what I'm reading.	19	3.52
I use typographical aids like bold face and italics to identify key information.	22	3.48
I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in the text.	23	3.10
I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information.	25	3.61
I try to guess what the material is about when I read.	26	3.47
I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.	29	3.27

Table 3 shows the response frequency for problem solving strategies which are realized to be the highly employed strategy types among the three categories. It is clear that *paying closer attention during reading in case of encountering difficult parts in the text* with the mean of 4.09 is the most preferred problem-solving strategy, which is used by 75% of learners. The least utilized strategies are related to the speed of reading as we

found that *reading slowly* and *adjusting reading speed* with the means of (3.30) and (3.27) are rarely used.

Table 3 - Response frequency for problem solving items

Problem solving strategies	Item	Mean
I read slowly but carefully to be sure I understand what I'm reading	8	3.30
I try to get back on track when I lose concentration	11	3.86
I adjust my reading speed according to what I'm reading	13	3.27
When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I'm reading	16	4.09
I stop from time to time and think about what I'm reading	18	3.76
I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read	21	3.88
When text becomes difficult, I re-read to increase my understanding	27	3.70
I try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases	30	3.64

Finally, studying data on table 4 that are related to support strategies shows that *using reference materials like dictionaries* is the most popular option (Mean=4.12) used by majority of the learners (75%). However, learners have not shown much interest in *taking notes* (M=2.63) which is preferred only by 27% of the learners.

Table 4- Response frequency for support items

Support strategies	Item	Mean
I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read	2	2.63
When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read	5	2.95
I summarize what I read to reflect on important information in the text	6	2.93
I discuss what I read with others to check my understanding	9	3.23
I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it	12	3.86
I use reference materials such as dictionaries to help me understand what I read	15	4.12
I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read	20	3.03
I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it	24	3.70
I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text	28	3.00

3.2 Interview Analysis

Strategies reported in interview sessions are analyzed according to Mokhtari and Sheorey's (2002) classification of reading strategies that are global, problem-solving, and support strategies reviewed before. All of the strategies collected after interview analysis were 31 strategies of which 15 had corresponding items in the questionnaire while 16 strategies were new and the SORS did not contain such strategies. Table 5 shows the 15 reading strategies that are common between both the SORS and

interview data, and the following numbers show the percentage of the learners who have reported to use the strategy.

Table 5 - Strategies covered by the questionnaire

<i>Global strategies</i>		
1	Having a purpose in mind	81%
2	Thinking about what one already knows about the topic	37%
3	Using tables, figures and pictures	100%
4	Previewing the text to see what it's about before reading	87%
5	Guessing and predicting about the general topic of the text	56%
6	Evaluating one's guesses	81%
7	Using typographical aids like bold face and italics to identify key information	6%
8	Analyzing critically and evaluating the information in the text	6%
<i>Problem-solving strategies</i>		
1	Trying to get back in case of losing concentration	31%
2	Guessing the meaning of unknown vocabulary	37%
3	Rereading	75%
4	Reading slowly	18%
5	Creating mental images	50%
<i>Support strategies</i>		
1	Seeking help from others	12%
2	Using referential materials	75%

The interesting point about global strategies is that all participants (100%), use *tables, figures and pictures* to enhance their reading comprehension, so the importance of these visualizations comes to the mind here. It is also shown that *Rereading* is the most frequent problem-solving strategy reported by 75% of the learners. It was something quite predictable because rereading seems to be very usual among readers as they frequently get back to the text and read again in case of losing concentration, or encountering difficulties. As for support strategies, just two strategies of seeking help and using referential materials were reported by the students where the former is more often used (75%) than the latter.

Analyzing strategies collected in interview sessions, we have found some strategies that are not among questionnaire items and they are listed in Table 6. Based on how the questionnaire has classified the strategies, we have regarded them as global, problem-solving and support strategies.

Table 6- Strategies not covered by the questionnaire

<i>Global strategies</i>		
1	Trying to be more strategic	31%
2	Identifying difficulties in understanding	31%
3	Planning what to do after reading	31%
4	Managing time	6%

<i>Problem-solving strategies</i>		
1	Making connection between a text and one's prior knowledge	56%
2	Searching for the main idea of each paragraph	56%
3	Focusing on key words	43%
4	Trying to ignore some details to just serve the purpose of reading	5%
5	Ignoring certain parts and waiting to see if more information is provided later	50%
6	Scanning	87%
7	Using discourse markers and their co-texts to identify relationship	18%
8	Analyzing the structure of the sentence or vocabulary	31%
9	Using co-text to understand the meaning of a vocabulary	37%
<i>Support strategies</i>		
1	Stopping reading and resuming later on to refresh one's mind	31%
2	Using different technological sources to gain some knowledge about the topic of the text	31%

Table 6 shows that, among global and support strategies, there is not a distinguishing strategy mostly used by the participants. Although the students were informed to talk about the strategies not used in testing situations, those that they use when reading without time limitation, still some of them (6%) believed in the need for having time management in every reading activity. Also, we found that 31 per cent of the students favored trying to be strategic when reading. This is an interesting point that has been ignored by SORS. As some educational settings are accompanied with strategic based instruction programs and making readers aware of the strategies has recently increased in language classrooms, some readers try to remind themselves of different strategies that they have been instructed and try to apply them to develop their understanding. We have decided to include this strategy as a global strategy because it is the knowledge of other reading strategies and is the act of trying to remind oneself of the use of strategies during reading. A number of students often try to reflect on the difficulties with their reading skill, which means they try to think of the reason for their lack of understanding and their low level of proficiency in reading. It seems that this one is an important strategy so more thought should be given to its inclusion in instruments that try to discover about the reading strategies of the students.

About problem-solving, that most of the strategies fall in its category, *scanning*, which is abundantly mentioned by many studies on reading strategy though ignored by the SORS, has gained the most popularity and 87% have testified using it in their reading. *Focusing on key words*, which has been reported to be used by 43% of the interviewees, means the efforts applied by the students to find vocabulary that is thought to carry major ideas and to understand the message by paying attention to those key words instead of reading the whole parts of the text. Problem-solving strategy number 10, using co-text to understand the meaning of a vocabulary, is different from guessing strategy which is one of the questions in the SORS. Here we have used the term co-text to mean other words around an unknown vocabulary. While in guessing strategy, context, general topic of the text, visualizations etc., help reader understand the

meaning, by co-text we mean just the words before and after an unknown vocabulary that can be usually so helpful in guessing an unknown vocabulary. We have found that 37% of our participants apply this strategy to tackle the problems caused by unknown vocabulary. Discourse markers and their co-text are also used to identify relationship between the sentences because knowing the discourse markers greatly facilitate learners' understanding of author' point of view and the general meaning that the text carries. It should be pointed out that stopping reading and resuming later on as one of the support strategies, is used when there is not any time limitation. It can have good affective effects because boredom or mind's going blank may happen to reader and temporary relaxation to refresh one's mind is something that may work well in such cases.

Some students (31%) strongly believe in making use of technology to help them understand the text better. Some stated that they may search topics about the text on the internet to obtain a whole idea of the text content and gain some background before reading.

Regarding the frequency of strategies used, interview findings are in line with questionnaire data in that students mostly make use of problem-solving strategies (47%), then global strategies (41%) followed by support strategies (31%). Also, students reported using tables, figures, and pictures and referential materials as the most highly preferred strategies among all strategies of the questionnaire and interview.

4. Conclusion and Implication

This study was an investigation on the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the frequency of their use among a group of undergraduate students who were all English language learners. The results of Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS) and interview both showed that the participants are moderately aware of the reading strategies. The study further showed that the most frequent reading strategy used by the university students is problem solving strategy followed by global and then support strategies. This signifies that *trying to keep concentration while reading, re-reading, and referring to previous knowledge, paraphrasing, ignoring less important vocabularies, visualizing, etc.* are the strategies mostly preferred by the university students. However, some studies have shown that high proficient readers use more global or top-down strategies and found them more effective for reading comprehension (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002; Carrell, 1989). According to studies reported by Vann and Abraham (1990), the strategies employed by successful and unsuccessful readers could be similar reading strategies, but the successful ones were found to use more metacognitive strategies which were equivalent to global strategies in other instruments. Although problem solving strategies can effectively guide the readers through encoding and a better understanding of the text, it seems that the aims of a reading act would be easily achieved by employing global reading strategies. Besides, the findings showed that support strategies are among the least often used ones implying that participants do not place much worth on basic support tools that help reading comprehension.

So, creating ways to boost metacognitive awareness and making students aware of their own thinking process becomes more essential in language classrooms. However,

the point is that how we can do this and motivate our students and make sure that they make use of some strategies that we think are useful for their reading demands. As long as learners see the benefits of using specific strategies, can we be hopeful that they will use them again in future. Language teachers are recommended to diagnose their students strategies, for example by applying methods that we used in this study, and then identify some reading strategies that they think are appropriate for their students considering the students level, age, learning context, and individual characteristics. After wards, they can model the strategy, encourage the students to use those strategies while reading, and provide opportunities to practice the learned strategy, and even make students discuss the different aspects of the strategy with their peers. To foster the use of such strategies in learners' mind, teachers may need to provide tasks and activities which require students to do them by making use of the predetermined strategies. We propose the policy of "*A reading class, A strategy class*" claiming that we will have strategic, autonomous readers when each session of a reading class is devoted to working on a particular strategy in a way that learners feel that they are learning reading steps; the feeling that they gain when they learn the grammar of a second language. Knowing about the strategies is not merely learners' responsibility, rather teachers at the first stage play critical role of guiding the students through instructing and applying strategies until the students gain enough ability to use them on their own. Therefore, a reading classroom is not a class of translating, or providing definitions for the new words, rather it is a collaborative classroom aimed to breed autonomous readers, something that will be attainable because many studies have claimed that learner autonomy is intimately related to learning strategies (Huttunen, 1996; Vanijdee, 2003; Wenden, 1991; White, 1995).

Since the study has been carried out in Iran which is an EFL context, we hypothesize that the finding could have been affected by the context because strategies used by university students in an EFL context can be different from those used in ESL context. Riley and Harsch (1999) support this fact and state that learners in an ESL environment use more strategies than learners in an EFL environment. They believe that ESL learners are "more motivated and active and have more opportunities to use the target language and are more aware of strategy use because they stay in an English-speaking environment" (pp. 4-5).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, our interview showed that there are many items reported by the students but not assessed by SORS, and majority of them were problem- solving strategies. For example focusing on key words, scanning, searching for the main idea of each paragraph, and a few others are among important reading strategies that the instrument does not ask about them. It seems that SORS is limited in obtaining information about problem solving strategies because of the few number of items given to this category. This limitation of our instrument could have touched our results, though the interview findings supported questionnaire data. This is a limitation for our study and the remedy for it is using a more comprehensive reading strategy assessment questionnaire where all probable problem solving strategies are included in it so that our findings could be more valid and reliable.

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AMERICAN HEADWAY STARTER: A TEXTBOOK EVALUATION

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Abstract

One of the most important responsibilities of teachers is monitoring the class, both students and materials. Apart from juggling various aspects of teaching, it is necessary for teachers to be equipped with the skills to examine and assess the textbooks in order to tailor and adapt the materials according to the needs of the language learners. The present study aimed at exploring and evaluating 'American Headway Starter', one of the ESL textbooks currently in use in language institutes in Iran. The merits and demerits of "American Headway Starter" were evaluated based on Ansary and Babaii's (2002) checklist. The items of the checklist are categorized under four main headings including approach, content presentation, physical make up and administrative concerns. The results of the textbook analysis revealed that although four skills are incorporated within manageable communicative activities, the impact of traditional approaches of materials preparation can be traced in the materials of the textbook and a preference for structural and grammatical activities is dominant.

Introduction

Teachers spend much time using textbooks in class, so choosing an appropriate one is prominent. Textbooks play an efficient role as the basis for both input and practice in language classrooms (Cunningsworth, 1984; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Macian, 1986; Rivers, 1981). Therefore, the majority of teachers have textbooks suggested, prescribed, or assigned to them (Garinger, 2001).

According to Riazi (2003, p. 52)

"Textbooks play a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning and are considered the next important factor in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher. "Moreover, Teachers, students, and administers are all consumers of textbooks. All these groups may have critical views about what a standard textbook is. This study is designed to explore the potential performance of the textbook and retrospective evaluation, which is on-going evaluation of the textbooks. This study attempts to investigate systematic evaluation of EFL/ESL textbooks according some theory-neutral, universal, and broad characteristics of EFL/ESL. Ansary and Babaii (2002) suggest a scheme, which is based on a selected set of common consensus-reached and some theory-neutral, universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks, for a systematic textbook evaluation. Ansary and Babaii's schema is a combination of both Tucker and Ur's schemas. Tucker (1978) mentions "competence of the author" or "whether or not a textbook is based on the findings of a contrastive analysis of English and L1 sound systems as criteria. Penny Ur (1996) also offers "good grammar practice"

as a criterion which is not always applicable for all approaches and methods of learning teaching. All in all, in Ansary and Babaii's checklist almost all the important issues are mentioned regarding the evaluation of language textbook and introduced in an article titled "Universal Characteristics of EFL/ESL Textbooks: A Step Towards Systematic Textbook Evaluation".

Among the published available materials for English language teaching in the market, "American Headway" was selected and evaluated. "American Headway" is a multilevel series for adults and young adults who want to use American English. The Student Book along with audio CD has 14 units, each of which is divided into a number of sections. Objectives introduced on the table of scope and sequence at the first of the book. All units involve Vocabulary, Grammar, and Functional language, Speaking, Reading, Listening, and Writing parts. The Student Book also contains audio scripts at the back. The Workbook includes various activities and tasks with black and white pages. The Teacher's Book comprises a statement of principles, descriptions of different exercises on the Student Book, the answers of them and some photocopiable games and activities to supplement the materials. Then finally, some tests and quizzes are available.

Evaluation

Since teachers spend a significant amount of time using EFL textbooks in the classrooms, it is necessary for teachers to strike a balance between being a slave to their texts and providing organized, objective-based instruction (Garinger, 2002).

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) identify four ways in which textbooks can help in times of educational change: first as "a vehicle for teacher and learner training"; second because they provide "support and relief" from the burden of looking for materials; third by providing "as complete a picture as possible" of "what the change will look like"; and fourth through the psychological support they give to teachers. However, achieving these objectives depends on the approach, principle and quality of the textbook.

It is difficult to find a specific system, which provides a definite way to evaluate a textbook. As Allwright's comments (1981, p.9):

"There is a limit to what teaching materials can be expected to do for us. The whole business of the management of language learning is far too complex to be satisfactorily catered for by a pre-packaged set of decisions embodied in teaching materials."

However, probably the application of a set of universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks may well help make textbook evaluation a coherent, systematic and thoughtful activity. Therefore, on the basis of this checklist, it was tried to explore and explain the merits and demerits of "American Headway". A description of how the checklist system works is as follows. Evaluation essentially involved the following steps based on the procedures Ansary and Babaii (2002) followed and the analyses they did in their research. The textbook was evaluated with a particular focus on the checklist criteria under four headings: 1. Approach 2. Content Presentation 3. Physical Make up 4. Administrative Concerns

2.1. Dissemination of a Vision (theory or approach)

2.1.1. The nature of language and learning

"American Headway" is used to teach English skills, specifically American English. The authors aim to combine the best of traditional methods with more recent approaches to make the learning of English stimulating, motivating and effective. It provides a foundation in the structure of the language, gradually building learners' understanding of basic grammar, vocabulary and function of English.

2.2. Content Presentation

2.2.1. Skills

There should be a balance between listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills development in each EFL/ESL textbooks. A good textbook should be based on receptive and productive skills as well as the integration of these skills in order to provide an overall competence of language. In this case, the authors try to match them according learners' needs. The skills integration and the development of discourse are in harmony with each other.

There are not any conversations at the first of each unit as is the custom of most of the textbooks. Instead, the units contain discussion questions through which not only the verbal communication is generated but also teacher gets the feedback of oral competency and interest of the students. A small number of speaking activities is based on pair work or group work and giving very little attention to other communicative activities like role play.

Researches shows reading texts must provide the learners with sufficient examples of the techniques and challenge learners to think critically about the strategies they use (Moran, 1991; Auerbach & Paxton, 1997, Salataci & Akyel, 2002). Reading activities are required to think critically about reading and question-answer types that range from simple scanning questions to questions that ask for opinions and arguments are presented for more comprehension. On the contrary, the reading texts considerably lack variety in materials. Besides, they are not up dated and much authentic.

The book devotes more space for writing exercises and activities regarding practicing of grammatical structures and presentations. Although, the focus of the authors is on developing communicative competence of the students rather than grammatical competence, there are exhaustive in-depth treatments of grammar in this textbook. On the other hand, the book incorporates challenging tasks such as writing a diary, a letter to a friend and so on. In addition, the learner has a proper format for his/her own writing in order to learn how to write several paragraphs under the title of the same topic. Therefore, by having controlled samples of writing activities gradually guides students to write spontaneously.

Listening skill encompasses various types of activities included dialogues, extracts, statements, comprehension of details and questions and answers. It also provides learners with vocabularies along with the listening and pronunciation practice on CD so that students have the opportunity to correct their pronunciation, practice stress, and familiarize themselves with the different accent. It should be mentioned that listening tasks along with CD in the form of multifarious models are laudable.

2.2.2. Appropriacy

The appropriacy of materials, language focus and activities should be measured by the learners' feedback in different classes.

The language of the book and the social situation are matched with English speaking countries. It introduces the culture of English language implicitly which are not matched with our surroundings; however learners are interested in learning about cultural or cross cultural issues.

Undoubtedly, the material sequencing and consolidation or recycling of materials are very systematic and facilitate interactive learning. Vocabulary and comprehensible input levels or the difficulty level of contents are well-graded and can be taught every learner with different backgrounds. The material is almost authentic and it seems to be matched the learner objectives.

2.2.3. Exercises and Activities

Learners are needed to expose with the basic characteristics of super segmental features of English sounds such as tone, intonation and pauses, and pronounce English sounds correctly. However, actually there is a lack of phonological exercises among the different activities of the book. It is only limited to words but not mentioning any instructions about the phrases or sentences.

The vocabularies are on the basis of frequency of occurrence; however the amount of the presentation of vocabulary and new phrases are not sufficient for the learners. Therefore, the teacher should introduce more him/herself, because vocabulary is a more important criterion for a teacher whose students will be taking state proficiency tests. The vocabularies of each unit added at the end of textbook. Besides, this glossary is accompanied with their phonetic transcription and part of speech. In spite of introducing new vocabularies, there is not sufficient number of exercises in order to practice them.

There are great amount of contextualized exercises on particular grammatical items served in each unit with clear presentations, self-check exercises in the "Grammar Spot" and detailed explanations in the "Grammar Reference", given at the back of the book, followed by extensive practice activities in each part which shows more or less the preference of language form to other aspects of the language system. Language function is one of the essential aspects of learning a language which is only presented in the form of "Everyday English" in this book. Although, learners can experience pragmatic, discourse and context in this part of exercises and can be familiar with cultural differences, they are limited in preselected sentences.

2.2.4. Supplementary Materials

Teacher's guide book is available but is not provided much useful guidance. It is sufficed to the answers of the exercises offered in the book and some primary notes of how to teach and use the book in hand. As the result, the teachers often do not use the teacher's manuals. The student workbook serves alternative activities. Moreover, it is accompanied with an audio CD for listening of the exercises of the book and workbook.

2.3. Physical Make-up

2.3.1. Practical Consideration

The physical appearance and the design of the cover give a bit of stuffy look. The size and volume of the books is acceptable. The book has sufficient number of pictures to make the book more desirable and life-like. The paper is not shiny but its texture is good and it enhances the readability and usability of the book. The durability and binding are not strong enough.

The good printing, size and type of the fonts used in this book motivate the learners to read. That is, the book is well-illustrated and equipped with eye-catching phrases and sensational pictures or titles. The typography suits each part and the topics of each unit or activities are written in bold type. Most of the letters are in black color but in colorful frames. In addition, on some parts used of bold print for more emphasis which shows the important issues. There are no traces of weak points in the font size for topic and exercises, the top, bottom, margins, the space between words, sentences, lines and paragraphs, the quality and color of ink used and there is no white space, too. Aside from them, no cases of errors could be found through the book texts.

2.4. Administrative Concerns

2.4.1. Appropriacy in local situation

No words could be found specifically about any religions, thus the book is free from religious values. The book is not gender bias. Furthermore, the book is available for learner in a reasonable price; therefore they can afford it in Iran.

2.4.2. General Impression

The book motivates learners by pleasurable activities and more and less tries to arouse their interests. In spite of lots of grammatical activities, the book should provide a variety of communicative activities to promote the use of information/opinion gap. Besides, the book rests a lot of responsibility to the learners for their own learning because teacher is there as a facilitator. Therefore, the teacher has a pivotal role here to lead students toward a situation where they can use language for communicative purposes. Additionally, it is attempted to introduce the various aspects of traditions and cultures which are interesting for most of the learners and provokes their intrinsic motivation.

Conclusion

The physical qualities of the book are in perfect condition. It is endeavored to combine four skills in manageable communicative activities, however the traditional approaches affect the materials and preference of structural and grammatical activities is noticeable. The adequacy of grammar activities is not appropriate. It would have been a better idea if the authors had made an attempt to decrease grammatical tasks and increase vocabulary exercises. Most of the speaking activities are mainly based on question and answer type activities and pair work, it would have been better to add some conversations and role play activities. Further, teacher's guide is not much useful for teachers.

Through the process of materials evaluation our understanding can be developed and contribute the acquisition theory and pedagogical practices. By using standard checklists which are included more universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks, teachers can tailor and adapt the materials according the needs of the learners. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to be well-equipped with the skills to examine, compare and assess the materials to ensure that learners feel secure and have a sense of progress and achievement by the book used in the class.

According to Allwright (1981), there is a limit to what teaching materials can be expected to do for us. This means a perfect textbook is just a simple tool for teachers. What we do, as teachers, is more important than a textbook. As Brown (1983) believes materials per se would not interest everyone. Teachers should choose them on the basis of what they can do the best with them.

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MJLTM

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING: A COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

In this research, the relationship between motivation and Language Learning Strategies (LLS) are studied from a cognitive perspective among 102 BA students of Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali Branch. A questionnaire on motivation by Gardner (2004) and a questionnaire by Oxford (1990) on language learning strategies called SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) were administered. In addition, a placement test containing 70 items developed by Jack. C. Richards (2000) was used to determine the participating students' levels. Moreover, students were interviewed to eliminate any ambiguities and misunderstandings in questions to reinforce the finding of questionnaires. Results showed that there are significant relationships between six domains and strategy at 0.05 level of significance that indicate a strong correlation between the factors. In the regression equation among 6 stated strategies, compensatory strategies not only confirmed a significant level but removed linear and the strategies were included in equation.

Keywords: motivation, Language Learning Strategies, Cognition, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, thinking styles.

1. Introduction

Second language (L2) learning has always been a complicated and controversial issue due to various factors, including biological, neurological, psychological, and sociological factors among others. In many researches, the psychological learner variables, especially students' motivation toward second language learning, have been taken into consideration in particular. In L2 learning, apart from learners' motivations, learning strategies have been claimed to be a crucial factor that influence the achievements or the proficiency level of language learners (Oxford, 1990; Ehrman, 2003). Based on the perspective of social psychology, Gardner (1985, p.8) defined L2 motivation as "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language" because of his desire to do so and the satisfaction he obtains from the activity. Furthermore, based on Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, motivation is related to all aspects of 'activation' and 'intention', including energy, direction, persistence and equifinality. Here motivation is classified as extrinsic

motivation and intrinsic motivation based on the degree of self-determination. Motivation from extrinsic to intrinsic is classified as five categories: external regulation, interjected regulation, identified regulation, integrated regulation, and intrinsic motivation.

Based on Oxford's (1989) findings, good language learners use the following six groups of strategies: metacognitive, affective, social, memory, cognitive, and compensatory strategies. Learner's use of strategy may reflect their motivational orientation. Oxford and Nyikos(1989), for example, found that the most frequently used strategies were formal practice strategies, which are related to language rules whereas the least frequently used strategies were functional practice strategies related to use of authentic language. In other words, learners' choice of learning strategies might be the reflection of their motivational orientation. Many factors are argued to influence students using language learning strategies: age, sex, attitude, motivation, aptitude, learning stage, task requirements, teacher expectation, learning styles, individual differences, motivation, cultural differences, beliefs about language learning, and language proficiency(Rubin, 1975; Bialystok, 1979; Abraham& Vann, 1987,1990; Oxford,1989;Oxford & Nyikos 1989;Chamot & Kupper 1989; Ehrman & Oxford,1995).³

Recent researches in the area of individual differences in learning and memory is reviewed in many cases from a cognitive perspective (Skehan, 1989; Oxford & Ehrman, 2003). In so doing, the importance of strategy choice is stressed using the concept of cognitive flexibility. In this study, although, we cannot make conclusive statements based on our knowledge of individual differences, we will take a cognitive perspective and trying to make a link between language learning strategies and motivation as individual differences.

A cognitive theory of learning sees second language acquisition as a conscious and reasoned thinking process, involving the deliberate use of learning strategies. Learning strategies are special ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning or retention of information.

From a cognitive perspective, motivation is concerned with such issues as why people decide to act in certain ways and what factors influence the choices they make (Williams & Burden,2000).This explanation of language learning contrasts strongly with the behaviorist account of language learning, which sees language learning as an unconscious, automatic process. A behaviorist would tend to consider motivation largely in terms of external forces. Another view is a Constructivist view of motivation which centers on the premise that each individual is motivated differently. However, an individual's motivation is also subject to social and contextual influences (Williams & Burden, 2003).

1.1. Statement of the problem

Scholars of adult L2 learning traditionally have dealt with the issue of individual differences in terms of such constructs as aptitude, motivation, learning strategies, learning styles, meta-linguistic awareness, and personality traits(e.g., extroversion, introversion), as well as a range of other social and affective variables (Ehrman, Leaver & Oxford,2003). In particular, it is claimed (Djignovie, 2001) that motivation may have

a strong impact on language learners' use of learning strategies. Also, it is stated that learners' appropriate use of language learning strategies makes great contribution to the success of second language learning (Bull, 2000). Learners' choice of learning strategies might be a reflection of their motivational orientation. Besides, it is stated (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989) that motivation can be effective in predicting learners' use of strategies. Students with stronger motivation are believed to use more learning strategies than the less motivated ones (Oxford, 2003).

Persian university learners of English at different stages of learning face various difficulties in choosing an appropriate learning strategy (Razmjoo, 2004). Also, learners bring their own individual characteristics, personalities, attributions and perceptions to the learning situation. As a result, the relationship between learning strategies and motivation as an individual difference will be evaluated in this study.

1.2. Objectives of the study

Oxford(1990, p.8) defines learning strategies as "the specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable , more self-directed, more effective and more transferrable to new situations". Although in itself "motivation to learn" is a complex multifaceted construct, according to Dornyei (2001), the picture becomes even more complex when the motivation to learn a foreign language is concerned. It seems that a better understanding of the dynamic relationship between learners' use of language learning strategies and the causal attributions they make for their achievement in language learning is necessary in order to direct and enhance learners' motivation. The present study is an attempt to analyze some aspects of this relationship. In this study intrinsic/extrinsic approach to motivation has been chosen for investigation. The study aims at finding whether there is any meaningful relationship between different kinds of motivation and language learning strategies. In other words, the purpose is to find out whether students who are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated will choose specific kinds of language learning strategies.

1.3. Significance of the study

The importance of language learning strategies was emphasized in the field of language learning as well as language teaching, as Oxford (1989) proposed, that language learning strategies are related to all parts of learning process.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the language learning motivation and learning strategies and the relationships between these two variables among students in Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali branch. We use cognitive approach to determine this relation specifically and will explain the features of a cognitive approach.

How students are motivated and what kinds of learning strategies they choose and employ to understand, learn, and process new information has been the primary emphasis of this investigation within the area of EFL teaching and learning. Students' achievement and competence may differ in EFL learning because of differences in motivation and learning strategy use.

Accordingly, the findings of this research can help EFL teachers assist students in identifying their own learning strategies consciously to make learning quicker, easier, more effective, and more fun.

1.4. Research Questions

In this research we will take a cognitive perspective of individual differences and investigate the language learning motivation and learning strategies and the relationships between these two variables.

1-What kind of language learning strategies do students at Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali branch use?

2-What are the types of motivation among students of Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali branch?

3-Do intrinsic/ extrinsic motivation and language learning strategies relate to each other among students of Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali branch?

2. Review of literature

In the field of language learning, tremendous discussion has been made on the importance of learners' self-autonomy (Dickinson & Wenden, 1995; Littlewood, 1996). Numerous empirical studies have been shown to be supportive of the importance of self-concept of ability, perceived value of the subjects, and expectations for future success as crucial predictors of academic performance (Pokay & Blumenfeld, 1990). In Gardner and Macintyre's (1991; in Brown & Gonzo, 1995) explanation, motivation referred to learners' directed, reinforcing effort in learning a language which is the effort that a language learner is willing to pay in the process of L2 learning. Since the goal of learners may be different, as McDonough (1981) stated, some wish to become linguists, some think about future job, and others wish to be identified with the foreign country. Therefore, the effort learners make may be different according to their individual goals in language learning.

According to Rubin's (1987) classification, there are three types of learner strategies that contribute directly or indirectly to language learning. They are learning strategies, communication strategies, and social strategies. She divides learning strategies into two main types: cognitive learning strategies and metacognitive learning strategies. These strategies contribute directly to the development of the language system constructed by the learner. Cognitive learning strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem-solving that requires direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning materials.

Based on earlier research into learning strategies, Oxford (1990) developed a new language learning strategy system, which includes two main classifications: direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategies are specific ways that involve use of language, sub-divided into memory, cognitive and compensation strategies. Indirect strategies do not directly involve using the language, but they support language learning (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990), and are divided into metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. These strategies can be specified as follows: 1) Memory strategies for remembering and retrieving new information; 2) Cognitive strategies for understanding and producing the language; 3) Compensation strategies for using the

language despite lack of knowledge; 4) Metacognitive strategies for coordinating the learning process; 5) Affective strategies for regulating emotions. 6) Social strategies for learning with others (Oxford, 1990). Cohen (1981) defines second language learner strategies as "the steps or actions selected by learners either to improve the learning of a second language, the use of it, or both" (p.229).90, pp.14-15).

Motivation has always been considered as an important factor in learning. Motivation is a factor determining the extent of people's desire to do an activity. A great deal of research has dealt with defining, analyzing, and conceptualizing motivational factors. Many definitions come under the rubric of the term motivation. Keller (1983, p.289) indicates that "motivation refers to the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect." Gardner was one of the pioneering researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) to focus on motivation. He chose to define motivation by specifying four aspects of motivation: 1.a goal, 2.effortful behavior to reach the goal, 3.a desire to attain the goal, 4. positive attitudes toward the goal (Gardner, 1985, p.50).

A goal, however, was not necessarily a measurable component of motivation. Instead, a goal was a stimulus that gave rise to motivation. Gardner focused on classifying reasons for second language study, which he then identified as orientations (1985, p.54). He found two main orientations through his research:

Integrative: a favorable attitude toward the target language community; possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use of the language.

Instrumental: a more functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement.

In the social - educational models of learning a language, motivation is a hidden variable that is formed of a desire to learn a language, severity of motivation and attitudes to learning (Gardner & Tremblay 1994). According to Gardner (1985) language learning motivation is a combination of a target, desire to achieve that goal, a positive attitude towards learning and strive to achieve the target. He classifies this motivation to two types of integrative motivation and Instrumental motivation. In integrative motivation, learner's goal is to be homophonic with a language, similar to people and to participate in the culture of a language (Oram & Harington 2002). Intrinsic motivation is an inner sense of satisfaction in doing the work which lies in an activity itself (Amabile et al., 1994). This type of motivation comes from the person or his work (Bateman & Crant, 2004)

Noels' research (2001) on English speaking people who were learning Spanish, showed that intrinsic motivation and replication set related to the increased desire to continue learning Spanish and setting internal and motivation is associated with a reduction in the desire to continue learning this language.

Some researches proved the importance of understanding students' individual differences (e.g. motivation and learning strategies) in their study. Moni's (2007) research on motivation in an Indonesian EFL context found that high school students were more integrative and instrumental than university students who had a stronger intensity of motivation and more positive attitude toward learning English

According to the advantage of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation model in understanding the structure of language learning motivation, recent studies examine

the model in relation to learning English. Today, the need is deeply felt to master English as an international language and a tool to achieve a variety of new scientific information, scientific research and culture.

Thinking styles can be affected by a variety of factors like culture, gender, age, parental styles, schools, different jobs, birth order and social and economic status (Imamipour & Seif, 2003). Sternberg suggests that thinking styles are related with creativity processes, problem solving and decision making (Imamipour & Seif, 2003).

Yamini and Dehghan (2005) in a study entitled "the relationship between language ideologies, language skills, and learning strategies" observed that learner's ideas about language learning difficulties are associated with the use of language learning strategies.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

A total number of 102 BA students, including 31 males and 71 females were selected based on convenience sampling to take part in the present study. They ranged in age from 18-35 years. All of the students were randomly selected from Islamic Azad University, Bandarazali Branch. The participants majored in Public Management (17), Law (27 students), Management (13 students) and Accounting (44 students). All the participants were native speakers of Persian.

3.2. Instruments / Materials

Four instruments were used in the studies which include the following:

3.2.1 Oxford LLS questionnaire

A questionnaire on motivation by Gardner (2004) with 50 items and a questionnaire by Oxford (1990) on language learning strategies called SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) with 50 items distributed.

3.2.2. Gardner's Motivation Scale

A questionnaire on motivation by Gardner (2004) with 50 items; it was ranged from completely agree to completely disagree and the second one was ranged from Never to Always.

3.2.3. Jack. C. Richards standard placement test

A placement test containing 70 items including grammar, vocabulary and reading obtained from Jack. C. Richards (2000) was used to determine the students' levels.

3.2.4. Interview

To cover any misunderstandings and ambiguities in the questionnaires and find the participants attitude toward language learning, some items were asked the students.

3.3. Procedures

The questionnaires were administered to the students. Prior to this, they were fully briefed on how to fill out the questionnaires. There were two phases in this

investigation: a pilot study and the main study. To examine the reliability and validity of the instruments and to find out possible obstacles, first a pilot study was conducted. The Likert-type questionnaire had three parts as mentioned before. The participants were required to rate statements ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). In addition, students' names were not required to be given; only their gender and average grade of the semester were asked to be reported. Data collection was conducted at regular English classes with the assistance of several English professors in Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali branch.

4. Findings

Descriptive statistics of motivation and strategies are expressed separately including mean, standard deviation and variance. Among the strategies, compensatory strategy has accounted the most average to itself. After that, other categories are as follow respectively:

Table 1 : Descriptive Statistics: strategies and motivation

	min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Memory	1.11	4.56	2.9993	.69744	.486
Recognition	1.20	5.00	3.2193	.71467	.511
Compensatory	1.56	5.00	3.6509	.80720	.652
Metacognitive	1.20	4.67	3.1231	.68652	.471
Affective	1.33	4.67	2.8105	.69773	.487
Social	1.17	5.00	3.0611	.83847	.703
Strategies	1.55	4.48	3.1407	.58768	.345
Motivation	3.12	4.76	3.9056	.32284	.104

Correlation was obtained to investigate the relationship between the overall mean of motivation and strategy. Table 4-14 indicates this correlation. The table suggests that there is a statistically significant relationship between strategy and motivation among students. ($p=0.05$).

Table 2: The relationship between strategy and motivation

		Strategy
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.099*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021
	N	102

To predict the strategies used by participating students, the present researcher used regression between six strategies and strategy (general) that the result was expressed as a linear graph. The regression equation results were entered in the next table. (Table 4-15).

Table 3: Evaluation and prediction of strategies among students

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.023	.055		.418	.677
	Memory	.279	.018	.331	15.103	.000
	Compensatory	-.023	.068	-.028	-.336	.737
	Metacognitive	.217	.018	.298	12.250	.000
	Recognition	.218	.075	.254	2.922	.004
	Emotional	.161	.017	.191	9.270	.000
	Social	.141	.019	.201	7.529	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Strategy						

In the regression equation among 6 stated strategies, Compensatory strategies not only confirmed a significant level but removed linear and the strategies were included in equation. The regression equation between these factors is as follows:

$$Y = 0.23 + 0.279X_1 + 0.217X_2 + 0.218X_3 + 0.161X_4 + 0.141X_5$$

4. Discussion

After the distribution and interview phases, statistical analyses began. It should be added that the researcher run a pilot study with almost 50 students to solve any difficulties in questionnaires. To determine the significance of these differences several t-tests were run with SPSS software version 19. The tables presented the frequency, percent, mean, variance, standard deviation and standard error of means.

To answer first question, among the strategies, cognitive strategies and then memory strategies were used more than others while all groups used social strategy as the least one. In explaining these findings, it can be said that learners are likely to lack confidence and be anxious to use a memory strategy. So the students try to relate their previous knowledge with new one to learn English materials. According to the findings, there are significant relationship between six domains of strategies (separately) and strategy (overall) that indicate a strong correlation between the factors ($p = 0.05$) but there is no significant relationship between six domains of strategies separately and motivation ($p = 0.05$).

To answer the second one, as we mentioned before, we answered it with a descriptive manner. In addition to questionnaire, some questions about participant's feelings were asked them randomly. Also, through the present study, the researcher observed a few classes. The results showed that most of these selected students were passive at classes; also, the statistical results about strategies indicated this claim too. According to statistical results, the students used memory strategies more than other strategies and from a cognitive perspective it can be claimed that they were more intrinsic rather than extrinsic. Also, during the interviews, they expressed this clearly that their classes didn't have an active atmosphere. The characteristics of introvert learners were obviously were noticed since they have no discussion or challenge during the class time. The students' desire to learn English seemed weak and they worried to speak in

English class. Totally, their motivation to learn English was very low. These were the researcher observations during this period.

To answer the third and most important question of this study, correlation was run to investigate the relationship between the overall mean of motivation and strategy. Table 2 indicates this correlation. As it was derived from the table, a low significant difference value (less than < 0.05) indicates there is a significant relationship between strategies and motivation. So, the null hypothesis rejected for this study. According to results which were obtained by t-test, there was no relationship between gender and strategies and motivation (greater than > 0.05). Also, by F-test (ANOVA), it was found that field of study had a statistically significant effect on motivation and strategies ($0 < 0.05$).

5. Conclusion

Strategies which teachers can act for second language learners in order to increase students' motivation to learn a second language include:

Strategy instruction should be embedded in meaningful communicative contexts: The material itself does not have much meaning; if the topics are related to concepts, they are easier to learn. It is one of the significant ways to make connection between new knowledge and what are in learners mind.

Activating learners in classrooms: The notion that only the teacher should choose the best and most efficient way of teaching to get a good result, certainly is not reasonable. Learning occurs when content is learned by repetition and practice rather than being passive learners to sit in class and just listen to the teacher that the learning result will not be favorable. Therefore, it is appropriate that the learners are actively engaged in learning. Continuous testing of learners: Testing and evaluation of previously learned materials results in repetition and practice; so learning can result in permanent memory. Advising learners to alternate studies: Students should be awarded for permanent learning, they need more than once repetition; teachers insist that for transferring it from temporary memory to permanent memory, alternative repeat and practice is needed.

The role of interference in teaching: Some previous knowledge affects learning new things. Effective teachers have a positive interaction with a precision that will facilitate learning and reinforce identified and negative interactions that can make difficulties during teaching. It is recommended that learners focus on learning rather than volume, pay attention to ways of learning and improve their skills. Learning through cognitive and affective learning strategies can develop their learning skills and knowledge to call upon and thus to become active learners.

In this research, the relationship between motivation and LLS was analyzed by Oxford's (1990) and Gardner's (2004) questionnaires and models. So, it is suggested to other researchers, they can use other various standard questionnaires and models like Deci and Ryan's model to collect data.

In the present study, the relationship of motivation and LLS was analyzed; it's suggested to other researchers to investigate the relationship of LLS and anxiety or motivation and learning skills.

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECT OF TEACHING PHRASAL VERBS ON THE LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE OF GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS

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Abstract

The present study aimed to investigate the effect of teaching phrasal verbs as a classroom activity on Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of grammatical patterns. The main question this study tried to answer was whether the knowledge of phrasal verbs might enhance higher knowledge of grammatical patterns in Iranian learners of English. To answer the question, 40 English intermediate trainees participated in the experiment of the study. They were randomly selected from among a population of trainees via an OPT test score of at least one standard deviation below the mean score. They were then divided into two groups of 20 and were randomly assigned to an experimental and a control group. A pretest of English grammatical patterns (sentence word order) was administered to both groups, then, they were taught grammatical patterns for 8 sessions but with different methodologies: the experimental group received a treatment of phrasal verbs while the control group received a placebo. A posttest of English grammatical patterns (sentence word order) was then administered to both groups. The data of the study were analyzed using an independent sample t-test to indicate the groups' posttest mean difference. The results indicated that the Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group received higher scores, though not significantly, in grammatical patterns after being treated with 8 sessions of phrasal verbs.

Key Words: Phrasal Verbs, Grammatical Patterns, Sentence Word Order, Iranian EFL Learners, OPT.

1. Introduction

Over the last decade the number of studies concerned with the effects of different ways such as making the learners familiar with phrasal verbs on learning a second or foreign language has increased considerably. This is due to the fact that many linguistic or non-linguistic factors can extremely influence language learning in individuals. In this study, grammar is magnified because it is considered as one of the most basic components in learning English as a foreign language. The purpose of this study was to explore the probable effect of making the learners familiar with the phrasal verbs as an independent variable on the learners' knowledge of grammatical patterns (word

order) as a dependent variable. It is worth mentioning that by making the subjects familiar with phrasal verbs, the researcher can at least help the subjects to be aware of the appropriate sequence and position of verbs, their particles, and their related objects in sentences.

Syntax along with the concepts such as grammar, grammatical patterns of sentences and word order, which are deemed to be the subcategories of the broad notion of syntax, is one of the first notions highlighted in this paper. The syntax of English language has several interesting properties which have often been discussed in many works of research. According to a net source, syntactic theories are commonly divided into two broad types, formal and functional. Linguistic form is what the formal theories of syntax focus on, relegating meaning to a peripheral position; by contrast, functional theories tend to focus on the function that language serves, and the ways that syntax is organized to serve these functions; in other words, meaning plays a central role.

An enormous range of variation can be found in the extent to which theories are formal and functional within these two camps. Extreme functional syntaxes recognize only meaning or functions, and deny the existence of structure in syntax. In extreme version of formal syntax, by contrast, grammar tends to be conceptualized as an abstract algebraic system specifying the acceptable strings of symbols making up a language. Meaning is considered irrelevant, and syntax (in whole or part) is seen as constituting an autonomous system. The majority of theories fall in somewhere between the two poles.

These days there are different views regarding syntactic theories. Most syntacticians agree that there are limits on the range of syntactic variation possible among languages. Opinions differ on the nature of the universal grammar; some take a strong 'universalist' stance, arguing that there is a single abstract universal system underlying the syntax of all languages. Other linguists take the view that there are universals of syntax, though not necessarily any universal system of syntax.

The other factor taken into consideration in the paper was the notion of task and making the learners involved with phrasal verbs as a task. It is found that students who were not exposed to hearing phrasal verbs did not learn sequences of words and were not influenced by natural phrasing. For example, they had difficulty in learning a sequence like "paid the tall lady," which has natural phrasing, as they had in learning a sequence where the word order was jumbled such as in "lady tall the paid".

The present investigation process aims at finding out different approaches to teach phrasal verbs to second or foreign language learners so as to improve their knowledge of word order or sentence structure. Developing L2 learners' grammar has always been a controversial issue (Sarahian, 1995, p.1). Some methods of teaching such a skill, as it is evident, prescribe deductive and some recommend inductive instruction of grammatical patterns and rules. Some use traditional approaches of teaching grammatical points and some use new and updated approaches of teaching such a basic skill. Saeidi (2004) quoting from Larsen-freeman (1997) mentioned that since grammar is considered as a collection of arbitrary rules about static structures in a language, it is often misunderstood in language teaching.

According to Dickins & Woods (1998), English grammar is chiefly a system of syntax that decides the order and patterns in which words are arranged in sentences, but in many cases all these definitions raise more questions than they answer: what is a sentence? How does position determine meaning? If grammar is concerned only with sentences, does this mean that in any given text there is no grammatical relationships between sentences? To determine what grammar means to us, it is better to look at the relationship between linguistic competence and communicative competence and at what we expect grammar to tell us. The prominent role of grammar, as one of the basic skills of L2 learning, is widely recognized by teachers and learners. As a matter of fact, there are kinds of controversy between scholars regarding grammar teaching. Fotos & Ellis (1991) bring up a worth-noticing idea by asserting that a continuing controversy in the field of second language pedagogy is whether grammar should be taught at all. Some language teachers adopt a "zero position". They maintain that teaching grammar has only a minimal effect on the acquisition of linguistic competence in a second language. Krashen (1985) cited in Fotos & Ellis (1991), for instance, believes that acquisition only takes place when learners are exposed to roughly-tuned input which they are able to comprehend and that learning is limited to a few simple portable rules. On the contrary, there are some scholars who argue for grammar teaching. Since grammar is one of the basic foundations of language teaching, there have been different definitions of it by different schools of thought. As Radford (2004) states, grammar is traditionally divided into two different but inter-related areas of study, morphology and syntax. The former is the study of how words are formed out of smaller units and the latter is the study of the way in which phrases and sentences are structured out of words (p.1). Birjandi et al (2006) maintain that 'grammar is a systematic analysis of the structure of language' (Birjandi et al, 2006, p. 220).

According to Fotos (1998), the reason why any grammar instruction figures heavily in the EFL curriculum is manifested by the particular characteristics of EFL settings. However, learners of English as a foreign language are well aware of the fact that, despite years of study, they are still unable to use the English language communicatively. It is evident that by having a good knowledge of L2 grammar system, L2 learning would be accelerated as well. According to Campbell (1970), "to learn to speak and understand a foreign language is to acquire native-like competence in that language". How do we explain native speaker competence? He claims that the best answer to this question seems to be the fact that native speakers possess and utilize a finite number of rules to produce and interpret an infinite number of sentences (p.37).

Therefore, in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages it follows that the learner, if he is to acquire a native-speaker competence, must learn the rules of English on all levels. Phrasal verbs are claimed to be one of the most notoriously challenging phenomena of English language instruction (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Gardner & Davies, 2007; Siyanova & Schmitt, 2007). Cwie (1993, p. 38) looks at them as "a nettle that has to be grasped if students are to achieve native-like proficiency in speech and writing". Despite their rather complicated structure and unpredictable meaning of some combination type, phrasal verbs are of high relevance to EFL/ESL learners because a grasp of them "can be a great asset to learners in acquiring a new

language" (Clece-Murcia & Larsen -freeman, 1999). The purpose of this study is to show whether the teaching of phrasal verbs is an appropriate way of providing the learners with the knowledge of word order. This is a significant matter because the learners should be able how to construct meaningful sentences and paragraphs, which makes the writing more effective and comprehensible.

2. Review of the Literature

Definitions of grammar and phrasal verbs

Grammar

Falk (1973, P. 16), in her "Linguistics and Language", states that the grammar of language includes an account of speakers' knowledge of sounds and meaning, as well as syntax. According to psychologists, grammar is "the subconscious, mental rules that speakers follow to create language". Linguists define grammar as "the study and analysis of linguistic structures". Sociolinguists define it as "the rules that govern the use of language in social situations".

Phrasal Verb

Phrasal verbs are sometimes referred to as the multiple-word middle ground between "syntax and lexis" (Gass & Selinker, 2001), and the recognition of the critical role of multi-word expressions has been emphasized in language acquisition. These multi-word units are lexicalized, that is, they behave like a single "big word" (Ellis, 1996, p. 111). They are defined as a structure that "combines a verb and invariable particle that function as a single unit both lexically and syntactically" (Liao & Fukuya, 2004:196)

Phrasal Verbs: General Considerations

Phrasal verbs are a category of multiword units that are used in everyday English. According to a net source, for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students wanting to improve their communication skills, the study of multiword units can be frustrating, interesting, and when understood and mastered, a great confidence builder. A multiword unit (MWU) is a string of words that are considered semantically and syntactically inseparable, and thus become a unit of words that together has a unique meaning. Accordingly, phrasal verbs are a type of MWU consisting of a verb that is followed by an adverb or a preposition. EFL students often make errors grammatically when placing, or omitting, the correct preposition or adverb with verb to form a suitable phrasal verb.

In EFL learners, prepositions usually play a less important role than the content words such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbials. As prepositions are one type of function words, their major function is to show the grammatical and structural relations between linguistic elements (Kao, 2004). Learners spend more time on content words in order to build up most of the sentence fragment, and to increase accuracy. One category of relational prepositions is spatial prepositions, which are commonly used to describe space or direction. The prepositions *on*, *at*, *in* are examples. When prepositions become part of fixed phrases in phrasal verbs or collocations by combining them with main verbs, EFL students routinely misinterpret the phrase due to unfamiliarity. Overall, such a misunderstanding and wrong use of prepositions in phrasal verbs or collocations might lead to reduce, omit, or apply incorrect grammar

on the production. Prepositions in the aspect are no longer like the free prepositions with limited functions indicating spatial concept.

Syntactic Patterns of Phrasal Verbs

The possible syntactic patterns that accommodate phrasal verbs are varied, but the following five are considered basic:

1. Verb, Adverb (VA)
2. Verb, Adverb, object (VAO)
3. Verb, Object, Adverb (VOA)
4. Verb, Preposition, Object (VPO)
5. Verb, Adverb, Preposition, Object (VAPO)

Semantic Categories of Phrasal Verbs

Nobody has succeeded in finding a successful way of categorizing phrasal verbs semantically, that is, in terms of meaning. Linguists who try to categorize them disagree sharply. But for the purpose of learning and teaching them more easily, it is quite useful to posit three broad semantic categories including literal, semi-idiomatic, idiomatic.

Literal: In this category, the verb retains its basic concrete meaning while the short adverb or preposition maintains a literal meaning (Frazer, 1976). Such combinations are the easiest for language learners to understand and learn.

Semi-idiomatic: In this category, the verb retains its concrete meaning, but the short adverb or preposition adds a nuance that would not be discernible from its basic meaning (Spasov, 1966). Even though the exact meaning of these phrasal verbs might not be clear, an approximate meaning might be grasped by a language learner, as in the following:

Idiomatic: These combinations are fully idiomatic. No part of the meaning of the combination is predictable from the meanings of the verb and the short adverb or the preposition.

Experiments on the Verb Category and Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs are constructed with the combinations of verbs and adverbial or prepositional particles. Phrasal verbs and idioms are both cases where a string of words can correspond to a single semantic unit (Saeed, 2000). Such a semantically meaningful and syntactically inseparable idiosyncrasy contributes to phrasal verbs identified as one category of multiword units. As a matter of fact, Moon (1997) described several different types of multiword items: compounds, phrasal verbs, idioms, fixed phrases, and prefabs. Multiword verbs are termed to describe the large number of English verbs consisting two, or sometimes three parts: (1) a base verb and preposition such as "look into", (2) a base verb and adverbial particle, that is a phrasal verb such as "break down" and (3) the combination of a base verb, adverbial particle and preposition such as "put up with" (Gairns & Redman, 1986). Multiword verbs can be interpreted as another terminology for phrasal verbs. Under the current teaching conditions, learning phrasal verbs has been acknowledged as a formidable barrier for EFL students' efforts to achieve fluency and accuracy. Phrasal verbs represent a practically limitless group of verbs that can be combined with short adverbs or prepositions to produce new meanings. Phrasal verbs are ubiquitous in all forms of written and spoken modern English, making the ability to understand and produce

them a requisite for an adequate command of the English language. Research studies indicate that although phrasal verbs are fairly well established in hearing children at three and four years of age (Fischer, 1972), many deaf children as old as 18 and 19 still have difficulties with them (Payne 1982; 1987). Kluwin (1979), in a study using elicited writing samples from deaf adolescents, found improper use of both literal and non-literal prepositions by subjects. Since literal and non-literal prepositions are an important component of phrasal verbs, one would expect deaf children to use them improperly in phrasal verbs, as well. Odom and Blanton (1967) found that deaf students who learned sequences of words were not influenced by natural phrasing. For example, their deaf participants had equal difficulty in learning a sequence like "paid the tall lady," which has natural phrasing, as they had in learning a sequence where the word order was jumbled such as in "lady tall the paid." In contrast, the hearing participants remembered more easily the sequences with the natural phrasing. The implication is that deaf students would also have difficulty learning phrasal verbs, for the ability to attend to phrasing is an important requisite for learning phrasal verbs. Payne (1982, 1987), in a comprehension study with 45 hearing participants between ages 8 and 12 and 45 prelingually profoundly deaf participants between ages 10 and 19, found the phrasal verbs to be well established in the hearing participants but extremely problematic for the deaf participants.

History of English grammar

Rutherford (1977) cited in Carter and Nunan (2002) claims that means of inculcating a language's grammar include pattern practice and structural drills, though, for example the Audio-lingual method widely practiced in the 1950s and 1960s. Partly due to the influence of transformational grammar, materials in the 1970s featured sentence-based linguistic rules with exercises asking students to transform one sentence pattern into another. Although these practices are still widely used and very visible in current language teaching materials, a major shift occurred during the 1970s.

Hymes (1971) cited in Carter & Nunan (2002) believes that factors contributing to the shift include: observation of learners' difficulties in transferring the grammatical structures learned in class to communicate contexts outside, and calls to broaden linguistic study from grammatical competence to 'communicative competence'. Saeidi (2004), quoting from Widdowson (1990) in his discussion of grammar and learning, considered grammar as a device for mediating between words and contexts. In his view, grammar functions in alliance with words and contexts for the achievement of meaning. This view is completely different from traditional teaching approaches which tended to dissociate grammar from context. According to Lightbown (1998) as cited in Saeidi (2004) traditional approaches to form-based instructions leads to treat language instruction as separate from language use. Larsen Freeman (1997) has pointed out that instead of viewing grammar as a static system of arbitrary rules, it should be seen as a dynamic, rational system that consists of structures characterized by the three dimensions of form, meaning, and use. Richards, Platts, and Weber (1985) cited in Nunan (2001) claim that 'grammar is a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in a language.' Further Nunan (2001) believes that for

most people, the essence of language lies in grammar. It is therefore, fitting that this exploration of language should begin with an examination of a notion of grammar (Nunan, 2001, p.96). Nunan (2001) asserts that five years after Cobbetts' pronouncement, the object of English grammar was to teach those who use the English language to express their thoughts correctly, either in speech or writing. For most of the history of language teaching, grammar has had to do with correctness, and the role of the teacher was to impart the rules that that result in correct usage. He continues his assertion by saying "these days, at least, grammarians are a little more careful than in Cobbetts' day to focus on describing language as it is used, rather than prescribing how it should be used" (Nunan, 2001, pp 96-97). According to Carter & McCarthy (2006), English grammar is the body of rules that describes the structure of expressions in the English language. This includes the structure of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. A text that contains more than one sentence is no longer in the realm of grammar but of discourse. The grammar of a language is approached in two ways: *descriptive* grammar is based on the analysis of text corpora and describes grammatical structures thereof, whereas *prescriptive* grammar attempts to use the identified rules of a given language as a tool to govern the linguistic behavior of speakers. Grammar is divided into morphology, which describes the formation of words, and syntax, which describes the construction of meaningful phrases, clauses, and sentences out of words (P. 486).

Research Question of the Study

Based on the problem and the related literature explained above, the current study tries to answer the following question:

RQ: Is there any effect on Iranian EFL learners' grammatical knowledge due to teaching phrasal verbs?

Hypothesis of the Study

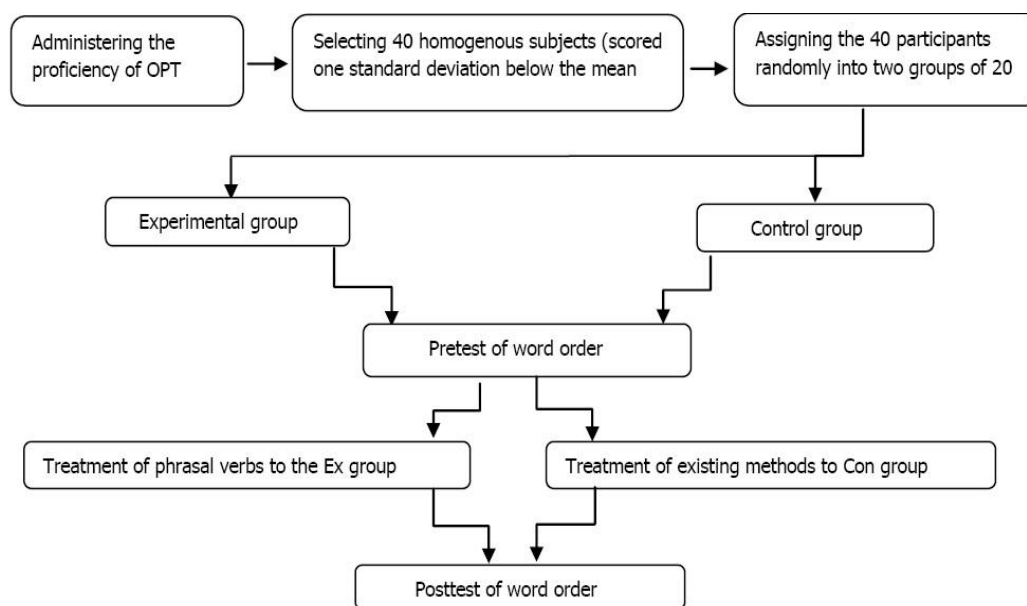
H₀: Teaching phrasal verbs does not affect Iranian EFL learners' grammatical knowledge.

3. Methodology

Design of the Study

The present study followed a quasi-experimental design. There are at least four stages: 1) subject selection via administering an Oxford Placement test (OPT), 2) exposing the participants to the pretest of sentence word order, 3) treating the experimental group of the study with the phrasal verbs and the control group with the existing methods of teaching sentence word order, and 4) administering the posttest of sentence word order to both groups of the study.

The design of the current study has been illustrated diagrammatically below:



The Diagram of the Design of the Study

Participants

The researcher was granted permission to complete this study during regular class time by a private institute - Kish Air Cultural & educational Institute (KAC). The participants of this study were 30 Iranian EFL learners of English language. They were intermediate male trainees, with the age range of 17-20, who were selected randomly from among the trainees based on the results of an OPT administered to 60 subjects. Since the problem of sentence word order is targeted, the 40 participants had to be representative of the weak trainees, thus, they were the students with the scores that were at least one standard deviation below the mean score of the class. The 40 participants were then divided into two groups of 20 and were randomly assigned to the experimental group as well as the control group.

Materials

The materials used in the current study were of four sorts: the OPT material for proficiency, the material for the pretest of the study the material for the treatment of the study and finally, the material for the posttest of the study. The OPT used in this study consisted of several sections including vocabulary, grammar, and sentence recognition. For each section, the participants were asked to answer the questions in the specified answer sheet. The answers were then collected and scored by the

researchers. The pretest of the study consisted of a test of sentence word order. This was a test of word order including 20 questions selected from the book "Objective Tests". The final section of the pretest was made after it was judged by three professors (inter-rater reliability). The material for the treatment of the study contained 20 phrasal verbs in the experimental group of the study. Although several hundred phrasal verbs exist in English, only those that have the adverbial particles **up**, **down**, **off** and **out** were included in this study. Also word order was taught to them via giving them unsorted words and asking them to arrange them into grammatical order.

The material for the posttest of the study consisted of the sentence word order questions used in the pretest of the study. Since the study here aims at indicating the degree of progress from the pretest to the posttest in the experimental group of the study in which phrasal verbs were taught, the same test was administered as the sentence word order test in both the experimental and the control groups, and any other parallel tests of sentence word order were ignored to rule out the possibility of the effects of test differences.

Procedures

The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants' proficiency was paper-and-pencil test. Hence, the participants were asked to answer the questions in specified answer sheets. The time allowed was 70 minutes as had been determined in OPT. The pretest of the study was a sentence word order test with the characteristics explained. The time allocation for the sentence word order pretest was about 15 minutes. The treatment of the study included 8 sessions of teaching sentence word order to both groups as well as 15 minutes of treating the experimental group with phrasal verbs. Finally, the posttest of sentence word order consisted of the test used in the pretest of the study and resembled to it in terms of time allocation and test characteristics.

Scoring

The OPT used in this study was scored on the basis of standard criteria introduced by the test itself. The criterion for scoring the pretest and posttest of the study was the maximum of 20.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from hypothesis testing of the study will be analyzed via calculating a t-test between the posttest sentence word order scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study.

4. Results

Descriptive Analysis of the Data

This section focuses on the descriptive analysis of the obtained data in this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software. Table (1) shows the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of sentence word order in the experimental group of the study:

1) Descriptive analysis of the data of the experimental group of the study

Tests	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Variance	Missing value
Prewo	20	10.6500	2.05900	4.239	0.00
Postwo	20	11.3000	1.34164	1.800	0.00
Valid N (list wise)	20				

As it is indicated in table (1), the number of participants has been 20 in each experiment ($N_{PRE}=20$; $N_{POE}=20$), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value=0.00) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiment of the study. The mean for the PREWO (pretest of sentence word order) scores was indicated to be 10.65 ($\bar{X}=10.65$) as compared to the mean of the POSWO (posttest of sentence word order) scores which was 11.30 ($\bar{X}=11.30$). As for the standard deviations obtained for the experimental group, there seems to be more variability among the PRSWO scores than the scores in the POSWO. This may give an image of the participants' post-test scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (Phrasal verbs).

Similarly, the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of SWO in the control group of the study has been indicated in table (2) below:

2) Descriptive analysis of the data of the Control group of the study

Tests	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Variance	Missing value
Prewo	20	10.9500	2.08945	4.366	0.00
Postwo	20	11.1500	2.03328	4.134	0.00
Valid N (list wise)	20				

As it is indicated in table (2), the number of participants has been 20 in each experiment ($N_{PRC}=20$; $N_{POC}=20$), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value=0) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiments of the study. The mean for the PRSWO (pretest of sentence word order) scores was shown to be 10.95 ($\bar{X}=10.95$) as compared to the mean for the POSWO (posttest of sentence word order) scores which was 11.15 ($\bar{X}=11.15$). As for the standard deviations obtained for the control group, there seems to be more variability among the PRSWO scores than the scores in the POSWO. This may give an image of the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (existing methods).

Inferential Analysis of the Data

This section focuses on the inferential analysis of the obtained data of this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS software. Table (3) shows the inferential statistics which include the calculation of the t-test between the posttest of sentence word order scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study.

3) The T-test results of the study

T-Test Results	Observed t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Between the posttest scores of the experimental group and the control group of the study (equal variances not assumed)	0.311	19	0.759

As it is indicated in table (3), the t value of the study was calculated between the posttests of sentence word order scores of the experimental and control groups of the study. The observed t value was calculated to be 0.311 ($t_{obs}=0.311$) and the degree of freedom was 19 ($df=19$). The critical t value for this degree of freedom is higher than the observed t value ($t_{crit}=2.093$; $t_{obs}=0.311$). Furthermore the level of significance was calculated to be 0.759 ($sig=0.759$) which has been used in interpreting the data for the rejection or support of the hypothesis of the study in the next section.

Results of Hypothesis testing

In this section, the results of testing the hypothesis of the study have been presented and elaborated. In order to give a detailed analysis, attempts were made to take advantage of the results of the study as an evidence to determine the rejection or support of the hypothesis. In addition, the rejection or support of the hypothesis was justified by explaining the consequences of such a rejection or support, i.e. what would happen if the hypothesis of the current study was rejected or supported. Before analyzing the hypothesis, it will be repeated here:

H0: Teaching phrasal verbs does not affect Iranian EFL learners' grammatical knowledge.

The hypothesis of the study which targeted the effect of teaching phrasal verbs on Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of grammatical patterns was supported. Evidence from various sources of data could help to verify this support. The results of the t-test of the study (see table 4) could be employed to confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by SPSS was .311 ($t_{obs}=0.311$) while the critical value of t determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 ($P=0.05$) was 2.093 ($t_{crit}=2.093$). Thus, the observed t value was lower than the critical t value and low enough to support the null hypothesis of the study.

The second evidence to verify the support of the hypothesis of the study was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be 0.759 ($Significance_{two-tailed}=0.759$). Since this value was higher than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations) the difference between the posttests of the study indicated that teaching phrasal verbs would not significantly enhance the higher knowledge of grammatical patterns of the participants in the experimental group.

5. Discussion

General Discussion

The findings of the current study indicated that teaching phrasal verbs could not result in a better performance of language learners in a test of grammatical patterns. These

findings seem to be compatible with the findings of the research study made by Larsen-Freeman (2001) as cited in Carter & Nunan (2002) that acquisition of grammatical structures is not linear, i.e. one structure is not completely mastered before another is attempted (Carter & Nunan, 2002, p.39). Another research study with which the findings of the current study is compatible is made by Rutherford (1987) as cited in Carter & Nunan (2002) who suggests that an optimal approach to dealing with the non-linearity of grammatical acquisition is when teachers help students understand the general principles of grammar (e.g. how to modify basic word order) rather than concentrating on teaching structure-specific rules (e.g. phrasal verbs) (Carter & Nunan, 2002, p. 39). Further, the results of this study is in line with Larsen-Freeman (1997) who also pointed out that instead of viewing grammar as a static system of arbitrary rules, it should be seen as a rational, dynamic system that consists of structures characterized by the three dimensions of form, meaning, and use. Consequently, teaching phrasal verbs as an arbitrary rule will not redirect teaching grammar towards a dynamic, rational process in which form, meaning and use are interrelated. Moreover, the findings of the current study is incompatible with the findings of the research study made by Clece-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) that phrasal verbs are of high relevance for EFL/ESL learners because a grasp of them can be a great asset to learners in acquiring a new language and achieving a native-like proficiency in speech and writing. The second incompatibility of the findings of the current study is with the research made by Cwie (1993) who looked at phrasal verbs as a nettle that has to be grasped if learners are to achieve native-like proficiency in speech and writing.

Implications of the Study

Theoretically speaking, the results of current study can be considered a contribution in the latest theories and models of teaching grammar to the speakers of other languages. Such a contribution includes the enhancement of some sort of input which may result in a more dynamic, not static, way of teaching grammar.

Pedagogically speaking, the results of current study may first be beneficial to teachers of foreign languages (particularly Iranian teachers) in that they can advise some innovative methods of teaching grammatical patterns by dealing with the non-linearity of grammatical acquisition, helping the learners to understand the general principles of grammar, and using some practices within classroom activities. In this way, the Iranian EFL learners may be exposed to a more realistic situation of English language which results in more exposure of the learners to English language grammatical patterns.

Second, the results of the current study seem to be more practical and compatible to an Iranian situation of foreign language learning particularly for those who encounter problems regarding their grammatical competence. It is applicable to those who have made their minds to promote their grammatical competence through strengthening their knowledge of grammatical patterns.

Moreover, the results of this study can be useful for testers of English as a foreign language. Since grammar is a fundamental element and learners seem to be evaluated more with their grammar than other elements as the basic foundation of language,

language testers can check their learners' knowledge of grammatical patterns to find out whether they are more competent if their attention is drawn to general principles of grammar rather than to structure-specific rules. Furthermore, testers can use the results of this study to devise newer measuring instruments of L2 learners' grammatical competence.

Material designers, also, can take advantage of the results of the current study in that they may develop new curricula for teaching grammar at the universities, schools, and institutes or design materials to convey more information in teaching sentence word order. They can publish new books, pamphlets, or other teacher-made materials based on their specific classroom condition. They can, further, take more advantage of the non-linearity of grammatical acquisition to teach grammatical patterns.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Due to the fact that learners have difficulty in ordering of the sentences, more research is needed in this important area to discover how teachers can teach the grammatical points that can be influential and effective in the process of language acquisition. What follows are some suggestions that further studies could investigate. First, the present study can be replicated with learners of different proficiency levels. That is, one can carry out the same study at the elementary, pre-intermediate, and advanced levels to compare their performance to see whether learners perform differently regarding their proficiency level. Second, this study can be replicated using both form-focused and meaning-focused tasks with the aim of comparing learners' performance when they complete different types of tasks at varying proficiency levels. Moreover, this study was conducted over an eight-week period, but future studies can be carried out in a longer period to find whether they could come to a different conclusion or not; also, future studies can be carried out to discover the impact of the use of phrasal verbs regarding learners' gender. While the data from the current study was collected from male students, future studies can be conducted based on the data from both male and female students to examine the impacts of gender on students' knowledge of word order and grammatical patterns.

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DOES VIEWING TEST ITEMS AT DIFFERENT TIMES MATTER IN ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSE LISTENING TEST?

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Abstract

An experiment was conducted to explore the effect of viewing test items at different times in a listening comprehension test. In this experiment three groups viewed listening comprehension test items at three different times. The first group viewed these items before listening to the text for two times ("before reading group") while the second one viewed them after listening to two times ("after reading group"). The third group, on the other hand, viewed the questions between two listening ("sandwich group").

First, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was used to divide the testees in to three groups with comparable listening abilities. The data obtained from this standardized test was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The result then showed that the three groups were comparable in their listening abilities. After this was done, a listening test for first year English for Academic Purpose students prepared by experts was administered to investigate the mentioned treatments.

To accept or reject the null hypothesis which stated that viewing test items at different times in a listening test has no effect on the testees' performance, a one-way ANOVA was employed. The ANOVA then detected a significant mean difference in scores across the three approaches. The calculated value of F ($F=8.440$ with degrees of freedom 2 and 132) exceeded the value of F tabulated at .05 probability level set for this study. As a result, the null hypothesis mentioned above was rejected. The Scheffs post hoc comparison of means showed that the 'sandwich group' produced significantly higher scores in the listening comprehension test than did the 'after reading group' and the 'before reading group'. On the other hand, these latter groups did not show a significant difference in their performances.

Introduction

Most English for Academic Purpose (EAP) listening tests allow students to listen to listening texts one time followed by requiring them to answer the test questions. In some other testing contexts, students are allowed to listen to a text twice in a row before they attempt the test questions. However, in this technologically advancing world, the use of digital technology like MP3 player & recorder, mobile phones and other voice recording devices have become very common in classrooms. As a result, most nonnative English speakers' and even the native ones as well record lectures to use them for several re-listening opportunities that range from viewing study exercises

in any combination of the different parts of a lecture. However, for a long time, when students in higher education attended a lecture in English, they usually had only one opportunity to listen to a given lecture. As a result, most of them fill the information gap in their lecture notes by comparing their notes with other students who have taken good notes, and by completing their incomplete notes from relevant reading materials. Technology has altered the traditional common practice of listening to a lecture one time because the contemporary practice shows that students listen the same lecture again and again with a possibility of pausing the lecture at any spot for a better understanding. If this is the current practice, how should we approach testing listening for Academic Purposes?

Models of Listening Comprehension

The listening process, according to the bottom-up model theorists, starts from the lower level of decoding input and ends with the higher level of the input. More specifically, this model suggests that "at the lowest level the acoustic input is decoded into phonemes and then the information obtained is used to identify individual words, after which processing continues on to the next stage, the syntactic level" (Buck, 1994 : 150). This, therefore, implies that the semantic content of an utterance is extracted after the syntactic level is completed. In sum, bottom-up processing model assumes a fixed order of processing of an input, which is going through a number of consecutive stages in predetermined stages and orders.

Advocates of the top-down model, on the other hand, contend that processing of a spoken input is more complex than the assumption considered in the bottom-up models. They argue that "non-linguistic skills such as referencing and the use of general background knowledge are important part of listening comprehension" (Buck, 1994: 150). Gillet and Temple (1990) also argue that listeners do not only process spoken texts by using their linguistic resources but also by using their content and structural schemata. This first schema refers to the background knowledge of the listener in relation to the text to be listened to while the latter refers to the organizational structure of the text. Activating these schemata, therefore, would result in better understanding of the text. In fact, culture, age, and religion may affect the content of a particular schema to be activated

The other comprehension model is known as interactive model. This model subsumes both top-down and bottom-up strategies.

Listening Test Texts: Once or Twice?

Most EAP listening test practices show that either taped or read listening test texts presented once or twice. Even though this area in particular and testing listening in general are little researched areas, the available literature documents the advantage or the disadvantage of one over the other (i.e. listening once or twice). Most of the literature bases the discussions on theoretical grounds and experimental studies.

Theoretical Arguments

The literature presents arguments for and against listening to a text once or twice in a listening test. These theoretical arguments can be categorized into four perspectives; namely, authenticity, constraints from the testing situation, practicality, and tradition.

The argument from the authenticity perspective supports listening to a text both once and twice. Fortune (2004) reasons that in real life we listen to what somebody says only one time, so letting students listen only one time in a listening test is a representation of the real life. He also reminds us that in real life there is always a possibility of asking for a repetition or clarification of what was said. Murray (2007) adds that it is less relevant to restrict listening to a test text to only one time since technology has now allowed listening to varied information and materials online as many times as people wish. Being cognizant of the pros and cons of both arguments, Buck (2001) argues that listening to a text two times implies testing a different construct because almost no utterance is repeated in exactly the same way as it was said in the first time. Either the repetition of the first utterance is a paraphrase or summary of the first one or an elaboration or clarification of the first one. Buck continued to back his position by presenting empirical findings which show that there is only partial similarity when the first utterance is compared to the repeated second utterance. It was also argued that it is not clear whether listening to a text only two times in a listening test is a true representation of real life because depending on the proficiency level of an ESL learner, second language listeners may ask for repetition or clarification more than two times in authentic situations.

The second argument that tries to justify the need for listening to a text two times in a listening test raises issues that are present in a listening test condition but absent in real life situation. A case in point is the availability of some visual cues and background contextual information about the topic of discussion in face to face communication and the absence of this opportunity in a listening test classroom. There is an existence of extra cognitive load in listening tests than in real life listening. The listening test task imposes a need to write notes that help to answer test questions and in some cases the test tasks may demand a complex process which is different than what one experiences in real life. This complexity also taxes extra attention. Advancing this argument, Geranpayeh and Taylor (2008) argue that extraneous variables like any noise either from the listening test rooms or from outside may negatively affect students' performance. However, it is not clear whether or not repeating the areas of the listening text where the interruption occurred is enough. Boroughs (2002) advocates for testees to be allowed to listen twice, as they need to adjust their ears to a recording or different voice. A critique of Boroughs' argument is that listeners normally quickly adapt to different voices swiftly.

From the practicality point of view, testing should be limited and time allotted by institutions for that purpose is not that relaxing. Therefore, the same amount of time devoted to listening to a text twice during a test can be used to present a test with more test items which, in turn, increases the reliability of the test. Geranpayeh and Taylor (2008) point out that the institutional testing tradition may sometimes dictate whether or not a listening text should be heard once or twice. For example the listening

texts are heard two times in the Cambridge ESOL First Certificate and Proficiency exams while they are heard once in the TOEFL listening tests.

Experimental Studies

Experimental studies conducted to investigate the effect of listening texts conducted once or twice show that repeated listening helps to decrease the difficulty level of test items (Brindley and Slayter 2002 ;and Sherman ,1997). Similarly, Brown, (2007) & Chang & Read, (2008) found out that allowing multiple hearings help to decrease test anxiety and enhance testees' self-ratings of comprehension. Again ,Berne, (1995); Cervantes & Gainer, (1992); Chang & Read, (2006); Dupuy, (1999); and Lund, (1991) reported that repeated listening is a good teaching strategy that facilitates comprehension though they do not necessarily suggest that listening test texts should be heard more than once in a testing situation. The studies by Lund, Chang and Read revealed that students with high than low proficiency level benefited from repeated listening. Similarly, Cervantes & Gainer analyzed the effect of repeated listening on answering questions about the gist and specific information of a text and reported that repeating listening texts bring about higher test performance on questions of the gist than on items of specific information. Borroughs (2002) has also found stronger effect of repeated listening texts on performance when students do a summarizing test task than when they are asked to complete multiple choice questions. Adding to this, Sakai (2009) reported that recalling the information in a listening text was superior following a second listening compared to a first listening.

Variation in the question response may create different constraints on the testees who provide answers to comprehension questions while listening to the text as opposed to those who give answers after listening to the text (Rost, 2002). In describing the possible constraints, Rost says that responses after listening are subject to intervening conditions that affect memory for detail whereas responses while listening are subject to conditions of time pressure that may affect one's ability to reflect upon the meaning carried by the overall text. Piolat, Olive, & Kellogg, (2005), also recognize that note-taking introduces considerable time pressure. Rosenhouse et al., (2006) added that note taking from a fast spoken text makes listening comprehension difficult. On the other hand , Chaudron, Loschky & Cook, 1994; and Lin, 2006) contend that note-taking is an important support to comprehend a text (specifically when a text is heard only one time) because it allows the listener to capture the ephemeral bits of information in the passage. Another finding reported that note taking did not make significant difference on the overall scores of testees who answered comprehension questions (Lin 2006).

Some research findings like Divasta and Gray's (1972), Dunkel's, (1985) and Chaudron's (1988) have indicated that there is no strong correlation between quality of notes and quality of understanding. Rost (2002: 120) has attributed this lack of correspondence partly to the limitation of the listener's attention and adds the following: "There is a paradox in selecting what to note as important: Note taking is a decision to defocus the text, and to focus on the act of writing. Listeners, who are more attentive to the lecture and possibly understanding more of the lecture content, might take the fewest notes".

On the other side, closed tasks which involve limited writing and minimum visual interpretation may help listeners to use selection strategies. Such tasks may also "allow maximum attention to the spoken text ... and may provide useful evidence of listener attention and understanding" (Rost 1990: 127). This does not mean that the limitation of attention that affects note-taking does not exist since testees are still required to write answers while listening. In the same way, multiple choice questions, which are answered while and after listening to the text, create extra difficulty by interfering with the nature of the listening process (Ur, 1984). Supporting this idea, Rost (1990: 133) says: "multiple-choice tests differ from summarizing tasks in that the listener is given new text (i.e. the written test) and is asked to integrate a representation of the first text (i.e. the lecture text with this text)." This, therefore, may warn us to recognize the effect of test formats/methods when interpreting listening comprehension performances. Studies on the effect of listening test text once or twice on different test variables is not conclusive but there is a high level of agreement that repeated listening decreases task difficulty. Similarly, there are findings that verify the effect of listening twice on reliability (Otsuka, 2004), validity, test takers ability (Lund, 1991; Otsuka, 2004; Chang & Read, 2006) and item discrimination (Borroughs, 2002; Fortune, 2004) of listening tests. However, the findings on the authenticity of listening to a text once or twice in listening tests are not conclusive.

Advantages and Drawbacks of viewing Questions at different times in Listening Tests

Viewing questions at different times on listening comprehension tests may have different effects. Some writers in the area like Shohamy and Inbar (1991), and Cohen (1984), have identified some positive effect of preview questions while others such as Marslen-Wilson and Tyler (1980), Rost (1990) and Faerch and Kasper (1986) question the net advantage of preview questions.

As regards the advantages of previewing questions in a listening comprehension test, some researchers believe that guiding students to the appropriate directions, driving them into the proper mood for a particular text, helping them identify specified purpose(s) for listening, activating relevant schemata, and if possible, motivating them to listen to the text are some of the benefits of previewing listening questions (Underwood, 1989; Harmer, 1991; and Rost, 1990).

Previewing questions in a listening comprehension test might be an important way of providing vital information about the text to be listened to since such questions supply testees in advance with a gapped schematic representation of the text and a framework for generating hypothesis (Shohamy and Inbar 1991). Similarly, Black (1978: 189) is of the opinion that "reading a question which paraphrases a main point and monitoring for the answer must represent more cognitive elaboration which should result in more extensive and accurate recall of the proposition covered." If this is the case, then, we may expect prior reading of comprehension questions in listening tests to provide extra data, cognitive elaboration and schematic support, which may positively affect test performance.

On the other hand, concerning the drawbacks of prior reading of questions on listening comprehension test, Sharman (1997) holds that previewing questions may

supply additional data but may also tax cognitive resources. This is so because testees are required to answer a question while listening to the text. In other words, writing answers to test questions may affect test scores and the existence of a target (something the testee is required to work for) may make testees abruptly abandon one area of attention. If such tasks reduce the cognitive resources, thinking and writing responses to the comprehension questions may bring about extra difficulty.

Similarly, Mrsele Wison and Tyler (1980)) say that previewing questions commonly forces attention down to sentence level or below and may make the discourse to be perceived less clearly in its totality. In other words, questions which require testees to focus on lower levels of understanding may slow down take up at higher levels. Barlett (1992) backs up this idea by saying that the character of what is perceived is lost the moment we seek to analyze it into partial percepts. If this is the case, then, prior reading of questions which propose single propositions may detract attention from global meaning.

Weir (1993) indicated viewing questions in a listening test may have an effect on the nature of the listening process. For example, listening is considered to be characterized by inadequate operation of top-down strategies because of the time constraints (Faerch and Kasper, 1986; O'Malley and Chamo, 1990; Hayashi, 1991, and Shohamy and Inbar, 1991). To this end, focusing on questions while listening may again have an impact on the balance at the processing levels.

Discourse comprehension is an individualized process which comes into play in accordance with different strategies and different individual knowledge (Alderson and Lukmani, 1989). . Understanding of discourse is based on "the knowledge resources that are brought into play and in the process by which they are matched with the input" (Faerch and Lasper, 1986: 23). Buck (1991) also suggests that getting the right answer for a question may be a different process for every combination of listener and text. If this is the case, then, one could possibly expect that previewing questions in a listening test may interfere with subjective processing.

In addition to the above two approaches of testing listening, the third option, according to Sherman (1997) is providing test questions between two listening. This approach as Sherman argued is a "powerful aid to answering" tests questions accurately. However, there is no replication study to generalize the effect of previewing listening test items on students' EAP listening test performance. This study, therefore, aims at experimenting this listening test approaches by considering an EAP first year university students.

Purposes

This article tries to experiment the effect of viewing listening test items at different times on listening comprehension performance. The difference among these approaches is the time in which testees view and respond to test questions. More specifically, the first group views the questions before listening to the text while the second group views the questions after listening twice. The third group listens to the text first and then views the questions and then completes its answers after the second listening. Determining the difference among these three approaches, if any, is the concern of this study. The guiding questions of this study are the following.

- Is there a significant difference among the three approaches mentioned above in producing high results in a listening comprehension test?
- If "yes", what is the source of the difference?

Sampling

The study was conducted at Unity University, Ethiopia. The population of students in this college is 8,500. Of these, 585 were regular first year degree program students. A population of 143 students from 13 sections was the sample of this study. This was done with the hope of securing a 25% representative sample of the regular degree program students of the college. The procedure employed in selecting the students was as follows: students' roll numbers were first recorded on a piece of paper from their attendance sheet and lots were drawn to select 11 students from each of the 13 sections. Then, the subjects were divided into three groups and the three treatments were assigned to them on a lot basis. Eight of them, however, failed to show up in the pre- and post-tests. This, as a result, has reduced the sample to 135.

Variables

The constants for the three groups were the same listening text, amount of time, and their listening abilities which were considered to be similar. The differing variables were reading of the questions prior to listening to the passage (the before reading group), reading of questions between two hearings (the sandwich group), and reading of questions after two hearings (after reading group).

Instrumentation and Material

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), which is one of the most popular standardized English language proficiency tests, was used to divide the samples in the three groups with comparable listening abilities. This test has .95 reliability indexes. The listening component of this test, which was used for the purpose of this study, has 50 multiple choice questions under three parts. Parts 'A' and 'B' present short spoken sentences and short conversations between two people respectively while part 'C' presents longer conversations and talks.

For the experiment, three College English listening tests prepared by expert committees were assessed for their reliabilities and the reliability of the tests were found to be .50, .51 and .76. Finally, the most reliable one was considered for this study. The reliability index of the test used for this study, thus, is .76 cronbach's alpha. This test, in fact, was assumed to have content and face validities for it was prepared by a committee supervised by two testing experts. The title of the test text was "Women in the Industrialized World". The number of questions designed from this passage was 22. The test formats used to present these items were short answers, true/false, fill in the blank and multiple choices. To meet the purpose of the study, three instructions were designed for the three groups of the experiment. In the pilot study, the instructions were first read by six randomly selected students of the same level to check for the clarity and appropriate changes were made. Then, these three instructions were presented to the three groups orally by the researcher. This was done with the hope of having sufficient opportunity to clarify the instructions.

Experimental Design

The experiment was carried out to see the effect of viewing test items at different times in a listening comprehension test. To do this, there were three comparable groups which were exposed to three different treatments, namely .AFTER READING, BEFORE READING, AND SANDWICH groups. More specifically, the first group previewed the listening comprehension questions and gave answers after two listening. The second group listened twice and it was then given the questions to answer. The third group listened once then read the questions, then listened again and answered the questions.

The Procedure

The following is a step-by-step procedure used in this study:

1. Select first year college students who were taking an EAP course from 13 sections randomly. The alphabetically written attendance sheets of the instructors were used for this purpose.
2. Administer a pre-test (the listening component of TOEFL) to divide the testees in to three comparable groups;
3. Assign subjects to the treatments on a lot basis;
4. Expose the three groups to the experimental treatments, and
5. Compare the performance of the groups on the post-test by using tests of statistical significance.

Methods of Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics used to summarize the data were means and standard deviations. The inferential statistics employed to decide the significance of the mean difference among the three groups was one-way ANOVA. Following this, Scheffe's post hoc test (Multiple Comparison) was calculated to identify the variable which made the difference.

Scoring Guideline and Scorers' Reliability

The scoring guideline used to mark the listening comprehension test was produced by the expert committee. To maintain scorers' reliability, two colleagues were involved in marking the subjective items of the test. Since the test papers were photocopied and given to the individual scorers, the possibility of biasing one another is less. Each of the scorers was informed to award one or zero mark for each item based on the answer key they are provided with. Since some of the answers require rephrasing of ideas in one's own words, the scorers were informed to tolerate spelling and grammar errors so long as they do not affect the ideas of the answers. They were particularly informed to focus on the comprehensibility and correctness of the answers to the questions. Whenever there was variation between the two scorers for an item, the decision of a third person was used. This, therefore, has helped us to maintain inter-rater reliability.

Training Offered to the Experimental Groups

The result of the unstructured interview in the pilot study has attested that students in the 'before reading' and the 'sandwich groups' have no experience in the above two test techniques. However, students in the 'after reading' group have reported that they have the experience of the technique. Since using a test format in which testees have no experience about is one of the factors which may affect students' performance (Alderson et al, 1995), listening test exercises in these approaches were offered to the subjects of the study. The training was offered using two different texts. One of the texts was used for the 'sandwich' technique while the other one was used for the 'before reading' technique. Training, however, was not given on the 'after reading' technique. This was so because all of the students had adequate experience in this format.

Results of the Pre-test

After the students were selected randomly from the 13 sections, the pre-test (the listening component of TOEFL) was administered to divide the testees in to three comparable groups. The test was composed of 50 items. After the test papers were marked, the scores of the students were put in a rank order i.e. from the highest to the lowest score. Then, codes such as A, B and C were given to each score to make the grouping simple. The procedure used in giving the codes was as follows: the first top three scores were labeled as A, B and C, respectively, while the second top three scores were coded in an inverted way as C, B and A, respectively. Similarly, the next three scores were labeled as A, B and C while the other three were coded as C, B and A. The same procedure was used until the 135 scores were given these codes. After this was done, students whose scores were labeled as A, B and C were considered to be in groups 1, 2 and 3, respectively. After the students were grouped in the above way, descriptive and inferential statistics were run to ascertain the comparability of the groups statistically. The following tables (1 and 2) present the results of the pre-test:

Table1: Descriptive Summary of the Pre Test Results

Groups	Statistical Values			
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
After Reading	5	43	19.60	8.22
Before Reading	5	42	19.60	8.29
Sandwich	5	42	19.62	8.49

Table2: The Pre -test Results of the One -Way ANOVA

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	.01481	2	.007407	.000	1.000
Within groups	9170.178	132	69.479		
Total	9170.193	134			

As indicated in Table 1, all of the three groups had comparable mean and standard deviation results. This was further investigated by ANOVA and the result of the one-way ANOVA ($F=.000$ with degrees of freedom 2 and 132) has confirmed that there is no statistically significant listening comprehension ability difference among the three groups.

Results of the Experiment

As indicated in the previous sections, three groups were made to view questions at different times in a listening comprehension test and comparison of their performances was made to see if the time they view the test questions brings about difference in their scores. Thus, the following null (H_0) and alternative (H_1) hypotheses were made: (H_0) the time in which test items are viewed in a listening comprehension test has no effect on the testees' performance while the (H_1) states that the time in which test items are viewed in a listening comprehension test has an effect on the testees' performance.

Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were employed to study the data obtained. The result of the descriptive statistics (Table 3) shows that the mean performances of the 'AFTER READING', the 'BEFORE READING' and the 'SANDWICH' groups were 10.93, 10.09 and 12.69, respectively. Similarly, the standard deviations of these groups were found to be 3.36, 3.25 and 2.50 respectively.

Table 3: Descriptive Summary of the Post Test Results

Groups	Statistical Values			
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
After Reading	4	17	10.93	3.36
Before Reading	5	17	10.09	3.25
Sandwich	5	16	12.69	2.50

The above statistical values may in fact give us some pictures about the differences in the approaches. They, however, cannot tell us whether the differences are significant. To this effect, One-way ANOVA was carried out to determine the difference among the three approaches. The ANOVA, then, detected a significant difference in scores across the different approaches. As shown in Table 4, the calculated value of F ($F=8.440$ with degrees of freedom 2 and 132) exceeded the value of F tabulated at .05 probability level set for this study. The probability that these differences occurred by chance alone was less than 5%. This, then, allowed me to reject the null hypothesis which stated that the time in which test items are viewed in a listening comprehension test has no effect on the testees' performance.

Table 4: ANOVA for (Mean) Differences among Approaches

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	158.326	2	79.163	8.440	.000

Within groups	1238.089	132	9.379		
Total	1396.415	134			

Since the ANOVA result indicated that at least one of the individual means was significantly different from the others, locating the direction of the difference was another area of interest. To this end, Scheff's post-hoc test at 0.05 levels was used to compare the three means. The result is presented in the following table:

Table 5: Post-hoc Comparison of Means

Groups	Mean Difference	Sig
Sandwich Vs. Before Reading	2.60*	.000
Sandwich Vs. After Reading	1.758*	.027
After Reading Vs. Before Reading	0.85	.427

Note* Shows statistical significance

As can be seen from the above table, the Scheffs post-hoc result indicated that the 'sandwich group' performed significantly different from the others. On the other hand, the 'after reading' and the 'before reading' groups have shown a non-significant mean difference in their scores.

Discussion

It is widely agreed among language skills' assessment scholars that assessment formats and contents should represent classroom learning formats and contents appropriately to be considered valid. But how valid is valid to give only one time listening opportunity in a listening test while students, these days, actually listen a lecture as several times as they wish. The long-standing practice that students should take lecture notes as fast as possible using short hand note taking strategies seems to be challenged because most students are equipped with technological devices to record lectures for later use. For instance, some students even go to the extent of video recording lectures and photographing supporting notes written on the white or black board using their cellphones. Would giving students two listening opportunities make tests to offer parallel experience to what the several chances they can get from their recorded lectures? Whether a listening text should be heard once or twice is debatable. The issues surrounding this deliberation need to be subjected for empirical studies and are beyond the scope of this article.

This study took the argument for listening to a text twice and it experimented the effect of the time in which test questions are viewed on performance. The One-Way ANOVA and the post-hoc test have shown significant mean differences among the three approaches ($F = 8.440$ with degrees of freedom 2 and 132) and thus indicated the approach that made the difference respectively. Accordingly, the 'after reading' and the 'before reading' groups showed a non-significant mean difference while the 'sandwich' group revealed a statistically greater mean difference over the other two approaches. This finding is also corroborated by the qualitative findings of Sherman (1997) even though his quantitative data revealed no statistical mean difference among the approaches. Unlike documenting the difference, pointing out specific causes that

made the difference between the sandwich approach and the other two calls for further experiments that control the effect of individual variables across the three approaches that might have caused differences on performance. Nevertheless, tentative explanations about the possible variables that caused the differences in the examinees' scores could be forwarded.

Viewing the test questions before the second listening may help to have selective and focused listening. Besides, the five minutes given to read the questions between the listening may as well have a positive role to answer some of the questions. This may be true because the notes the testees have taken or the information they have recorded in their memories from the first listening may help them to answer some of the questions. This, however, is not the experience of the 'before reading' group.

Moreover, the sandwich approach seems to help testees utilize top-down as well as bottom up processes in a balanced manner. In the 'sandwich' approach, the first listening seems to encourage top-down processing of the text since the testees are exposed to experience the wider context. Similarly, the placement of the test items before the second listening may facilitate bottom-up processing since the testees process the information in the text by going from specific questions to the complete text. The 'Before Reading' approach, on the contrary, seems to encourage the text to be processed by letting the testees go from the general to specific processing.

What is more, if not knowing test questions in advance creates anxiety and if this, as a result, has a negative effect on the performance of the testees, listening two times before knowing the questions seems to be the worst of all.

On the other side of the comparison, the 'sandwich' approach seems to lay a good ground for testees to focus their attention on the main idea(s) of the text since they do not have the test items before the first listening. In the 'after reading' group, however, reading of the questions prior to listening the text may push the testees to do two things i.e. answering and listening. This, as a result, may make them abandon one area of attention. If this is a possible condition, the chance of the 'after reading' group to fully grasp the message of the text is at least lowered by a factor than the other group. If this can be considered as an advantage, the 'sandwich' group then seems to be in a better condition than the 'after reading' group.

It is also logical to think that activation of relevant background is higher when one gets adequate information about something from a certain stimulus. Otherwise, the possibility of activating less important or irrelevant schemata may be possible if a stimulus provides an incomplete input. In connection to this, Anderson and Pearson (1984) pointed out that a particular sub schema may not necessarily activate the schema it belongs to. They also say the reverse is possible. We may, therefore, consider that the interaction effect between the fragmented representations of the text and the background knowledge of the testees in the 'after reading' group may not be as powerful as the interaction effect between the whole text and the background knowledge of the testees in the 'sandwich' group to activate proper schema.

Some testees in the 'after reading' group may experience difficulties to comprehend the test questions properly or may find the nature of the test questions having bad appearance before listening to the text. This questions the face validity of the test and consequently; it may create anxiety which possibly affects the degree of attention that

should be paid to the listening of the text. This, as a result, may lead to disguise the construct to be tested. This likely negative effect of the text appearance, however, may not have equal strength to that of the sandwich group because this group has no exposure to the comprehension questions before the first listening.

Conclusion and Implication

The study was aimed at investigating the effect of viewing test items in different times in listening comprehension tests and the finding showed that viewing listening comprehension test items in different times has an effect on performance. Accordingly, viewing questions between two listening is found to have strong support to respond to listening comprehension test questions correctly. Based on the findings of the study, the following implications may be drawn:

- Testing a given ability or construct in different methods may result in different performances. Thus, recognizing a method effect in testing is very important.
- All of the three testing listening approaches considered in this study have got their own advantages and disadvantages. However, the weight of each advantage in each approach to enhance listening test scores may not be equally significant. Similarly, the influence of each disadvantage in each approach to affect test scores may not also have the same level of significance. Thus, further Study should be planned to investigate the significance level of each advantage and disadvantage across the approaches.
- Experimenting these approaches with different types of texts, test formats/techniques, levels of students and gathering students' opinions about these approaches and comparing these opinions against the students' performances may also give us valuable insights about placing test items in different positions in listening comprehension tests.

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CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF 20:30 NEWS BROADCASTING

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Abstract

Today Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is considered as one of the dynamic research fields in Social Science, Political Science, Sociology and Linguistics. In Critical discourse analysis, some issues as power relationships, manipulation, Hegemony, dominance and justice are analyzed. Critical discourse analyst assumes some kind of responsibility for herself, a responsibility for rescuing people in the national and international Level. This study attempts at revealing the problem that how Linguistic and non- Linguistic ideological structures are represented in 20:30 news broadcasting and in doing so, what kind of explanation a critical discourse analyst presents considering these Linguistic and non-linguistic ideological structures employed in 20:30 news broadcasting. The result of this research can throw Lights upon mind and show the way to the audience to what she hears as news broadcasting and also can be treated as a model for the whatever suitable presentation of news by the editors- in - chief and by those who are involved in news broadcasting. It should be stressed that this research tries to have a role, though trivial, in improving critical thinking skill as one of the most prominent cognitive ones.

Key words: Critical discourse Analysis, Hegemony, Ideology, critical thinking

1. Introduction

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is considered as a new approach in the domain of discourse analysis which analyzes and divulges the hidden ideology and power relationships in a text. In this area of discourse analysis, analyst's main concern is to divulge those inequalities, crisis, and misuses of power and discriminations which are reproduced, legitimized and/or administered by a specific discourse. In this approach, there is a strong belief that texts are not innocent of ideological implications, rather report events through the lens of specific standpoint; that is, It is possible to scrupulously investigate the hidden ideology in diverse texts. In Critical Discourse Analysis, It is strongly recommended that language of a media is not a transparent and placid medium; rather, a distorted reporting of events. CDA, through its critical stance, analyzes any text. This study is an attempt to show how ideological linguistic and non-linguistic cues are represented in 20:30 news broadcasting and what kind of explanation CDA presents. Critical analyst, unlike previous traditional scholars in the area of discourse analysis, does not confine herself and is not trapped in the labyrinth

of methods and theories, but chooses an interdisciplinary approach .that is, Critical Discourse Analysis aims at reconciling different scientific domains including semiotics, sociology, communication science and linguistics. In the viewpoint of the writer, when diverse sciences are integrated, "creativity" would emerge and this would, inevitably, led to new discoveries and achievements.

2. Review of related literature

Although there are diverse approaches in Critical Discourse Analysis, Fairclough's Dialectic relational approach (1985,1999,1989b,2001),Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach (1993,1995,2000,2004,2006,2008), Wodak's Discourse historical approach (2001,2009) are among the most outstanding and influential ones. However, Van Dijk unlike other outstanding characters in the field considers the "cognitive" aspect of discourse and in his analysis of discourse, pays attention to three aspects of "discourse, cognition, society" simultaneously and integrates them. Thus, his approach is an appropriate one to analyze media and to investigate dominant ideology which is hidden in a text. In this research, following Van Dijk's (2004) model, It is strongly held that It is the context and meaning of a discourse which expresses ideology, not the form and structure of that specific discourse. In this section, ideological analytic categories have been described adapting Van Dijk's (2000) model.

Actor description

Actor might be described as a group member or as a specific individual. They also might be described by their first or last name, or by their specific properties, by their position and the kind of relationship they would have with other groups.

Verification through authority

A speaker/writer might try to achieve the objectivity and reliability of her speech via mentioning a political character or specific organization.

Categorization

Usually, political parties and groups would intend to categorize other groups.

Consensus

This category stresses on inter-group solidarity and puts special emphasis on unity within country.

National self glorification

In this strategy, history, tradition and principles of our country would be applauded.

Negative other representation

In this macro strategy, out-group parties are negatively realized in the content of discourse.

Positive self-representation

Political discourse typically focuses on our hospitality, patience, our adaptability with law while It is asserted that our behavior is bereft of prejudice and we are strong supporters of international rules.

Polarization Us -Them Categorization

Typically, political groups intend to categorize group into in-group and out-group parties and would like to assign positive characteristics to their own group and to use negative attributes for the adverse group. Other important analytical categories of Van Dijk's (2000) model are included:

Metaphor , comparison , contra-factual , disclaimers, euphemism , evidentiality , example/illustration, generalization, hyperbole, irony , number game, presupposition , vagueness, victimization , implication, distancing , dramatization, history as a lesson, humanitarianism, legality, honesty, openness ,pseudo-ignorance, reasonableness.

3. Method

In this descriptive research, which is a kind of qualitative and heuristic one , visual and sound recording of 20:30 news broadcasting was conducted for a period of one month (Bahman 1387)[February 2009].This news broadcasting is shown in TV of Iran everyday on 8:30 pm except during holidays and Fridays. Totally, 24 news extract were selected to analyze. The motive for this selection is due to their appropriateness and suitability regarding our main question and purpose in the research. In order for the analyses not to be prolonged, the main important and principal lexicon and structures which had ideological implications were analyzed. So, for the sake of brevity, only one extract and its image correspondent was chosen for ideological analysis.

Original extract(phonetically transcribed)

Mostajere ru siyāh e kaxe sefid asbābkeši kard. jorj dabelju buš asbāb va asāsiyaš ro az kaxe sefid bardāšt va rāhie tegzāz šod. Tamum šodan e zemamdariye boš forsāt e monāsebi bud barāye varaqzadane parvandeye kariye hašt sālaš. In **jomhurixahe nabeqe** chehel o sevomin raeese jomhure āmrikā dar in dore bā raftārā va goftārāš az xodaš tasvire vizheiy nā faqāt dar zehne mardome donya ke dar zehne āmrikaieyhā ham beja gozāšt. Alāve bar do sevome mardome āmrikā ke az raftane boš xošhālan, **hašt sāl jenāyat** , boš ro be jek **čehreye manfure jahāni** tabdil karde , ammā xob **jorje** dige, etemād be nafs tekun nemixore. Bad az si en en . Lomond ham bar asās e jek nazarsanji elām kard:" boš fājee āmiztarin raeese jomhure āmrikā bud". Bārāk obāmā ham dar hāli emruz be onvāne čehelo čāhāromin raeese jomhure emrikā ruye kār umad ke hame montazeran az lāk e entexabāti dar biyād . har chand mošaxxas shodan e tim e tarkib e asliy e obāmā, tā hodudi montazerāne taqir ro nā omid karde.

English translation

"White palace **disgraced tenant** moved to a new place. Jorge W. Bush moved the furniture and went to Texas.

Bush's statesmanship ending was a suitable opportunity to analyze his 8 year career. This **genius republican**, the 43th president of US in this period drew a particular image not only in the mind of all people in the world, but also in the mind of all Americans. Besides 2/3 of Americans who are happy due to Bush's relinquishing power, 8 years of **crime** made people recognize Bush as the world's **detested** face. But, no wonder, it is Bush. Nothing could make problems for his self reliance. After CNN, LOMOND, based on people's opinion and attitudes about Bush, declared that "Bush was US's most disastrous president". Today Obama became US' forty-fourth president and now all people wait for him to come out of his shell. However, when Obama's fix players [cabinet members] were chosen, those who longed for change were, to some extent, disappointed"

Text analysis

In this extract, 20:30 is going to degrade the event through constructing a tenancy context. Although here we are dealing with a very important event, that is, Bush's presidency termination, 20:30 through drawing a specific context (tenancy context) in the title, describes those events which addressee could reconstruct by his mental schema about presidency termination in a specific country. In this extract, ideological strategy of "actor description" is being used, because the president of a country is negatively and unpleasantly described as a social actor. So, Bush is described as a "mostajere ru siyāh"(a disgraced tenant). In the phrase "jomhurixāhe nābeqe(genius republican)", political and ideological strategy have been outstandingly used to describe social actor unpleasantly. These strategies are related to "lexicalization" strategy because news reporter could use neutral phrase of "in jomhurixāh"(this republican) instead of employing that phrase. On the other hand, it is reported that the president's speech and behaviors left a "particular"(viže) image in the minds of all people in the world. Although the word "viže"(particular) in Persian is synonymous with "xās-maxsus", in this context, it is not a neutral word at all, but a negative implication should be assigned to it. So, here it is considered as synonymous with "altered"(maxduš) and undesirable (nāmatlub). Furthermore, ideological strategy of "Game play" in the phrase "alāve bar ānke 2/3 mardome āmrika az raftane bosh xošhaland", was utilized. The role of ideological strategy of "labeling" or "lexicalization" is uncovered because 20:30 interprets "8year presidency" as "8 year crime"[hašt sāl jenājat]. 20:30 also takes CNN and LOMOND as a reference point to support his anti-Bush and anti-American ideology and to validate his standpoint. So, specifically the role of ideological strategy of "Authority" is divulged. The rhythm and musical harmony which is observed in the pairs "bārāk va lāk" in the sentence "bārāk obāmā ham.....lāke entexabāti dar biyād", demonstrates "alliteration" strategy. On the other hand, it has been asserted that "when Obama's primary members(players) of cabinet have been chosen, those who longed for **change** were disappointed". In this quotation, the strategy of vagueness was used. So, some questions remained unanswered including:

- 1) Who are those longing for change? 2) Is Iran the only country who waits and longs for change? 3) Could we place all people in the world in this domain?

Image analysis

In this extract, when 20:30 asserts that "Lomond based on people's opinions and attitudes about Bush declared that Bush is US' most disastrous president", we see an image in which this phrase is written with bold and red format. In the center of the image, LOMOND newspaper is shown while the letters cannot be recognized. Bush's image also occupies a predominant space of newspaper. The background color of this page is "black". It sounds that the central and focal point is hidden in the sentence written above the image, that is "Bush is US' most disastrous president". Although CNN reports this utterance, 20:30 also reports this issue as if 20:30 is reporting the event. The important role of color cannot be ignored simply because this utterance is written with **red** letter through which 20:30 aims at showing "bloodthirsty" identity of Bush and this goal is met via depicting a visual element. Moreover, 20:30 through placing Bush's image in the center of the image seeks to indirectly say that this picture is Lomond's most important topic. On the other hand, we see Bush's image in vertical angle. This shows power difference between us and Bush as a social actor; that is, observing Bush's image in a top-down style as an observer, we are delicately imposing an imaginary power on a social actor (Bush) and this shows our higher statue. In nutshell, it is not only due to 20:30 representation of image by which our understanding is expanded, but some aspect of our understanding owes to 20:30 specific relationship with addressee.

4. Result and discussion

In this paper, it has been shown that Critical Discourse Analysis is a suitable method to divulge and trace dominant ideology in a text and Van Dijk's model is beneficial to analyze news broadcasting. It is also divulged that linguistic and non-linguistic cues are often represented in 20:30 via some important strategies including national self glorification, polarization, actor description and irony. Furthermore, this study showed that Critical Discourse analyst should process both linguistic and non-linguistics knowledge and specifically he should get mastery of some related areas including semantics and pragmatics. In this attempt, it is also shown that non-linguistic elements as image and color might be employed ideologically. Critical discourse analyst should also process sufficient social and political information to understand social, political, economic and cultural conditions much more comprehensively. So, her background knowledge assists her to have much more suitable attitude toward the process of text production and this ultimately helps her to present more plausible interpretation. In other words, researcher only in this condition can punctiliously investigate different layers of text and recognize the delicate hidden ideological network in a text. Theoretically speaking, this study might expand previous researches on linguistic theory and might introduce new conditions which are necessary in defining linguistic theory. Moreover, this study can also enlarge our knowledge of linguistic typology and can present new methods in classifying languages. These are considered as outstanding achievements of CDA. The last point is that, unfortunately, the important role of rhetorical devices is being forgotten in our country. The strategies used in Van Dijk's model are closely related to rhetoric, so these could help us to get mastery of this skill. Ultimately the ideological implication of the

study is that it could increase "critical thinking" in society. In Schafersman (1991) viewpoint, critical thinking enables an individual to assume herself as a responsible citizen who is not a sheer consumer of goods and amusements of society, but a person who helps her community. This is a skill which should be taught.

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THE EFFICIENCY OF PLANNED FOCUS ON FORM ON THE SUCCESS IN ELT

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Abstract

In the context of this research, it is intended to treat and assess a grammar teaching method that results in grammatical accuracy and fluency simultaneously as a reply to the question of “What kind of grammar teaching method should be used in ELT?”. It is thought that it is useful to use a model which supplies consciousness in forms and which stresses meaning and usage. Thus, it is aimed to investigate the efficiency of Planned Focus on Form in this study. The target forms of this study are When-While Clauses and Present Perfect Tense in English. Firstly, a language teaching model and testing materials were developed on the basis of Planned Focus on Form for each of the two target forms. Secondly, these materials were piloted with a group of similar participants. After having designed the materials, this model was conducted in eighth grade class at a secondary school in Ankara-Şereflikoçhisar. Then, the tests related to these target forms were applied to the participants. Next, the scores of the pretests, posttests and follow-up tests were statistically analyzed in order to test the effectiveness of treatment procedure. Finally, the findings of the study are obtained from this data analysis. At the end of this study, it is concluded that Planned Focus on Form

- is more efficient in learning and using of the target forms.
- is more efficient in learning and using grammatical rules of target forms.
- is more efficient in comprehension and interpretation of target forms in reading skills.
- is more efficient in controlled and free production of target forms in writing skills.
- is more efficient in retention of target forms which are learned.

Key words: Form Focus Instruction, Planned Focus on Form, Grammar Teaching, Foreign Language Teaching.

1. Introduction

A language is a system which contains a number of rules, lexical items and the usage of these items in communicative aims. These elements of a language are thought to be taught in also foreign language teaching. Within this concept, the grammatical items should also be taught with their usage. There are also numerous studies which emphasizes the teaching of grammatical items in meaningful contexts (Ceylan, 2007;

Çalış, 2001; Gürata, 2008; Odabaşı, 1994). There are also some studies which advise to apply activities that pay attention to the target forms in the input and to the description and comprehension of the target forms in grammar teaching (Ellis, 1995: 88).

In the context of this research, it is aimed to treat and evaluate a grammar teaching method that results in grammatical accuracy and fluency simultaneously as a reply to the question of "What kind of grammar teaching method should be used in English language teaching?" Within this context, the relationship that explains how input changes into output should be understood in a better way in order to solve the problem of teaching grammar. The basic question in the subject of turning input into output is that "What kind of grammar teaching supplies the relation of turning input into output?" It is thought that it is useful to use a model which supplies consciousness in forms and stresses meaning and usage. Thus, the teaching model that benefits from the communicative approaches and that teaches the characteristics of a form in a contextual and meaningful context is emphasized in this study. The current study aims to provide insights into the processes of language curriculum development in teaching English as a foreign language to Turkish students according to the sub model of Form Focus Instruction, that's Planned Focus on Form. In other words, it explains a small-scale study including material development, treatment and testing based on Planned Focus on Form Instruction.

Numerous studies have been carried out on Form Focus Instruction in foreign language teaching (FLT) for over 30 years. It has been investigated whether Form Focused Instruction leads to higher levels of accuracy in the use of specific structures as well as the effects of instruction on the sequence of acquisition. These studies have been carried out in two principal ways: One way includes comparing classroom learners with naturalistic learners. The other way includes designing experiments to study whether instruction directed at specific grammatical features results in their acquisition (Ellis, 2001b, p.56).

Whereas the earlier research was concerned with whether Form Focused Instruction worked, current research has been directed at examining how this model is accomplished in different settings and what effects different types of Form Focused Instruction have on second language acquisition. For instance; VanPatten and Cadierno (1993, p.225-240) found that input processing instruction and production-focused instruction were equivalent on production and the former was more useful on comprehension. Wan (1999, p.1-243) noted that grammatical consciousness-raising tasks were as effective as grammar instruction in helping students acquire grammatical knowledge and produce grammatical sentences. Lok (2000, p.1-70) provided evidence of no significant difference between the effects of the provision of meaning-based and form-based prompts in the learners' question formation performance. Dutta (2002, p.1-73) revealed that when learners produced the target language, they became aware of gaps in their linguistic knowledge and reflected on their output in an attempt to solve their problems. Erlam (2003, p.1-227) showed significantly greater gains for the deductive grammar instruction group than for the inductive grammar instruction group. Andringa (2005, p.1-157) suggested that there was an interaction between the kind of grammar structure taught and the kind of

instruction received and duplicated the former results that explicit knowledge is limited. Gerzic (2005, p.1-119) presented that there was a considerable amount of attention to form in communicative lessons and that a focus-on-form was proactive since the students played an important part in both initiating and responding focus on form episodes. Chan Shiu Yip (2005, p.1-193) indicated that the average achievers were able to learn English grammar through an inductive approach. Xiao-xia (2006, p.21-27) proved that Form-Focused Instruction in a communicative classroom is beneficial to language learners and it is helpful for the development of students' inter-language system.

As for Turkey, in which country this study was applied, three studies on Form-Focused Instruction have been come across. Cantürk (2001, p.1-78) proved that the instruction in which comprehension tasks were used helped learners' comprehension and production and that task-based instruction in which Focus-on-Form was used was beneficial and effective in foreign language teaching. Eş (2003, p.1-125) reinforced the claim that output-based Focus-on-Form treatment has positive effects on learning English as a foreign language. Özkan (2005, p.1-148) highlighted that consciousness-raising technique used in Form Focus Instruction resulted in linguistic accuracy and retainment of the language learning.

It can be seen that all of these studies were carried out with the adult learners of English in the foreign language department of the universities. However, the present study constitutes the pre-application of an experimental research with 14-15 aged students. This study investigates the effects of the model not only on learning or success but also on grammar teaching and language skills such as reading and writing. This research aims at presenting the results of a curriculum evaluation and curriculum development study, focusing mainly on the effectiveness of the instruction-in which grammatical forms are integratedly taught in comprehensive and communicative contexts. In addition to this, this study aims to investigate whether the instruction conducted according to Planned Focus on Form has an effect on retainment of learning as the retention of a learned item is also another important matter in foreign language learning. As a result, this study underlines the important concepts in foreign language teaching since it differs from other studies in Turkey in terms of its participants and application.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Form-Focused Instruction is defined as "any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form". The term "form" includes phonological, lexical, grammatical and pragmalinguistic aspects of language (Ellis, 2001a, p.1-2). Form-Focused Instruction contains both traditional approaches based on structural syllabus and communicative approaches where attention to form arises out of meaning-focused activities. There have been a number of recent attempts to develop taxonomies of pedagogic options in Form-Focused Instruction. The center of these distinctions is Long's, focus-on-form and focus-on-forms. However, Ellis suggest that Form-Focused Instruction needs to be conceptualized in terms of three rather than two types, according to (a) where the primary focus of attention is to be placed and (b) how attention to form is distributed

in the instruction (Ellis, 2001a, p:16). Therefore; the types of Form-Focused Instruction are categorized as Focus-on-Forms, Planned Focus-on-Form and Incidental Focus-on-Form in this study.

Focus-on-Forms implies that the teacher and students are aware that the primary purpose of the activity is to learn a preselected form and those learners are required to focus their attention on some specific form intensively in order to learn it (Ellis, 2001a, p:17). Focus-on-Forms is equated with the traditional teaching of discrete points of grammar in separate lessons. In this approach, language is treated as an object to be studied and language teaching is viewed to be an activity to be practiced systematically (Ollerhead & Oosthuizen, 2005, p: 63). The primary organizing principle of course design is accumulation of individual language elements (Malik, 2008, p: 27). Mechanical or contextualized activities can be used in this instructional approach. However, the stress in both cases will not be on the meaning or communicative use of the forms in real-life situations, but on their formal use within instructional settings (George, 2008, p:4). This is done in an intensive way. Therefore, it can be said that the instruction aims the formal production of second language forms rather than the conveyance of meaning. In short, this sub model refers to traditional grammar instruction as in Grammar-Translation Method or Audio-Lingual Method.

There are various options such as explicit/implicit focus-on-forms, structured input/production practice, functional language practice (Ellis, 2001, p: 17-21) in this sub model. *Explicit focus-on-forms* is the instruction that involves some sort of rules being taught during the learning process (Ellis, 2001a, p:17). The rules can be presented deductively or inductively. *Implicit focus-on-forms* involves learners memorizing instances or inferring rules without awareness, or both (Ellis, 2001a, p:18). The difference between explicit and implicit focus-on-forms is the absence of awareness of what is being learned. *Structured Input* is a kind of input designed to provide plentiful examples of target form. In structured input, learner is pushed to attend to a particular feature of language while listening or reading (Ellis, 2001a, p: 18-19). It helps learners give primary attention to form rather than meaning and it makes learners attend repeatedly on a specific, preselected form. *Production Practice* involves both mechanical and contextualized activities (Ellis, 2001a, p:19). This instructional option is operationalised by means of oral and written transformation and substitution drills and more open-ended communicative practice (Van Patten and Cadierno, 1993, p: 225-243). *Functional Language Practice* is the instructional material that provides learners with the opportunity to practice the target structure in some kind of situational context (Ellis, 2001a, p: 20). The learners are aware that the purpose is to master the accurate use through repeated use of the target feature (Gerzic, 2005, p: 40). The primary focus is on form, not on meaning.

Incidental Focus on form refers to the instruction which draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose over-riding focus is on meaning or communication (Gao, 2009, p: 47). It can arise either because there is a problem of communication or because there is a problem of form (Ellis, 2001a, p: 22). Therefore; the instruction is extensive since several forms can be focused during the instruction. This type of instruction cannot be prepared in advance and the forms

cannot be preselected. There are two kinds of Incidental Focus on Form, Pre-emptive and reactive focus-on-form.

Pre-Emptive focus-on-form is an instruction in which the teacher or learner takes time out from a communicative activity to initiate attention to a form perceived to be problematic even though no production error in the use of the form or difficulty with message comprehension has arisen (Ellis, 2001a, p:22). There have been little studies on this type of instruction, so little is known about the kinds of options selected during the pre-emptive focus on form and whether or not it facilitates acquisition. *Reactive focus-on-form* consists of the negative feedback teachers provide in response to learners' actual or perceived errors (Ellis, 2001a, p: 23). Since negative feedback shows learners that the utterance they have produced is incorrect, how this feedback is given is important in terms of the learners. Negative feedback can be supplied either implicitly or explicitly. Implicit negative feedback is generally preferred by teachers as an option in form focused instruction (Gerzic, 2005, p: 44). The types of implicit feedback are classified as recast, clarification requests and repetition (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p: 45-46). Explicit negative feedback is not preferred in all types of Form Focused Instruction. As it is more obtrusive than implicit feedback, it occurs infrequently planned and incidental focus on form (Ellis, 2001a, p: 25). The types of explicit negative feedback are classified as explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback and elicitation (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p: 47).

Planned Focus-on-Form Instruction involves strategies that draw learners' attention to the form or properties of target structures within a meaningful context (Ellis, 2001a, p:20). It relates to input and meaningful production. Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus on form through grammar lessons designed to teach specific grammatical features by means of input, output, or production processing. In Planned Focus-on-Form, the instruction is intensive as the learners have opportunity to attend a single, preselected form many times. Thus, an important distinction between Incidental and Planned-Focus-on-Form is that with Incidental Focus-on-Form, various linguistic forms compete for the learner's attention, whereas with Planned Focus-on-Form, the teacher can select the only one linguistic form to which the learner should pay attention.

Planned Focus-on-Form approaches are intended to draw the learners' attention to specific language forms within naturalistic communicative contexts in the process of linking form and meaning. The rationale for these methods is based on the theoretical and practical assumption that the language learner needs to attend to, or notice, target language forms as a prerequisite to processing and ultimately acquiring those forms. The ultimate goal of this sub model is to facilitate the noticing input so that the noticed input can activate the remaining for learning. The use of this sub model in the classroom allows the teacher to instruct both accuracy and fluency. It emphasizes the accuracy of language forms in communicative classrooms (Gao, 2009, p: 47). Planned focused communicative tasks are intended to result in learner's correct usage of some feature that has been targeted. The primary focus is on the meaning of the form.

The instruction includes several approaches such as input flooding, input enhancement and focused communicative tasks. *Input Flooding* involves that input is enriched with numerous examples of the target language without overtly drawing

attention to it (Ellis, 2001b, p.108). The rationale for such an option is that acquisition occurs as a result of frequent exposure to a target feature (Ellis, 2001a, p.21). The aim of input flooding is to induce noticing of the target form in the context of meaning-focused activity. The difference between enriched input and structured input is that the focus is on meaning in the former whereas the focus is on form in the latter. *Input Enhancement* means highlighting target features and draws learners' attention to them (Ellis, 2001b, p.102). It can be achieved with many techniques such as underlining, using capital letters or using bold font in showing the target structure. It is aimed to help learners notice the target structure presented in the input. *Focused Communicative Tasks* are the tasks that are designed to elicit production of a specific target feature in the context of performing a communicative task (Ellis, 2001a, p.21). These tasks should make the learners produce the target form. Since these tasks have the characteristics of communicative tasks, focus in this task is on meaning, the activity is outcome-evaluated and there is a real-world relationship. The difference between communicative tasks and focused communicative tasks is that focused communicative tasks are intended to result in learners' employing some feature that has been specifically targeted (Gerzic, 2005, p.41). In other words, the focused communicative tasks are to induce the learners to process the target form.

According to Skill Building Theory having effects on Planned Focus-on-Form, a language is acquired first by learning the grammatical rules consciously, then by practicing exercises related to these rules, and at last applying these rules (DeKeyser & Sokalski, 1996, p.85). Considering this, a model of Planned Focus on Form was developed and conducted for the two target forms within the concept of this study. Also, while developing the model and the testing materials, the principles of Form Focus Instruction and Planned Focus on Form and reflections of the theories having effects on the models are taken into consideration. These principles can be summarized as follows:

- Instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence.
- Instruction needs to ensure that learners focus predominantly on meaning.
- Instruction needs to ensure that learners also focus on form.
- Instruction needs to be predominantly directed at developing implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge.
- Instruction needs to take into account the learner's built-in syllabus.
- Successful instructed language learning requires extensive L2 input.
- Successful instructed language learning also requires opportunities for output.
- The opportunity to interact in the L2 is central to developing L2 proficiency.
- In assessing learners' L2 proficiency, it is important to examine free production as well as controlled production (Ellis, 2005, p.1-15).

3. Methods of Research

Because of the fact that this study aims at supplying the evidence on the effectiveness of Planned Focus on Form, the overall design of the study involves the application of instruction in which grammatical forms are integrally taught in comprehensive and communicative contexts and the measurement of the students' achievement with the

help of various kinds of tests. Thus, this study is based on the model of quantitative research. It had an experimental design with pretest, posttest and follow-up test between an experimental group and control group. The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- The treatment based on Planned Focus on Form is more efficient in the learning of target forms.
- The students who are tutored according to Planned Focus on Form are better at learning and using of the rules of the target forms than the ones who goes on their own language program at school.
- The treatment based on Planned Focus on Form results in improvement in the reading ability of the students.
- The treatment based on Planned Focus on Form results in improvement in the writing ability of the students.
- The treatment based on Planned Focus on Form results in retention of the target forms.

In order to test these hypotheses, the following research questions were answered:

1. Are there any differences between the results of the pretests of the control group and experimental group with the respect of the whole test and grammar, reading and writing section of the whole test?
2. Are there any differences between the results of the posttests of the control group and experimental group with the respect of the whole test and grammar, reading and writing section of the whole test?
3. Are there any differences between the results of the pretests, posttests and follow-up posttests of the control group?
4. Are there any differences between the results of the pretests, posttests and follow-up posttests of the experimental group?
5. Are there any differences between the results of the follow-up posttests of the control group and experimental group?

The participants of this study were composed of the 8th grade of students at a secondary school in Ankara-Turkey. All of them were approximately 14-15 years of age and they were all native speakers of Turkish. They have been studying English since fourth grade of their academic life. They have four hours of compulsory English language course per week at their school. The instructor of the two groups was the regular teacher of them. All teaching and testing sections were conducted by the same instructor, with whom the students were familiar.

The number of the participants in the two groups changed on account of the removal of some students in the two terms of the academic year. For the first target form, which was treated in the first term, the participants in the control group were 13 male and 15 female, making a total of 28 Turkish students. The participants in the experimental group were 15 male and 13 female, making a total of 28 Turkish students. For the second target form, which was treated in the second term, the participants in the control group were 12 male and 13 female, making a total of 25 Turkish students. The participants in the experimental group were 14 male and 13 female, making a total of 27 Turkish students. Since only a few students couldn't attend the course for only one

day, no students had to be eliminated because of non-attendance at two or more sessions.

When-While Clauses and *Present Perfect Tense* were chosen as the target forms in this treatment due to the practicality; because, Eighth Grade English Language Programme of Turkey considers these structures among the structures to be taught. During the process, the experimental group received the treatment which was specifically designed and focusing on these target forms. The materials used in this treatment were developed or adopted from the coursebooks of foreign language teaching (e.g. New Hotline, Lifelines, Reach, Grammar Sense, and Grammar Dimension). The texts or exercises taken from these books were adapted to the treatment process in terms of learners' vocabulary repertoire and grammatical competence as well as the necessities of the model. The activities were designed according to the principles of Form-Focused Instruction and Planned Focus on Form. It was aimed to focus on both form and meaning with these activities. All materials required for teaching the target forms were provided to the teacher in the experimental group. After the teacher had been informed about these materials for six hours, he was asked to conduct these materials for 19 class hours for the first target form and for 17 class hours for the second target form.

As for the students in the control group, they received their normal classroom instruction which is based on the course book of Eighth Grade English Language Programme of Turkey. The students in the control group were treated during 6 class hours per target forms because the course book and Eighth Grade English Language Programme propose that these structures should be taught in three units and each unit should go on for two weeks. The course book was assessed by the researcher and it is seen that this book doesn't contain grammar teaching explicitly; it focuses on implicit learning of the grammatical structures with the help of some activities related to the language skills. Despite the fact that the Eighth Grade English Language Programme claims to be based on the constructive approach, plenty of irrelevances and deficiencies were identified at the end of evaluating the course book.

Although there are two different target forms in this study, the order of the treatments is the same and these stages have some common features. Therefore, the instruction starts with a warm-up and motivation activity. It goes on with the presentation of target form and explanation of target form. Then, to practice the target form, interpretation tasks are used. In the production stage, activities related to four language-reading, listening, writing, speaking- were orderly conducted.

In the stage of *presentation of the target form*, it is important to present the target forms in a meaningful text. Thus, the target forms were presented in a text but they were highlighted by having been written in bold, that's to say, Input Enhancement was used to get the students to focus on form. It is necessary to take the learners' attention into the meaning of the target forms, the students were asked to answer some questions related to the text in which the target form was presented.

In the stage of *explanation of the target form*, the grammatical rules are taught inductively or deductively with the help of Explicit or Implicit Instruction. In this study, Inductive teaching and Explicit Instruction were preferred. Explicit Instruction includes consciousness-raising tasks during which learners are encouraged to

determine grammar rules from evidence presented (Ellis, 2001b, p.84). In this study, the students were to discover the nature of target forms with the help of the questions asked them with the example sentences taken from the text.

After the explanation of the target form, the model proposes to design “activities that focus learners’ attention on a targeted structure in the input and that enable them to identify and comprehend the meaning(s) of this structure” (Ellis, 1995, p.88). These activities are called *interpretation tasks*. They are given as sequences of activities which reflect three operations. For the first activity, the learners are required to comprehend input that has been specially contrived to induce learners to attend to the meaning of a specific grammatical structure. For the second activity, the learners are made to pay attention to the important properties of the target feature. The third and last activity encourages the kind of cognitive comparison that learners will have to perform ultimately on their own output (Ellis, 1995, p.94). In this study, Interpretation Tasks related to the two target forms were presented in this sequence. The students were made to focus on form in the first activity, on meaning and form in the second activity and on cognitive comparison in the third activity. They were to be busy with a grammatical judgment test for both target forms in the third activity.

In *production* stage, the usage of target form in language skills is aimed. The activities were ordered from comprehensive to productive skills because it is thought to be necessary to present plenty of input before expecting the students to produce output. For this reason, reading and listening activities were conducted at first. The texts presented in these skills were full of the samples of target forms. The activities also pointed the comprehension and interpretation of the target forms. Thus, it was aimed that the students could turn input into intake.

Then, to make students produce output, writing and speaking activities were held. The students were given some roles and tasks that have to say, Focused Communicative Tasks were used. The activities were sequenced from the controlled/planned production to free/unplanned production of the target form. Controlled production task was used so that the students could try the hypothesis of the grammatical rules about the target form they internalized. Free production task was used so that they could turn the intake into the output.

In order to search for the efficiency of Planned Focus on Form, this study also includes a testing part. To see if the subjects didn’t have enough competence related to the target forms and their prior knowledge of target forms was statistically equivalent to each other, the pretest was administered one day prior to the instruction. The posttest was administered directly following the instruction in order to explore the effects of the treatments in both groups. Then, the follow-up test was applied 6 weeks later than the posttest so as to identify the retention of the target forms. All of these tests were the same test and they all were applied by the regular teacher during the timetabled class hours. These two tests for the two target forms comprise of three parts as grammar, reading and writing. Ellis states that “acquisition has been measured in terms of grammaticality judgments, comprehension and production” (2001, p.33). Hence, the tests were made up of the combination of different subtests: a multiple choice recognition test and a grammaticality judgment test for grammar test, a recognition

test and a comprehension test for reading test, a controlled production and a free production test for writing.

The grammar test consists of a multiple choice recognition test and a grammaticality judgment test. In the multiple choice recognition tests, the students were to complete or rewrite the thirty items which were not given in a communicative and comprehensive context. By using traditional measurement of grammar, it is aimed to show the effectiveness of the model into the traditional grammar tests. On the other hand, in the grammaticality judgment test, the students were asked to read a text and decide whether the sentences were correct or incorrect and to find the correct alternative if they were incorrect. This type of measurement is the typical of Focus on Form Instruction and this was used in the treatment section as the third stage of interpretation task in this application. Since this test includes recognition and correction of the errors and shows the usage of language in a communicative context, it's aimed to show the effectiveness of the model on the grammar tests.

The reading comprehension test consists of a short text containing examples of target forms. The students were asked to answer the questions, some of which were standard multiple choice and were designed to test whether they understood the sentences with target form and some of which were judgment questions and were designed to test whether they found the closest meaning of the sentences with target form. The written production test consists of two parts, one of which the students were to complete a text with the given phrases and clues and the other of which the students were to write a brief story with the help of given pictures and phrases. This test is aimed to measure the students' production of the target form. Since the instruction according to Planned Focus on Form gives importance to output, this type of test is to be used in order to express the effectiveness of the model into the output of the students.

Before applying all of these materials, they were piloted by the researcher with similar sample participants. In these pilot studies, not only the testing materials were tested, the teaching materials were also trialed and some important decisions and changes were done. For example, a teacher book was written for helping the instructor, some materials were replaced and some activities were simplified. These two pilot studies for both target forms are experimental studies with one group pretest-posttest design. At the end of these pilot studies, the reliability coefficient of the testing material is found as 0.97 for the first target form and 0.95 for the second target forms, two of which show a high reliability.

4. Data Analysis

Before examining the effects of the planned focus on form on the participants' gains, the pretest scores of the two groups were submitted to independent t-test in order to see if the subjects' prior knowledge of target forms was statistically equivalent. The results showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups prior to the treatment of each target forms. Thus, the possible development can be attributed to the effects of the treatments conducted. Besides, the mean of the test, which is 100 points in total, shows that the participants in both group doesn't have enough knowledge related to both of the target forms.

Table 1. Results of independent t-test for pre-test scores of the two groups

	I. Target Structure		II. Target Structure	
	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean
Control group	-0,30; $p>.05$	24,50	-0,11; $p>.05$	28,20
Experimental group		25,43		28,41

In order to measure the efficiency of Planned Focus on Form, the scores of posttests were compared between the two groups through independent t-test. This analysis was conducted for the two target forms separately. Table 2 indicates that there is a significantly difference between the two groups in terms of the experimental group for the two target forms. These analyses also reveal that the mean of the experimental group's posttests are higher than the control groups. Thus, it can be concluded that the treatments of the two target forms in the experimental group are more efficient in learning process.

Table 2. Results of independent t-test for posttest scores of the two groups

	I. Target Structure		II. Target Structure	
	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean
Control group	-5,30; $p<.01$	51,89	-5,97; $p<.01$	56,88
Experimental group		77,14		81,30

In this study, it is hypothesized that Planned Focus on Form is more efficient in grammar teaching, reading and writing. To test these hypotheses, the scores which obtained from the parts of the posttests-grammar, reading and writing, were also measured for the two target forms. For the grammar part of the posttests, there is a significantly difference between the two groups in terms of the experimental group. Table 3 shows that the mean of the experimental group's posttests for the two target forms are higher than the control group's. Thus, the treatments in the experimental group are more efficient in transferring and interpretation of the grammatical rules.

Table 3. Results of independent t-test for the grammar part scores in the posttest

	I. Target Structure		II. Target Structure	
	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean
Control group	3,65; $p<.01$	18,57	-8,95 $p<.01$	7,08
Experimental group		23,57		15,52

To see the effects of the model on reading, the scores which obtained from the reading part of the posttests of the two target forms were submitted to independent t-test. This analysis clears that there is a significantly difference between the two groups in terms

of the experimental group for the two target forms. As it can be seen in Table 4, the mean of the experimental group's posttests are also much higher than the control group's. It can be said that the treatments in the experimental group are more efficient in comprehension and interpretation of the target forms in a reading text.

Table 4. Results of independent t-test for the reading part scores in the posttest

	I. Target Structure		II. Target Structure	
	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean
Control group	-6,94; p<.01	6,93	-6,57; p<.01	10,84
Experimental group		12,00		16,81

One of the hypotheses of this study is that Planned Focus on Form is more efficient in writing skills. To test this hypothesis, independent t-test was applied to the scores obtained from the writing part of the posttests for both of the target forms. These analyses, as it can be seen in Table 5, underline significant differences between the two groups in terms of the experimental group for the two target forms. As the mean of the experimental group's posttests are also higher than the control group's, it is very clear that the treatments in the experimental group are more efficient in developing controlled and free writing abilities related to the target forms.

Table 5. Results of independent t-test for the writing part scores in the posttest

	I. Target Structure		II. Target Structure	
	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean
Control group	-4,52; p<.01	26,39	-3,15, p<.01	38,96
Experimental group		41,57		48,96

One-way ANOVA was performed on the follow-up tests scores of each group to see the differential effects of the treatment types on the retention of the two target forms. As reported in Table 6, significant differences are observable among the pretests, posttests and follow-up tests scores of the two groups for both of the target forms. Moreover, when the scores of the two groups are compared, it is clear that the experimental group is more successful in remembering the target forms than the control group.

Table 6. Results of One-way ANOVA for the follow-up test scores of the two groups

	I. Target Structure		II. Target Structure	
	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean	Independent t-test	Arithmetic mean
Control group	90,43; p<.01	40,96	59,60; p<.01	45,84
Experimental group	477,55; p<.01	67,79	378,10; p<.01	75,81

5. Results and Discussion

In order to test the hypotheses of this study, two groups of subjects, who are students in the 8th grade in a secondary school in Ankara-Turkey, were given two different types of treatment for the two target forms. Before and after the treatments, the pretests, posttests and follow-up tests were applied to the subjects in order to see the effects of the treatment and retention of the learning. The scores of the tests were statistically analyzed within and between the two groups in terms of both of the target forms. Findings from these analyses suggested that the treatments of the two target forms in the experimental group were more efficient than the treatments in the control group. The results gained at the end of this study are as follows:

- Planned Focus on Form is more efficient in learning and using of the target forms of the study than the teaching process based on the English language program of the secondary schools in Turkey.
- Planned Focus on Form is more efficient in comprehension, interpretation and usage of the grammatical rules of target forms than the teaching process based on the English language program of the secondary schools in Turkey.
- The experimental group's reading abilities have developed much more in terms of comprehension and interpretation of the target forms.
- The experimental group's writing abilities have developed much more in terms of controlled production and free production of the target forms.
- The learning of the target forms, which accompanied according to the principles of Planned Focus on Form, has more retention.

This study was occurred in the context of English language teaching as a foreign language. The findings of this study adjust to the studies happened in the context of second language teaching in immigrant classes and foreign language teaching. This study supports the findings of these studies in terms of different target forms. The studies searched by Cantürk (2001), Day ve Shapson (1991), Eş (2003), Fotos (1994), Harley (1989), Lyster (1994), Özkan (2005), Wan (1999), White (1991) and Xiao-xia (2006) reveal the efficiency of Form Focus Introduction in terms of plenty of different target forms such as noun clause, conditionals, place of indirect object, relative clause, reflexive, simple past tense, passive voice, reported speech, adverb placement. This study adds two more target forms, when-while clauses and present perfect tense, to these structures. Besides, this study enlarges the other studies since Planned Focus on Form, the sub-model of Form Focused Instruction, was totally applied and assessed. It also reveals the effects not only on the learning of the grammatical structures but also the reading and writing abilities related to the target forms.

The general finding in the studies which support the positive effects of Form Focused Instruction on the grammatical accuracy is that the effect of the model is much more if the target form is simple, that's, it doesn't require complex procedure. Especially the studies by Kadia (1987), Pica (1985) and Schumann (1978) suggest that the model is more effective in teaching the target forms which are structurally simple. However, one of the target forms in this study is syntactically complex (When-While Clauses), the other one is complex in meaning and usage (Present Perfect Tense) for Turkish learners of English. In other words, both target forms are accepted as the structures which are beyond the learner's inter-language systems. On the contrary of the other

research, this study suggests that Planned Focus on Form is also efficient in attending to the forms which are beyond the learner's inter-language system.

At the end of all these results, this study has shown that grammar teaching is still important in foreign language learning. It is thought that the success of the experimental groups has proved that explicit grammar teaching has positive effect on the development of grammatical competence. As well as explicit grammar teaching, this study indicates that interpretation tasks are very important and should be used in grammar teaching since they focus on the relation between form and meaning and they contain self-correction of mistakes.

Another important point of this study is that experimental group had chances to come across the target forms many times as the treatment included reading, writing, listening and speaking activities which focus on the comprehension and usage of the target forms. It has already known that using input very often in teaching process results in transmitting the input into the intake. So, this study has underlined the importance of using some techniques such as Input Flood, Input Enhancement and Enriched Input in the area of foreign language teaching. As well as input, it is also significant to have a chance of producing output in foreign language. It is understood from this study that designing controlled and free production activities which focus on target forms helps learners produce output in a more successful way.

As a result, this study is thought to have some evidence that Planned Focus on Form is more efficient not only in learning of the target forms, but also in grammatical accuracy, comprehension and production of the target forms. Yet, only this study is not sufficient for generalization as it is limited with the participants, duration of the process, target forms and measurement. Therefore, further research might be conducted in terms of different aged participants, other target forms. Another weakness in this study is that the measurement was only done with reading and writing on account of practicality. All language skills have different developmental stages, so further studies can be done in terms of the effects of the model in listening and speaking. As well, the effects of the feedback were not included in this study. It would be interesting to investigate the implicit or explicit feedback of the teachers in teaching process.

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A STUDY ON INDICATORS OF WRITING INSTRUCTION IN IRANIAN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CURRICULUM AT GUIDANCE AND HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

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Abstract

In this study, the indicators of EFL writing instruction have been studied at guidance and high school educational levels. The research questions were as follows: What are the indicators of writing EFL instruction at guidance school and high school EFL curriculum? What are the indicators of writing EFL instruction in Iran's guidance school and high school English textbooks? What are the weak and strong points of the instructional objectives of EFL writing in Iran's guidance school and high school English textbooks according to the indicators of writing instruction in EFL curriculum? To answer these questions, the language arts curriculum of Finland (2004), Lebanon (1995), and Canada (2001), and also Iran's has been analyzed qualitatively (through grounded theory method) at guidance school and high school levels. Because there has been no document as EFL curriculum in Iran's ministry of education, guidance school and high school textbooks were scrutinized carefully to extract the EFL writing theoretical framework and educational objectives. Findings showed that Iran's EFL textbooks for these educational levels have not been developed based on a particular theoretical framework. Here, EFL writing has been considered as something taken for granted and no particular definition has been considered for this language art and its sub-skills. The textbook developers not only did not deal with the conceptual framework of EFL writing, but also they did not develop the educational objectives explicitly. These led to developing general and ambiguous exercises in textbooks. In addition, no practical strategy has been presented for EFL teachers to enable them to achieve implied educational objectives in classes. In general, it could be concluded that EFL writing instruction in Iran follows no particular theoretical framework and objective. The implications of the findings would be discussed.

Keywords: Writing Indicators, EFL Curriculum, Guidance School, High School

Introduction

Language plays an important role in thinking, learning and communication. The students who have more ability to better understand and use language can take advantage of this ability. Literacy is something more than just the ability to read or write. The curriculum of different educational levels is specifically dedicated to teaching skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and media literacy. Linguistic abilities and skills enable students to learn about different topics, use language for different purposes, and enable them to communicate successfully. Students should be able to use the language correctly and fluently in different situations. National Language learning in primary school curriculum is important because learning subjects such as science, math, and social sciences could not be possible without language knowledge and skills. On the other hand, the curriculum taught in other academic courses is also very important because they are necessary tools for interaction and integration of information, as well as logical thinking and creative expression in speech and writing of students.

English as an international language is the most important means of communication between different nations. The necessity to learn a foreign language is obvious for everyone in today's world. The issue is of more importance in countries such as Iran, wherein the need to introduce the Iranian Islamic culture to the world is of great significance. Accordingly, the importance of EFL in Iran illustrates the need to pay more attention to the role of the English language. Language learning basically entails the integration of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Hence, the development of the four basic language skills constitutes a very important requirement of the curriculum.

At guidance school which is the beginning level of learning the foreign language, the foundation of English as foreign language knowledge and skills are developed in students and their instruction is continued throughout school years. Also, the students' knowledge and skills are based on what they have already learned at earlier grades. In order to write well in different situations according to their needs, students should be instructed to know the sub-skills and components of EFL writing. It seems that nowadays, the school textbooks are developed according to the authors' intuition and taste and they have no access to up-to-date and organized information on this language art (skill). The evidence for this comes from the lack of writing instructional objectives (see the unapproved document of "A Guide to Iran's English as a Foreign Language Curriculum, 1385). In other words, there are no content standards for EFL arts in an organized and principled way for different grades of guidance school and high school. Also, there is lack of research on this topic in particular. In fact, there are some studies on EFL instruction in Iran that is not directly related to this topic and they will be mentioned in the review of related literature.

Foreign language curriculum in Iran dates back to 1970 and there was no serious action on it until 2006. Due to the necessities and in order to make it more efficient, in 2006 planning council composed of some foreign language education experts and professors was held in the office of planning and developing textbooks. The Council, after preliminary meetings and consultations with various experts discussed and set the eighty different aspects of the curriculum. In fact, in 2006 a committee was formed

in the curriculum development center of the organization for educational research and planning, which is one of the offices of Iran's ministry of education, to develop "a guide to Iranian foreign language curriculum". In this committee, there were experts on English, French and German as foreign languages along with some professors on teaching the above-mentioned languages and also some professors of educational sciences. The committees' activities led to the development of a curriculum that was unfortunately not approved by the authorities of the Ministry of the education of Iran. As a result, there is no approved written document on "English as a foreign language curriculum" in Iran's Ministry of education (Anani Sarab, 1389).

However, we could have access to the educational objectives of Iranian EFL curriculum through the textbooks that are developed for guidance school and high school. Actually, the educational objectives are generally developed in a way that they correspond with Bloom's cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Bloom's classification of learning objectives within education is proposed in 1956 by a committee of educators chaired by Benjamin Bloom, identified three domains of educational activities:

- Cognitive: mental skills (Knowledge)
- Affective: growth in feelings or emotional areas (Attitude)
- Psychomotor: manual or physical skills (Skills)

After Iran's revolution in 1979, the Right Path To English Series "were replaced with "Graded English series" and they are used as textbooks in Iran's schools (Anani Sarab, 2010). As these books were developed based on traditional approaches of EFL instruction, they are not consistent with new knowledge and theories on foreign language teaching (see for example, Mahmoodi, 1990; Moradi, 1995). As a result, EFL instruction in classes just focuses on acquiring knowledge, not mastering the language arts (reading, listening, speaking and listening). In the textbooks developed for guidance school and high school grades, no indicator for developing writing skill has been considered. In other words, it is not clear that at the end of each grade, to what extent students should acquire writing skill.

Due to the gap in the related literature, the objectives of this study were as follows:

1. Determining the indicators of EFL writing instruction in guidance school and high school EFL curriculum,
2. Determining the indicators of EFL writing instruction in Iran's guidance school and high school EFL curriculum (textbooks),
3. The critical evaluation of Iran's guidance school and high school EFL curriculum (textbooks) according to the indicators of EFL writing instruction.

So this study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the indicators of EFL writing instruction at guidance school and high school EFL curriculum?
2. What are the indicators of EFL writing instruction in Iran's guidance school and high school English textbooks?
3. What are the weak and strong points of Iran's EFL curriculum (EFL textbooks) at guidance school and high school levels according to the indicators of EFL writing instruction?

Research method

According to research purpose this study was a pure and applied research and according to research design it was qualitative (based on grounded theory). The research sample and population of this study are the same and they are selected purposefully based on pre-determined criteria. The research sample include English curriculum of British Colombia (2001), Finland (2004), Lebanon (1995) and Iran (1390) which were collected by library study and especially through internet search. Finland and Canada's curriculum¹ were selected due to their success in international literacy competitions such as PIRLS (2011). Also, Lebanon was considered as one rather successful country in EFL instruction at schools.

This study is an initial attempt to define writing skill in EFL curriculum of guidance and secondary schools of Iran. To answer the first question, after reviewing the literature on writing skill, the conceptual framework of writing English as a foreign language has been developed. In order to do this, the cognitive psychologists and psycholinguists' studies on this language art have been studied carefully. Then, the objectives and indicators of writing instruction in EFL curriculum of Finland (2004), Lebanon (1995), and British Colombia (2001) have been investigated. Then, considering both conceptual framework of Writing skill and the commonalities of the mentioned curriculum on the instruction of this skill, the indicators of EFL writing instruction at guidance and high school levels have been developed. To answer the second question, aims of teaching and components of writing skill in the EFL curriculum of Iran for guidance and high school levels have been extracted from related textbooks. The last question has been answered by analyzing EFL curriculum of Iran for guidance and high school levels (actually related textbooks) based on the developed indicators for EFL writing.

Discussion and findings

This study with the main purpose of investigating the strong and weak points of Iran's EFL curriculum according to EFL writing instructional objectives and indicators, seeks to answer these three questions:

1. What are the indicators of writing EFL instruction in junior high school and senior high school EFL curriculum?
2. What are the indicators of writing EFL instruction in Iran's guidance school and high school English textbooks?
3. What are the weak and strong points of the instructional objectives of EFL writing in Iran's guidance school and high school English textbooks according to the indicators of writing instruction in EFL curriculum?

In what follows, answers to each of the above-mentioned questions would be discussed separately.

¹ Finland became third and Canada became 12th among the 45 countries participated in this international literacy competition (see http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/pirls2011/downloads/P11_IR_Chapter1.pdf).

Discussion and findings on the first question

Looking at the instructional objectives of EFL writing of Finland (2004), British Columbia (1995), and that of Lebanon (2001), it became clear that first, instruction of all components of this skill, i.e., spelling and written text production are intended at all educational levels. Second, instruction of all these components is planned in a way consistent with students' cognitive abilities. Third, in all cases, students are instructed to write with a communicative purpose in mind. Fourth, they are going to be instructed to write with the familiarity of the target language culture. Fifth, instruction of writing in different genres is intended. Sixth, students are intended to learn both writing techniques and organization of the text. And finally, students are instructed to develop the ability to write academically.

Writing process is a communicative act and usually a piece of writing is developed in proportionate with audience. Written texts are developed for entertainment or informing others about some events (purposeful writing). Also, students should be able to integrate new information and experiences and present a summary of them or be able to reformulate them. Of course, in order to communicate, students should have enough knowledge of written standard language (writing technique).

Writing in academic context requires the ability in producing ideas, their organization in a written text and retrieving information from long-term memory (text organization). Developing a consistent written text requires the organization of major and minor ideas of the related text. This depends on the individual's ability in manipulation of information and also his knowledge about the related topic.

Academic writing should be critical. In other words, the author should consider how to communicate with others through written language. He should interpret and evaluate his written text during a dynamic process. This analysis is done through a process within the writer's mind, before recording anything in the form of writing.

Writing process includes both encoding of words (spelling) and also text production and learning both of them require conscious instruction. Looking at the above explanation and commonalities of EFL writing instructional objectives in the above-mentioned countries, it could be said that components or indicators of EFL writing instruction are as follows:

- a. Encoding of words (spelling)
- b. Written text production
 - Purposeful writing
 - Writing strategies (writing technique and text organization)
 - Critical writing

Discussion and findings on the second question

At the beginning it should be noted that no specific EFL writing instructional objective has been defined in Iran's EFL curriculum (actually textbooks). In other words, no definite indicator has been considered obviously and directly. Based on EFL writing instructional objectives extracted from Iran's guidance school and high school EFL textbooks, the implied EFL writing instructional indicators have been extracted.

The EFL writing instructional objectives of three guidance school and three high-school textbooks have been extracted using Bloom's taxonomy. To do so, the exercises and tasks of the textbooks related to EFL writing instruction have been investigated.

Because the instructional objectives of these grades are not mentioned explicitly in the textbooks, so we tried to extract the EFL writing instructional objectives, having a careful look at the exercises and materials of guidance school and high school EFL textbooks in which the objectives are mentioned implicitly. Since October 2003, English language as a formalized subject has been taught in the first grade of guidance school. Looking at first grade guidance school English textbook, it became clear that the main focus of this textbook was on pronunciation, listening and writing skills as language learning begins by hearing words and sentences. The first four lessons of the textbook consist of writing exercises (*handwriting*), i.e., writing the alphabets and numbers, i.e., first, the capital letters, then capital and small letters together and finally the numbers. Also, the fifth lesson up to the tenth lesson consist of a writing exercise, namely, *Write it down* through which students look at the pictures and complete the sentences, and in some cases students should complete the sentences with the given words, look at the picture and complete the sentences, ask and answer questions, fill in the blanks, and follow the model to arrange scrambled words and sentences into correct word and kernel sentences. All in all, writing skill exercises include *handwriting*, and *write it down* exercises following a model, and they are exercises that consistently exist in all three guidance school grades.

So, the EFL writing instructional objectives of three guidance school textbooks are to enable students:

- to insert a word within an incomplete sentence and change it to a complete one,
- to be familiar with the sentence structure and format,
- to complete a sentence by writing some missing words,
- to write a complete sentence while looking at the picture beside it, i.e., to fill in the blanks for making a correct sentence,
- To use the correct form of the verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc (grammar) in a complete sentence.

Based on what was mentioned up to now, we could conclude that the instruction of both indicators of EFL writing including spelling and creative writing is intended in Iran's EFL curriculum at guidance school level.

In the first, second and third grade high school textbooks four EFL skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are planned to be instructed. In addition to textbooks as the main source, workbook, and educational software for self-study have also been considered.

In each lesson of the three high school grades' textbooks (Birjandi, Soheili, Norouzi, & Mahmoudi, 2012) different sections have been considered as follows:

Part A (New words) includes some new words to make the students familiar with the new vocabulary of the reading passage.

Part B (Reading) aims at reading and comprehending the passage. Here students are not permitted to translate because the aim of reading is not translation.

Part C (Comprehension) is a section that has been considered in some lessons. Here students' comprehension of the reading passage is checked through some exercises such as *answer the questions orally*, *True or False*, *complete the sentences using a,b,c,d* and finally *write complete sentences* to answer some questions.

After them, part D (Speak Out) and part E (Write it Down) are presented to introduce the grammatical points of each lesson. Some exercises such as transformation drills, substitution drills, repetition drills, and production drills are included. It should be mentioned that teaching grammar is not the aim. It is just a tool to help in writing, reading, and speaking correctly. Part E helps the students to write following the models through *write it down* exercises.

Part F (Language Functions) helps students to play a role in a situation or interact with partners by following the dialogue.

Part G (Pronunciation Practice) aims at making students familiar with the correct pronunciation of the words and sentences.

Part H (Vocabulary review) helps students to make sentences with the words in columns and sometimes by True or False exercises and Fill in the blank exercises, etc. And at last, part I (Vocabulary) presents new words which are used in the lesson in alphabetical order.

As it was mentioned, the writing skill exercises such as *substitution*, *fill in the blank*, and *sentence production* are included in high school textbooks. And sometimes some *write it down* exercises following the model are considered, which are consistent exercises in all three high school grades (Birjandi, Soheili, Norouzi, & Mahmoudi 2012).

So, the EFL writing instructional objectives of three high school textbooks include:

- Making a complete sentence with the words given;
- Answering some questions;
- Writing correct form of the words given;
- Writing some sentences about oneself.

As it was mentioned above, the goal of writing instruction in high school textbooks is to make students familiar with writing correct form of words and sentences. It is believed that handwriting, write it down exercises and making sentences will be surely effective and enough for teaching of writing. Moreover, it is stated that translation of the words is not necessary. In general, based on exercises and contents of the three high school textbooks, it can be understood that the writing skill instruction is intended. In some parts it is explained explicitly and clearly that the purpose of exercise is writing, not teaching grammar or translation. Based on what was mentioned up to now, we could conclude that the instruction of both EFL writing indicators is intended to some degree in Iran's EFL curriculum at high school level.

Discussion and findings on the third question

In guidance school and high school levels of Iran, the strong points of EFL writing instruction is considering some indicators of writing instruction mentioned above. The first component of writing instruction in EFL writing skill (spelling) has been planned to be instructed in guidance school level. However, the other components of writing instruction in EFL writing skill (written text production) has not been planned to be instructed in that educational level.

On the other hand, Just the EFL writing indicator "written text production" has been planned to be instructed to some extent at high school level. As it was explained before, written text production has three sub-indicators, i.e., purposeful writing, writing strategies (writing technique and text organization), and critical writing. These sub-indicators actually have not been considered in the EFL writing instruction of high school level.

Through studying Iran's guidance school and high school EFL curriculum, especially those parts on writing instruction, it can be understood that in this curriculum, EFL writing is taken for granted, because no clear definition has been presented for it and its sub-skills have not been introduced explicitly. The curriculum developers directly deal with EFL writing instructional exercises before determining its conceptual framework and educational objectives in advance. The lack of such conceptual framework and objectives lead to general and ambiguous EFL writing instructional exercises.

Conclusion and pedagogical implications

Findings showed that the EFL writing instruction in Finland (2004), Canada (2001) and Lebanon (1995) are defined in a consistent way and EFL writing instructional objectives are determined according to definite features. These have some consequences for EFL writing instruction. For instance, this skill has been planned to be taught critically and in accordance with context.

On the other hand, an important feature of EFL curriculum of these countries is that EFL writing instructional objectives are developed according to their EFL writing conceptual framework and this framework is developed based on the various studies of psycholinguists on language arts. Moreover, the general instructional objectives, i.e., macro objectives are developed based on this framework. Then, these macro objectives are broken into some "micro objectives" based on students' level of growth and cognitive ability.

Also, in their EFL curriculum, it has been stated operationally and explicitly how they could implement those objectives in the classes. In other words, first, all kinds of written texts that should be experienced by students are introduced in their EFL curriculum. Second, different kinds of educational activities that improve students' skills, cognition and knowledge to learn writing of different written texts (formal, informal ...) are determined, respectively. These are stated explicitly in EFL curriculum of Finland, Canada and Lebanon in detail for all grades.

However, as it was mentioned before, Iran's EFL textbooks for guidance and high school levels have not been developed based on a particular theoretical framework. Here, EFL writing has been considered as something taken for granted and no particular definition has been considered for this language art and its sub-skills. The textbook developers not only did not deal with the conceptual framework of EFL writing, but also they did not develop the educational objectives explicitly. Actually, EFL writing educational objectives were extracted indirectly from the exercises and the content of guidance school and high school textbooks. Lack of conceptual framework and lack of explicit educational objectives for EFL writing instruction at these educational levels led in developing general and ambiguous exercises in textbooks.

In addition, no practical strategy has been presented for EFL teachers to enable them to achieve implied educational objectives in classes. In general, it could be concluded that EFL writing instruction in Iran follows no particular theoretical framework and objective.

Based on what was mentioned on weak points of Iran's EFL curriculum at guidance school and high school levels, EFL curriculum and textbook developers could benefit and use the conceptual framework for EFL writing instruction suggested in this thesis, of course with some additions or changes. Based on this conceptual framework, they could develop EFL writing instructional indicators and objectives and also develop textbooks in accordance with those instructional indicators and objectives.

Findings of this research help EFL curriculum and textbook developers to develop EFL writing educational objectives in accordance with context (situation) and considering the audience. In other words, the EFL writing educational objectives should be planned in a way that when students graduated from school could be able to write in different situations in appropriate style and genre, using appropriate writing techniques and in a coherent and organized way; i.e., students should be able to write job application letters, formal letters, simple academic texts,

Also, Findings of this research helps EFL curriculum and textbook developers to consider critical writing when developing EFL writing educational objectives. In other words, they should plan those educational objectives in a way that after implementing them in class, students be able to critically view their own and others' written texts.

The other pedagogical implication of the findings of this research for EFL curriculum and textbook developers is that they should try to develop EFL instructional indicators and objectives for all educational levels in a way consistently following each other, in proportionate with at students' cognitive growth.

Also those involved in teacher education, could benefit the findings of this study. They could revise EFL teacher education curriculum based on the proposed conceptual framework and indicators for EFL writing instruction.

Teachers could benefit the findings of this research for determining their teaching strategies, bearing in mind their students' learning styles. Also, they could benefit the findings of this research when trying to devise better assessment tools.

Another group who could benefit the findings of this research are those involved in designing educational aids, here with emphasis on EFL writing educational aids, i.e., books, tapes, CDs, and films.

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THE EFFECT OF MIXED-UP STORIES ON VOCABULARY LEARNING AND RETENTION OF EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract

This paper proposes an effective teaching vocabulary method based on mixed-up stories for learning vocabulary effectively and sufficiently. Homogenous males and females have been selected randomly in their experimental and control groups. An English vocabulary test was designed from Interchange second learning English text book, third edition, by Jack c. Richards with Jonathan Hull and Susan Proctor. It has been applied as pre-, post-, and delay post- test. In addition, before using the test for the aim of data collection, it was piloted on a small group of subjects to estimate its reliability. The purpose of the second delayed test was to see which method of instruction had more impact on the students' vocabulary retentions and could sustain their vocabulary learning for longer period of time. The results and findings of the present study confirm the supports of mixed-up stories in the vocabulary learning and retention.

1. Introduction:

"Different task require different levels of word knowledge" (Blachowicz, Fisher, &Watts-Taffe, 2005). One of the most important aspects of teaching a language is to teach vocabularies effectively. The purpose of this study is to help English learners to learn the language in an appropriate way. If teachers desire to teach vocabulary to EFL learners in an effective technique, they should aware that "reciting new vocabulary words individually and mechanically is not effective as a long-term teaching strategy"

(Chengqian, 2009, p.5). Therefore, instructors may require designing an appropriate teaching method for controlling their students in teaching vocabulary. This paper explores a sufficient teaching vocabulary way based on a sufficient treatment that can be done in classrooms.

1.1. Teaching vocabulary and vocabulary learning

According to Stahl (2005), "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world." According to Moras and Carlos (2001), "Nowadays it is widely accepted that vocabulary teaching should be part of the syllabus, and taught in a well-planned and regular basis" (p.1). Three factors cause difficulties in learning meanings of words such as learners' characteristics, difficulty levels of words, and characteristic words (Blachowicz, Fisher, & Watts-Taffe, 2005).

Through testing of word knowledge in order to specify complex words, the development of word learning is defined (Nagy & Scott, 2000). According to researchers, we need to focus on different steps in vocabulary knowledge: (1) strange word ("I have not seen the word."), (2) presupposition knowledge of a word ("I've seen the it before."), (3) unknown knowledge ("It is not clear or I understand the word in general."), and (4) perfected knowledge ("I have enough vocabulary knowledge in speaking, writing, and so forth") (Dale, 1965; Chall, 1987; Stahl, 1999, as cited in Nagy & Scott, 2000). In the past, teaching of vocabularies restricted to show new items as they appeared in readings or listening texts (Moras, & Carlos, 2001). The teaching of vocabularies could not provide enough drills for vocabulary learning through language skills to ensure vocabulary expansion (Moras, & Carlos, 2001).

1.2. Significance of vocabulary learning

Reading skill achievements need vocabulary knowledge (Davis, 1968; National Reading Panel, 2000). Learners' ability in memorizing both social and academic vocabularies in every situation is important. In this regards, finding an effective vocabulary instruction method is so critical.

According to Blachowicz, Fisher, and Watts-Taffe (2005), the report of the National Reading Panel (2000) supported the fact that vocabulary instruction is important to age and ability of learners for learning new vocabularies.

1.3. Teaching language through stories:

Learners from all around the world seek for instructional stores to help them to improve their proficiency levels. Teachers can focus on more pleasant, practical, and useful methods in teaching vocabularies, grammars, and so on. As an illustration, childish tale and academic stories may be the effective ways for teaching a language to EFL learners. (Žigárdyová, 2006).

Learners have got the possibility to learn a language, because of the time, good memory and so on (Urbancová, 2006). According to Urbancová (2006), young learners' worlds of concepts and knowledge are distinctive from adult learners.

Thus, teachers must link language teaching far more closely to the students' everyday interests; they must be encouraged to respond to texts and situations with their own

thoughts and experience, rather than by answering questions and doing abstract learning activities. Teenagers address learning issues directly in a way. They need constructive feedback on whatever they do" (as cited in Harmer, 2005).

1.4. Significant of teaching through Stores

According to Urbancová (2006), stories play an important part in learning and enhancing the first language of humans and vice versa. In foreign languages, stories are critical parts of instructing the languages. Teachers need to start to teach a language with stories. "Many stories contain natural repetitions of key vocabularies and structures" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2). These enhance learners to memorize every part, so they can predict what is going to occur next in the future real context. Stories give an incentive stimulate for learners. They "can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language, culture and language learning" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.1).

Utilizing "stories allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing the children to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which will enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2).

2. Review of literature

Different task and methods for teaching vocabularies have been investigated for decades. Carter (1987) argued that "for many years vocabulary has been the poor relation of language teaching" (p. 145). "Vocabulary is a vital foundational thread in the tapestry of reading; it should be woven into the fabric of everything that is being studied" (Tankersley, 2005, p.66).

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) presented that researchers try to find out the most effective way in teaching vocabulary in the mini society of students which is called classroom such as using clues within words, analyzing root words, using around words, or using references like dictionaries. However the researchers try to find a new technique for teaching vocabulary, an effective way, in order to increase the pleasure of vocabulary learning against tiresome strategies in vocabulary learning.

2.1. Vocabulary learning and teaching

"Vocabulary is a vital foundational thread in the tapestry of reading; it should be woven into the fabric of everything that is being studied" (Tankersley, 2005, p.66).

There are two characteristics of vocabulary learning: an oral vocabulary meaning which refers to words that we use in speaking and listening, and a print vocabulary meaning that refers to understandable and essential vocabularies in texts that cause perfect understanding. In addition, Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001) argued that teachers may help their learners to learn vocabulary indirectly. They aware that students have to face words in different contexts, the new words need to be taught to students, teachers should use some items such as charts, and pictures in order to aid their students in learning. Nevertheless, according to NRP (2000), if teachers teach learners individual words directly, learners may learn the words perfectly. Although

direct vocabulary teaching is as effective as indirect vocabulary instruction, vocabulary teaching is sufficient indirectly.

Hart & Risley said (as cited in Jacob, 1996), "primary school children have different levels in mastering vocabulary words" (p.11). According to experts, if the lack of adequate vocabulary knowledge is ignored by the teachers, it intensifies in later years of students' age. "A high-performing first-grade student knows roughly twice as many words as the low performing first-grade student, and the gap only increases over the years. By twelfth- grade, high-performing students know approximately four times as many words as their low-performing peers" (as cited in Tankersley, 2005, p.67).

According to Blachowicz and Fisher (2005) in explicit vocabulary teaching; four types of words are focused: comprehension words, useful words, academic words, and generative words. In explicitly teaching all types of words need to be taught and many teachers choose the effective types of words for instruction according to their learners' background knowledge.

As a result there is a vocabulary gap, for filling the gap, as cited in Jacob (1996):

Reading aloud to pupils, such as telling a story, is an effective way for giving students opportunities to widen their vocabulary. When the children are listening to the stories, they will be given the chance to review their oral vocabularies. Meanwhile, new and advanced words can be introduced effectively. (p. 532)

According to Nuessell (1994), "Control of the lexicon involves two domains, that is, understand meanings from context as well as skill in "encoding specific lexical items" (p. 118). In other word, context is a key that learners open the door to learn meaning of words (Blachowicz, 2006). "Effective vocabulary study occurs daily and involves more than memorizing definitions" (as cited in Tankersley, 2005, p.74). According to the Texas Education Agency (2000), there are several strategies in vocabulary learning such as such as dictionaries, parts of words (prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds), and use of context clues (Ferguson, 2006). Ryder said (as cited in Blachowicz, Fisher, & Watts-Taffe, 2006): There are two things to be examined in the current development of vocabulary education; the first is the amount and depth of research done emphasizing the importance of vocabulary in relationship to school performance; the second issue is the degree to which teachers have been able to interpret and apply the research in their classrooms (p. 524). Teachers aware the appropriate words for instructing to their students as Beck presented (as cited in Blachowicz, Fisher, & Watts-Taffe, 2006) "the ways such as (a) frequency of words that is essential for using in the future, (b) the words that related to topics that students instructed,(c) ability for using words for learning other vocabularies" (p.530).

Also, Jiang (2004) investigated that what vocabularies are selected according to the ages of learners. She noted that learners learn vocabularies in order to master in a language, and learn the concepts of words, through the contexts of words. For adult learning, it is true that "acquisition is accompanied by little conceptual or semantic development" (Jiang, 2004, p. 417). If instructions accompany by learning their L1 semantic structures, learners learn vocabularies of a second language easily. On other hand, "teachers teach vocabulary that has the closest word-for-word exchanges between the native language and target language in concepts for beginners" (Chengqian, 2009, p.6).

According to McKenna (as cited in Herman, & Dole, 1988) teachers that teach primary schools need to provide story books contexts, or students use multi-media for learning vocabularies through listening to words contexts of the story books.

Richards said (as cited in Herman & Dole, 1988) "When vocabulary words are being taught to pupils, teachers need to consider how to teach these words to pupils based on the levels of ages, educational background and field of interest. The teachers also ought to recognize such sociolinguistic variables in which the words will be used" (p. 73). Furthermore, Herman and Dole (1988) believe that teachers need to train vocabulary differently and early, if a teacher needs to improve their learners' abilities for mastering a language, especially reading and listening of a language.

2.2. Learning Language through stories

According to Žigárdyová(2006), everyone knows a story or listen to a story once. Žigárdyová (2006) studied on children when they were involved in learning English through stories, and he claimed that the study of English for children when they are received stories as a hobby is critical because teachers can provide freedoms to create lessons in appropriate ways. It is important to select appropriate levels for certain classes. When learners listen to stories in classes they share social experiences, it "provokes a shared response of laughter, sadness, excitement and anticipation which is not only enjoyable but can help to build up the child's confidence and encourage social and emotional development" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002,p.1).

"Stories are a useful tool in linking fantasy and the imagination with the child's real world. They provide a way of enabling children to make sense of their everyday life and forge links between home and school" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002,p.1).

According to Ellis and Brewster (2000), stories improve the imagination powers of their learners and their learners involved in a story and playing the roles of the story in their minds for understanding and narrating the story. Children exercise their imagination through stories. Ellis and Brewster believed that this power helps their learners to simplify their hard lessons, subjects and they can develop their creativities. Stories also "develop the different types of 'intelligences' that contribute to language learning, including emotional intelligence" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2). Stories "develop children's learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2).

Stories have global themes with two bases, the abstract and concrete bases. Learners are able to play with thoughts and feelings for dealing with issues which are significant for living. Stories are able to present the cultures of every language and nation. They are able to identify the strange and unknown of cultures (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2). Instructors stories permit "to use an acquisition-based methodology by providing optimal input" (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2). It is wonderful to use real storybooks because they "add variety and provide a springboard for creating complete units of work that constitute mini-syllabuses and involve pupils personally, creatively and actively in an all-round whole curriculum approach"(Ellis, & Brewster, 2002,p.2). Ellis and Brewster (2002) claimed that, stories are popular for their secondary and primary school students. They claimed that their students need stories for learning a language. They continued that their students use stories to give

meaning from words. They claimed that “Learning English through stories can lay the foundations for secondary school in terms of learning basic language functions and structures, vocabulary and language learning skills” (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2).

Teachers are able to select various topics and styles for their students from different sources to make their students to supply their own stories if they have the right input (Ellis, & Brewster, 2002, p.2). Barnes and Todd (1977) Teachers try to train vocabularies that relevant to the subjects of interactions, and students improve their languages and maintain their interactions effectively. Mercer and Littleton (2007), agree with this view. Students apply their knowledge such as words that teachers train through interactions as a social interaction in “mini-society” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) which is called classrooms. Barnes and Todd (1977, p.127) noted that such instruction improve learners’ social relationships, and assist young people in preparing responsible adult life.

According to Ada (2004) as cited in Tatticanto (2009), stories can be used in classrooms for helping students to understand different topics easily. Stories are used for entertain students and training students in classrooms. Using stories in classrooms can be an appropriate method for teaching learners and teachers can use stories to teach their students effectively but teachers should not forget their students’ multi-cultures. While local and national stories may help learners to learn subjects easily, stories with different culture may confuse the learners form topics and they may have negative effects on the students.

Cortazzi (1994) points out that story telling and knowing stories can help to reduce young learners’ stress, fatigue, and any negative factors that affect the teaching process (as cited in Tatticanto ,2009). Zipes ,1995; Krashen ,1982; Rinvolucuri ,1992 found out that young learners have affective filter during learning and educating and stories are able to remove or decrees these negative factors easily during educating (as cited in Tatticanto ,2009).

According to krashen (1981), storytelling for EFL learners provide an appropriate learning condition and result in meaningful and comprehensible inputs. Language acquisition device is operated easily by stories and children try to learn languages’ elements from the data easily and sufficiently that stories provide for them learners.

The pedagogical importance of Storytelling is exceptional for EFL classroom, as Rossiter (2002) points out below:

Stories are effective as educational tools because they are believable, rememberable, and entertaining. The believability stems from the fact that stories deal with human-like experience that we tend to perceive as an authentic and credible source of knowledge. Stories make information more remember able because they involve us in actions of the characters. In so doing, stories invite active meaning making. (p. 1)

González (2010) also claimed that, children are able to memorize repetitive stories easily. Teachers can use repetition stories to assist learners to learn the patterns and structures of a language easily. Learners are able to predict, develop vocabulary and understanding word orders in order to improve their proficiency levels. For students’ comprehension, repetitive patterns in stories can be the plan of the learners to predict the action in the beginning and the conclusion. Repetitive stories can help learners’ memory and intelligence.

According to González (2010), Language learners can benefit from storytelling can help language learning by developing the ability to understand spoken language and provide a condition for learners to think intelligently to subjects and topics.

In connection to this, Castro (2002) reports on a study carried out in Colombia and stress that:

Listening to stories develops children's listening and concentration skills and their ability to receive and understand information expressed in words. Besides, with the stories children develop learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing. (p. 52)

According to Curtain and Dahlberg (2004), even at low proficiency level of language acquisition, children have explanatory style through experiencing storytelling. As the result, the stories encounter the following criteria: children from native culture can predict and understand stories easily, and they can learn large number of vocabularies. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) claimed that for low levels, teachers should select stories that include vocabularies symbolizing concrete subjects such as home, school, and so on. Through stories, teachers can teach formulas and structures that come regularly and frequently in texts. Teachers also can benefit from repeated elements in stories to provide language that children are able to learn it and utilize it for showing their feeling. This repetitive pattern was called a story as parallelism by Cameron (2001, p. 163). According to González (2010), children are able to connect to both oral language and the text that shows the oral language through reading aloud texts easily. In classrooms during the studying a language, teachers notice their students to focus on words or lines to emphasize those connections. González (2010) claimed that the goal behind the reading stories is to ask students to practice oral language input and link them to literacy in the new language.

González (2010) mentioned that teaching stories in low levels of proficiency for teachers is hard task. Teachers should propose a large number of preparations as pre-readings for their students which make the students ready for accepting stories. The pre reading stage can have practicing vocabularies through different ways such as games, puzzles, matching activities, songs and other kinds of activities which make learners to accept and understand stories in more appropriate and effective way and they help students to become familiar with the new language. By reading aloud stories learners involved in different tasks and language activities which make the stories move from receptive skills (listening and reading) to productive skills (speaking and writing). González (2010) found the following:

When reading aloud, big books play an important role since they can be a good source for teacher and students to make connections between the pictures and the written text. The pictures in the big books help children a lot because they can associate pictures and words and arrive at a better understanding of the story. A story is more memorable if it can be related to a sequence of pictures. (p.99)

2.3. Mixed-up story

According to Richards, J. C., Hull, J. & Proctor, S. (2005), participants were given copies of the reading stories of their text books. Then the author cut the copies and put each set of slips in an envelope. The author writes the names the story characterizes on

the board. Then ask what participants know about them. The author tells participants that they are going to retell the story in their groups. The author needs to divide the class into groups of four. The author gives the group envelopments, and explains the task for the participants. Participants read the slips and write the initial of the person each sentence describes. Participants complete the task. Then they share their ideas again. Participants listen to each other and check their ideas.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The homogenous participants in this study were 60 Persian native speakers learning English as a foreign language in one institute's semester in Mashhad, Iran. Their native languages were Persian. Their proficiency levels were intermediate. They were both male and female. They were youth. Participants, males and females, are assigned randomly to their control and experimental groups. Participants were not informed about the research study, serial tests, the treatment and so forth. Participants supposed that they participate in a natural institute's semester.

3.2 Instruments

3.2.1 The Pre-Test, Post-Test and Delay Post- Test

A test of English vocabulary was designed from Interchange 2 learning English text book, third edition, by Jack c. Richards with Jonathan Hull and Susan Proctor to examine the participants' Vocabulary Learning and Retention of EFL Learners. The vocabularies were adapted from unit one to seven of the book. The test was validated by the SPSS 16 Software. Also the reliability of the test was trusted by the SPSS 16 software. The test made by the author of the study. It has 40 questions' items. It has 20 multiple choice and 20 true/ false questions' items. The duration of each exam was 40 minutes. The test was same for pre-test, post-test and delay post-test. Delay post-test was required for evaluating the participant's retentions. The participants were not allowed to use dictionaries or cheat during the each exam. The sample of the test is presented in Appendix A. However, before using the test for the purpose of data collection, it was piloted on a small group of subjects to estimate its reliability. The result of the reliability analysis is given below:

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.711	40

3.2.2. Sample TOFEL Test

The study examined the homogeneity of the participants with a sample TOFEL test in order to gather the participants who have the same knowledge and proficiency levels.

3.2.3. SPSS 19 software

The study used the software for analyzing data and the results of the pre-test, post-test, and the sample TOFEL test. It was used for thrusting the validity and reliability of the tests.

3.3 Procedure

This study was conducted within 4 months. The participants became homogenous with a sample TOFEL test. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: experimental and control groups. Sex was controlled randomly for assigning participants in their groups. Participants were not informed about the research study, serial tests, the treatment and so forth. Each group studied the Interchange 2, third edition, by Jack c. Richards with Jonathan Hull and Susan Proctor. Participants were given copies of the reading stories of the text book. Then the author cut the copies and put each set of slips in an envelope. The author writes the names the story characterizes on the board. Then ask what participants know about them. The author tells participants that they are going to retell the story in their groups. The author needs to divide the class into groups of four. The author gives the group envelopments, and explains the task for the participants. Participants read the slips and write the initial of the person each sentence describes. Participants complete the task. Then they share their ideas again. Participants listen to each other and check their ideas. The control group received no treatment. The participants in experimental and control groups received post-test one week after the treatment. After one month, the participants received delay post-test for evaluating their retentions. The pre-test, post-test, and delay post-test are same vocabulary tests from the unit one to unit seven conversations' of the Interchange 2.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

The results for the descriptive analysis of the pretest and posttest are shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Mean score, Standard deviation, variance, and Std. Error of mean for pretest

Group Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Std. Error of Mean
Control Group	30	27.33	4.229	17.885	.772
Experimental Group	30	27.27	4.068	16.547	.743

Table 2. Mean score, Standard deviation, variance, and Std. Error of mean for pretest

Group Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Std. Error of Mean
Control Group	30	27.63	4.081	13.237	.745
Experimental Group	30	35.48	3.292	10.836	.601

To compare the group means for the study, a one-sample test analysis was employed for posttest phase (see table 3). As shown in this table, the difference is considered to be statistically significant between the two experimental and control groups. That is the candidates in experimental group with the specific inductive grammar teaching as the treatment have outperformed the ones in control group with deductive grammar teaching as the placebo.

Table3. One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Experimental	59.041	29	.000	35.483	34.25	36.71
control	37.088	29	.000	27.633	26.11	29.16

This confirms that use of Sculptures of Activities improved inductive grammar learning of Persian adult EFL learners to a great extent.

Three weeks after the experiment the students of both groups were asked to participate in a delayed posttest again. The purpose of this test was to see which method of instruction had more impact on the students' grammar retentions and could improve their grammar learning for longer period of time. Interestingly enough, here again the participants of the experimental group could performed better than the control group (See table 4).

Table 4. Mean score, Standard deviation, variance, and Std. Error of mean for both groups after three weeks

Group Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Std. Error of Mean
Control Group	30	23.93	4.110	16.892	.750
Experimental Group	30	32.07	3.638	13.237	.664

5. Results and discussions

Nowadays many researchers try to seek the best method for teaching vocabularies for helping learners to learn a language effectively. With this in mind, there will be the responsibility of assisting learners to effectively save and retrieve words in the target language (Sokmen, 1997), so that the use of effective pedagogical methods in teaching vocabulary is necessary. This basic concern gets more important when focusing on consideration the benefits of implicit vocabulary learning as reported in the literature. Today many researchers think that first of all, it is not really safe to think dichotomously in this regard, and that explicit learning is efficient enough. In spite of the dichotomy of incidental versus explicit vocabulary learning has been a main issue.

This is not a totally valid one because incidental teaching happen with explicit learning and most of implicit learning is out of control (Morin & Goebel, 2001).

According to Richards, J. C., Hull, J. & Proctor, S. (2005), in mixed-up stores, Participants were given copies of the reading stories of the text book. Then the author cut the copies and put each set of slips in an envelope. The author writes the names the story characterizes on the board. Then ask what participants know about them. The author tells participants that they are going to retell the story in their groups. The author needs to divide the class into groups of four. The author gives the group envelopments, and explains the task for the participants. Participants read the slips and write the initial of the person each sentence describes. Participants complete the task. Then they share their ideas again. Participants listen to each other and check their ideas (Richard, 2010). As discussed earlier, the candidates in experimental group have outperformed the ones in control group in vocabulary learning. This confirms that use of mixed-up stories enhanced vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners to a great extent. Again the participants of the experimental group could perform better than the control group.

6. Conclusion

While vocabulary learning is easy, learning new vocabulary items has always been challenging for the learners. However, variety ways of learning vocabulary are usually used by the learners such as using notebooks, flash cards, referring to dictionaries to clarify the meanings, or giving some synonyms and antonyms. "Different task require different levels of word knowledge" (Blachowicz, Fisher, & Watts-Taffe, 2005).

In general, vocabulary can be taught in variety ways each of which with its own advantages and methods. According to Stahl (2005), "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world".

According to Moras and Carlos (2001), "Nowadays it is widely accepted that vocabulary teaching should be part of the syllabus, and taught in a well-planned and regular basis". "Reciting new vocabulary words individually and mechanically is not effective as a long-term teaching strategy" (Chongqing, 2009, p.5). The results and findings of the present study confirm the significance of the instructional method of vocabulary teaching and foremost it supports the use of mixed-up stores in the vocabulary learning and retention.

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Appendix A

Choose the best answer.

A: I raised my children alone all these days.

B: I see, your children without their mother.

a. checked up b. grown up c. looked up d. ran up

Mr. Anderson and their families to their new house by their car.

proved b. wound c. met d. moved

A: Hi smith, are you from Brazil?

B: No, I am not. I am from England. What about you?

A: I am from USA.

occasionally b. sufficiently c. originally d. appropriately

Nancy should buy a new shirt but she doesn't have enough money so she tries to find a in neighboring town.

bank b. department store c. beach d. restaurant

A: hello, I am your new instructor today.

B: hello, my name is Anna Lopez; I don't know anything about skating.

A: no problem., I forgot to say; my name is Ted Blues.

It is lovely b. by the way c. I am fine d. sure I'd do

Dallas order before his main dish in a restaurant.

desert b. bill c. appetizer d. extra food

A: Hey, Steve .your mouth smells bad. Do you eat for lunch?

B: oh really, I have to brush my teeth.

rice b. carrot c. potato d. garlic

There are too many road here, I can't find my correct way.

tests b. signs c. abstracts d. trips

A: Hey son, why you come late? It is 10 P.M

B: Sorry mom, I know I should be home before as I promise.

midnight b. dawn c. dusk d. night

Julia is so untidy she always spread her stuff of her room.

all over the floor b. in the apartment c. in the hall d. all around the home

Nancy and Julia went to seashore and they decided to there.

do karate b. go horseback riding c. go surfing d. do yoga

A: hi, Jack. I buy lots of things here, but I don't have enough money to pay for the tax.

B: poor, Jack. Don't you Know you must buy your goods from the near your house.

a. department store b. barber shop c. greengrocery d. duty-free shop

Julia is so sad because she cannot provide..... for her children nowadays.

a. room and board b. indifferent life c. poor life d. airplane's board

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Appendix B

Experimental group, the total score is 40

participants	Pre-test	Post-test	Delay post-test		
1	24	35	28		
2	26	37	31		
3	30	38	36		
4	25	36	32		
5	24	34.5	30		
6	23	34	29		
7	30	38	34		
8	27	36	34		
9	28	36	32		
10	25	35	32		
11	31	38	36		
12	30	37	34		
13	28	35	30		
14	23	35	31		
15	24	32	28		
16	34	40	38		
17	30	37	34		
18	32	38	35		
19	33	39	36		
20	27	36	34		
21	35	40	38		
22	23	35	31		
23	24	37	34		
24	23	34	30		
25	35	40	37		
26	31	37	34		
27	25	30	27		
28	24	29	25		
29	23	28	26		
30	21	28	23		

Control group, the total score is 40

Participants	Pre-test	Post-test	Delay post-test		

1	24	26	23		
2	22	24	20		
3	21	25	20		
4	26	30	27		
5	24	25	21		
6	30	28	26		
7	35	37	33		
8	27	26	23		
9	30	28	26		
10	23	25	21		
11	25	30	20		
12	26	24	18		
13	25	24	19		
13	28	29	24		
15	30	27	23		
16	36	40	33		
17	31	30	28		
18	32	29	27		
19	34	31	26		
20	23	25	19		
21	28	28	22		
22	25	24	23		
23	30	27	25		
24	34	32	28		
25	28	29	30		
26	23	20	18		
27	25	25	24		
28	24	25	20		
29	30	30	28		
30	21	23	23		

GUIDED WRITING TASKS VS PRODUCTION WRITING TASKS IN TEACHING WRITING: THE IMPACT ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' PARAGRAPH WRITING

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Abstract

The current study targeted to investigate the effect of Guided tasks on Iranian EFL learners' Paragraph Writing ability. The main question this study tried to answer was whether using Guided tasks might enhance higher ability of Paragraph Writing on EFL learners. To answer the question, 60 English Intermediate learners participated in the experiment of the study. They were randomly selected from among a population of English Intermediate level via an OPT test score of at least one standard deviation below the mean. Then they were divided into two groups of 30 and were randomly assigned to an experimental and a control group. A pretest of paragraph writing was administrated to both groups, then, they were taught paragraph writing for 7 sessions but with different methodologies; the experimental group received treatment of Guided tasks while the control group received production writing. A posttest of paragraph writing was then administrated to both groups. The data of the study were analyzed using the T-test to show the mean difference of groups, and the degree of progress from the pretest to the posttest of the study in the experimental group was shown by calculating the ANCOVA Coefficient. The results indicated that the Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group received higher scores in paragraph writing after being treated with 7 sessions of using Guided tasks.

Key Words: Guided tasks, Paragraph writing, OPT, Writing, Methodology.

1. Introduction

As far back as the history of language instruction goes, teachers have sought new and better ways to facilitate and accelerate language learning. The ability to express one's ideas in written form in a second or foreign language and to do so with reasonable accuracy and coherence are a major achievement.

Writing occupies a vital role in achieving success in all areas of life, in general, and academic life, in particular. English as a foreign language teachers and students face certain problems in teaching and learning writing (Silvia, 2001). As many researchers of English have noted, acquiring the writing skill seems to be more laborious and demanding than acquiring the other three skills (zheng 1999). In fact, Nunan (1999, p.

271) considers it an enormous challenge to produce "a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing" in one's second language. This is magnified by the fact that rhetorical conventions of English texts – the structure, style, and organization often differ from the conventions in other languages. It requires effort to recognize the differences.

According to (Jupp & Milne, 1971), Guided task is defined as an approach to writing composition by giving students practice with a number of different sorts of sentences which are useful in composition writing. It also shows students how to use the events of their own life and their own thought to write interesting compositions. For the purpose of Guided tasks Writing, one should select only the latter group of tasks; ie; only those problems whose solution depends on the use of some strategies. The evaluator, according to Feuerstein, must identify the students' problems during the pretest and provides the necessary mediation during the learning phase. Because of the importance of writing, the present research is going to use the Guided tasks and to find out to what extent this format can improve the students' writing ability. Regarding the definition of the Guided tasks, Jupp & Milne (1971) believe that within this format, examinees carry out activities that solve the problems.

Statement of the Problem

Writing ability is one of the most salient outcomes of learning in higher education. Formal writing appropriately occupies a unique place in communication for an ongoing negotiation of meaning through interlocution. Therefore, the intended meaning must be expressed accurately to the reader. Second, the written medium is often reserved by society when important ideas need to be formalized, standardized or made more permanent. Thus, formal writing carries with it certain expectations of clarity, precision, quality and durability.

In addition to understanding the unique challenges associated with developing an effective L2 writing curriculum, we also need to understand how different L2 writing teachers emphasize different priorities in their instruction. Linguistic accuracy and rhetorical appropriateness are both essential to quality writing, observation suggests that L2 writing teachers rarely focus their efforts equally on both of these dimensions of writing. Many theorists and practitioners became critical of second language writing programs that saw writing simply as part of the learner's language development and that focused on the reduction of grammar errors (Dvorak, 1986; Susser, 1994). Kern and Schultz (1992), for example, lamented over those programs that emphasize "surface feature accuracy rather than on the development, organization, and effective expression of the students' own thoughts or ideas". Hinkel (2004), for example, observed that the writing process and the rhetorical aspects of writing have been improperly emphasized over the linguistic skills ESL writers need to succeed.

Writing in a second or foreign language is an acknowledged difficulty for a majority of English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as second language (ESL) students at all levels. Difficulties may result from both the cognitive aspect (e.g., a lack of an appropriate composing process, which leads to procrastination or writer's block [WB]) and the affective aspect (such as writing apprehension [WA] and negative experiences from instruction and evaluation) of writing. Without fully understanding the

difficulties that writers face that are not related simply to mastery of the conventions of writing, doubts about the effectiveness and efficiency of instruction will never cease. According to Rao (1997), students find composing in English difficult because the process demands utilizing many cognitive and linguistic strategies of which these students are uncertain (Nour Putch & Rhama, 2010). According to Dixon et al. (2002), some language scholars believe that students who face great difficulties with writing are those with learning disabilities and emotional and behavioral problems.

Accordingly, the problem under investigation and the purpose of this study is that whether guided tasks writing have any effects on the paragraph writing achievement of Iranian EFL learners and to examine whether insights derived from such tasks would enhance the development of abilities in the range of writing areas.

Significance of the Study

According to Dona Lee (2010), Writing is one of the important ways of expressing your thoughts, and communicating ideas and views to others. Some have the innate ability to put their thoughts into words. Writing is more beneficial, specifically for those who are emotional, and do not express verbally. This tool allows them to express their ideas, thoughts or their existing mental condition, which otherwise, may not be possible. Writing is an art, which you develop over a period of time. This practice will make you more mature as a writer, because you gradually start putting yourself into the shoes of the reader, and express accordingly. Also, the more you write, the more flexible your vision and thought process become towards the requirements and demands of the readers.

The transfer of organizational patterns from L1 to L2 has been a controversial issue. Some argue that L2 organization reflects that of L1, whereas others claim that poor L2 organization manifests only a developmental problem rather than L1 transfer (Mohan & Lo, 1985). We cannot discuss student L2 organizational patterns without taking into consideration student L1 and L2 writing back-ground in terms of writing conventions, instruction, and experience, as well as L2 proficiency level the number of second language writers seeking assistance at university and college writing. The interest of L2 writing instructors and researchers in written texts never disappeared, and continues unabated apparently bypassed by the process-writing revolution as well as by genre studies (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Hyland, 2000; Hyon, 1996; Johns, 2002; Swales, 1990) and contrastive rhetoric (Connor, 1996, in press). However, written products are increasingly viewed not just as linguistic artifacts but as socially produced and politically situated (Kress, 1993). Finally, the problem this study tries to investigate i.e. the problem of Iranian EFL Learners in their knowledge of writing can be more acceptably focused.

2. Review Literature

Trends in the writing -in- English skill

Writing ability is one of the most salient outcomes of learning in higher education. Formal writing appropriately occupies a unique place in communication for an ongoing negotiation of meaning through interlocution. Therefore, the intended meaning must be expressed accurately to the reader. Second, the written medium is

often reserved by society when important ideas need to be formalized, standardized or made more permanent. Thus, formal writing carries with it certain expectations of clarity, precision, quality and durability. (Chastain, 1998).

Writing, an important part of language learning, is essentially a reflective activity that requires enough time to think about the specific topic and to analyze and classify any background knowledge. Then, writers need suitable language to structure these ideas in the form of a coherent discourse. Our purpose, therefore, is to help our learners produce self-contained compositions. But for the learners to do so, they have to link and develop information, ideas, or arguments in logical sequences. (Lee, 2010) Writing is a complex activity whose components and sub-components involve action on a number of levels. It is multifaceted, requiring proficiency in several areas of skill and knowledge that make up writing only when taken together. Research into writing has mirrored this complexity and has developed concurrently in a number of disciplines – in psychology and the cognitive sciences, text linguistics and pragmatics, applied linguistics and first and second language education. (Chastain, 1998)

According to Corbett (1971), in *Writing Instruction*, informs us that by the late nineteenth century, various remnants of classic rhetoric could be seen in the writing instruction of native speakers of English. This was most likely due to the work of Whately in 1828 and the writing textbooks such as those written by Hill in 1878 and Genung in 1886 (Berlin, 1984). At this time, writing began to take on a more prominent role with an increased emphasis on the organization of a written work. Rather than attending to the process of writing, however, the objective usually was to produce the perfect product in the first draft, including the accurate and skillful use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary as well as organization (Murray, 1978; Raimes, 1986; Taylor, 1981; Zamel, 1976).

Guided Writing versus Production Writing (General Consideration)

Guided writing involves a teacher working with a group of learners on a writing task. The aims of the task are based on what they have previously been learning about the writing process. Guided writing aims to support learners in this psychologically and cognitively difficult activity. The learners have been looking at how conjunctions are used to contrast and compare ideas. They are now writing a short discursive essay on the subject of animal experimentation. The teacher is working with the groups to guide them in the correct use of the target language.

Young and poor writers have a limited control over strategies for writing. These writers do, however, learn strategic behavior for writing when these strategies are taught to them in clear and supportive ways. When authentic and targeted modeling of the ways in which writers work is presented by teachers and co-constructed with students during collaborative, rich discussion, learners develop understanding of the purposes, intrinsic motivation, and techniques of writing. Several excellent frameworks for writing instruction accomplish these goals, including modeled, shared, interactive, guided or independent writing. During guided writing instruction, in particular, students are provided with opportunities to experience successful and independent writing within the context of strong teacher support.

According to Oczkus (2007), the most effective way to move students into independent writing is, it provides everything you need to support students in the fledgling phase between carefully modeled group writing and their first solo pieces. Guided Writing explains how to observe which stage of writing development your writers are in, how to challenge them to stretch their writing into the next developmental phase, and how to provide specific teaching that helps them achieve goals they can't reach alone.

Origins of Guided Participation Concept

The construct of Guided participation is grounded in the work of Russian psychologist Vygotsky and the approach to cognitive development attributed to him in the early 20th century. This approach is known as the socio cultural perspective. Vygotsky and his colleagues were deeply influenced by the Marxist foundations of the new Soviet Union. One of the early goals of the Soviet regime was to bring literacy to the masses. Language and literacy are both tools of culture, and their use transforms mental capabilities. Vygotsky and his contemporaries were interested in understanding the impact of this effort as well as other aspects of the social environment on children's learning.

Although Vygotsky himself did not use the term Guided participation, it shares several key notions with his work. The early socio culturalists were interested in the processes of social mediation and mind. They downplayed the idea of the individual knower separated from a social context; instead, they emphasized the role of the dyad or social group embedded in "activity." At the time, the field of psychology was still in its infancy and very little was known about the mind, society, and the influences of culture upon thinking.

Paragraph Writing Process

Writing is most likely to encourage thinking and learning when students view writing as a process. Writing is a complex process that allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete, writing encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection (Gaith, 2002). In order to have a good writing that represents the writer's thought, it is necessary to do some series of steps that usually called as the writing process. In the case of learning, the writer is the student. When the students start to write, they might have difficulties in putting the ideas and organizing them. It is better to give them an understanding that writing is not a matter of writing the letters, instead it is a process. There are four main stages in writing process; they are prewriting, planning, writing and revising draft, and writing the final copy to hand it. Although the process is considered ideal it is not always used. Nevertheless, it will serve the students well, particularly when the paragraph will stand alone (Kelly, 2000).

Experiments on the problems of learners in writing: evidence from Iranian learners and abroad

One problem the English teacher in a foreign country frequently encounters is a lack of materials in English dealing with local topics of interest to students. For economic reasons, texts, tapes, and workbooks are, by necessity, geared to learners in countries

and cultures throughout the world. Culturally sensitive materials are often hard to come by. One way of overcoming these problems is to use materials written in English for tourists such as travel brochures or local maps. These materials are readily available in most cities around the world at little or no cost from local travel agencies or tourist bureaus (Verna, 1984).

Research Question of the Study

Based on the problem, the following research question was proposed:

RQ1: Do Guided tasks affect on Iranian EFL learners' Paragraph Writing ability?

Hypothesis of the Study

The abovementioned research question subsequently led to the formation of the related hypothesis:

H (1): Guided tasks do not affect on Iranian EFL learners' Paragraph Writing ability.

3. Methodology

Design of the study

The current study followed a quasi-experimental design. The rationale behind using such a design lied in the fact that there was no random selection of subjects throughout the English Institutes in the country, and the study was supposed to be conducted in English Institute, thus, the participants were selected from Kish Air Chaloos Institute. The design of the present study has been illustrated diagrammatically in figure (3.1)

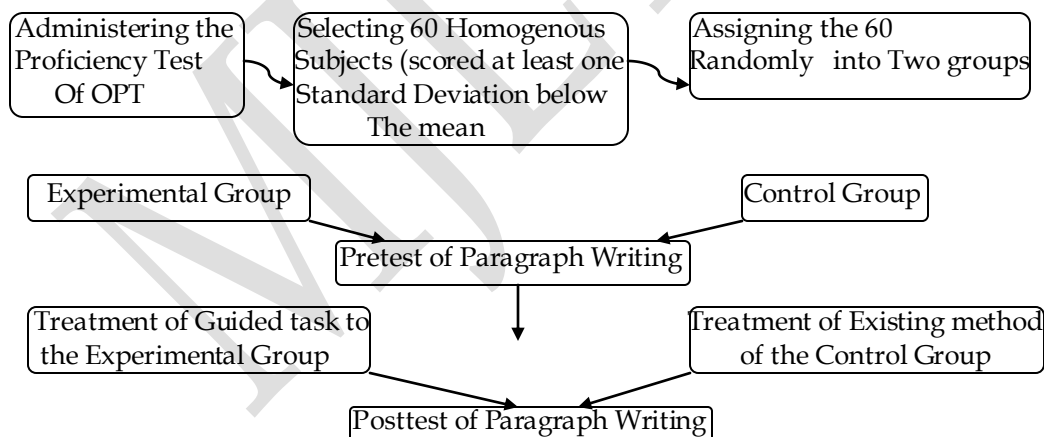


Figure 3.1. The Diagram of the Design of the study

Figure (3.1) illustrates the general schematic representation of the design of the present study. This includes at least four stages: 1) subject selection via administering an OPT, 2) exposing participants to the pretest of paragraph writing, 3) Treating the experimental group of the study with the " Guided tasks " and the control group with

the existing methods of teaching paragraph, and 4) administering the posttest of paragraph writing to both groups of the study.

Participants of the Study

The participants were selected randomly from among 60 Iranian EFL Intermediate learners of English language Institute of Kish Air Chaloos, with the age range of 22_28 and no control of sex, based on the results of an OPT as a proficiency test. Since the problem of paragraph writing is targeted, the 60 participants were asked to be representation of the weak trainees, thus, The 60 participants whose scores were at least one Standard Deviation below the mean of the class were selected. Then 60 participants were divided into two groups and were randomly assigned to the experimental group as well as the control (existing method) group.

Materials

The materials used in this study were 4 types: the OPT material for proficiency, the material of the pretest of the study, the material for the treatment and the materials for the posttest of this study: the OPT which was used in the current study consisted of three parts including vocabulary and grammar & writing. For each section, the participants were asked to select the best answers and for the last part, they were asked to write a paragraph. The papers were then collected and scored by the researcher.

The pretest of the study was writing a paragraph. A special topic selected from the book 'English Composition'. After being judged by three professors (inter_rater reliability), the final form of the pretest was made.

The material for the treatment of the study consisted of a deleted paragraph for the Guided task practice in the experimental group of the study. The Guided task practice included a paragraph (deleted) adopted from JUPP and Milne's Guided course in English Composition (JUPP & Milne, 1971, pp.2-40). Each paragraph was characterized with 3 marks (1=completely grammatical; 2= completely coherent; 3= completely word recognition).

The material for the posttest of the study included the paragraph used in the pretest of the study. The aim was indicating the degree of progress from pretest to the posttest in the experimental group in which guided tasks were being applied; the same test was administered as the paragraph writing in both the experimental and the control group.

Procedure

The OPT of the current study administered for measuring the proficiency level of learners was a paper-and-pencil test, so the participants were asked to write a paragraph with the special topic presented by the researcher. Administering the OPT was about an hour. The pretest was a paragraph explained. The time for the pretest of the study was about half an hour. The treatment contained 7 sessions of teaching paragraph writing to both groups as well as thirty minutes of treating the experimental group with Guided task. The posttest of the current study consisted of the test used in the pretest of the study.

Scoring

The OPT that was used in this study was scored on the basis of the standard criteria. The criterion for scoring both the pretests and the posttests was the maximum of 10.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from hypothesis testing of the study was analyzed via applying a t-test between the posttests of the experimental and control groups and two ANCOVAS (Analysis of Covariance) between the pretests and the posttests of both the experimental and control groups.

4.Result

Data Analysis and Findings

Descriptive Analysis of the Data

This section concentrates on the descriptive analysis of the data obtained in the study. The SPSS software was used in order to analyze the data. Table (4.1) indicates the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of paragraph writing in the experimental group of the study:

Table 4.1.Descriptive analysis of the data of the Experimental Group of the study

Tests Missing	N	Mean	SD.	Variance
PRE EXP 0.000	30	3.5000	1.13715	1.293
POS EXP 0.000	30	7.6667	1.12444	1.264

As it is shown in table (4.1), in each experiment, there were 30 participants and there has been no missing value which means that all participants participated in the experiments of this study. The mean for the pretest of paragraph writing scores as indicated to be 3.5000 and for the posttest of paragraph writing scores was 7.6667. As for the standard deviation obtained for the experimental group, there sounds to be more variability among the pretest of paragraph writing scores than the scores in the posttest of the paragraph writing. This may present that the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after presenting the treatment of the study (treating with guided tasks).

The descriptive analysis for both the pretest and posttest of paragraph writing in the control group of the study has been shown in table (4.2):

Table 4.2.Descriptive analysis of the data of the control group of the study

Tests Missing	N	Mean	SD.	Variance
PRE CON 0.000	30	4.5000	1.13715	1.289

POS CON	30	5.5333	1.07425	1.154 0.000
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As it is shown in table (4.2), in each experiment, there were 30 participants and there has been no missing value which means that all participants participated in the experiments of this study. The mean for the pretest of paragraph writing scores as indicated to be 4.5000 and for the posttest of paragraph writing scores was 5.5333. As for the standard deviation obtained for the control group, there sounds to be more variability among the pretest of paragraph writing scores than scores in the posttest of the paragraph writing. This may present that the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after presenting the treatment of the study (treating with guided tasks).

Since the hypothesis of the study presents the effect of using Guided tasks on the participants' paragraph writing ability to be tested via calculating the t value using the posttest scores of the study, the posttests of the study have been shown in table (4.3):

Table 4.3. Group Statistics; The Posttests of the study

Test SD.	group	N	Mean
Posttest			
EXP	30	7.6667	1.12444
CON	30	5.5333	1.07425

as it is shown in table (4.3), in each experiment, there were 30 participants in both experimental and control groups of the study. Apparently, the means of the posttests of both control and experimental groups of the study were different; however, the significance of the differences between these groups was calculated by the t-value.

Inferential Analysis of the Data

This part concentrates on the inferential analysis of the data in the study. The SPSS software was used in order to analyze the data. Table (4.4) indicates the t-test results of the study between the posttest scores of the both experimental and control groups of the study:

Table 4.4. The T-Test results of the study

T-Test Results	observed t	DF	sig.(2-tailed)
Between the posttest scores of the experimental& the control groups of the study	7.443	29	.000

As it is shown in table (4.4), the observed t value was indicated to be 7.443 and the degree of freedom was 29. Finally, the level of significance was indicated to be 0.00 which has been used in calculating the data for the rejection or support of the hypothesis of the study.

The next inferential analysis of data in this study was indicated to be the degree of covariance between the pretest and the posttest of paragraph writing in both the experimental and control groups of the study:

Table 4.5. The Covariance between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups

between pretest & posttest of the experimental group	between pretest & posttest Control group
Covariance	..000
(F)	.090

As it is shown in table (4.5), the covariance between the pretest and the posttest of the control group is .000 and .090 in the experimental group of the study. This means that the scores of experimental group is near 1, so the experimental group has undergone a progress compared to the control group whose score is lower than the experimental one. Thus, it can be concluded that the experimental group outperformed the control group as a result of being treated with Guided writing task.

Results of hypothesis testing

The hypothesis of the study which targeted the effect of using Guided tasks on Iranian EFL learners' paragraph writing ability was rejected. Evidence from various data confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by the SPSS was 7.443, while the critical value of considering the 2_tailed significance level of 0.00 was 2.000. Therefore, the observed t was higher than the critical t and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study.

The second evidence to confirm the rejection of the hypothesis was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be 0.000, since this value was lower than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations) and, also, there is no chance for calculating the difference between the means of the posttest of the study, so it shows that using guided tasks would increase the higher ability of paragraph writing of the participants in the experimental group of the study.

The rejection of the hypothesis of the study could also be supported by indicating the experimental group participants' progress from pretest to the posttest of the study. It was shown in table (4.5) for supporting. It also was shown in table (4.5), the covariance value between the pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. This meant that using Guided tasks affected the participants' paragraph writing ability which showed the posttest scores stand higher. Table (4.5) showed the evidence for the rejection of the hypothesis of the study which was based on participants' lack of progress from the pretest to the posttest and also, the covariance value between the pretest and posttest scores in the control group was lower than that of experimental group. This meant that posttest scores of paragraph writing were close to the pretest scores in the control group and showed that not using Guided tasks didn't affect the participants' paragraph writing ability and it caused the posttest scores to stand as close as possible.

5. Discussion

General discussion

The findings of the present study showed that using Guided tasks in teaching writing skill could result in a better performance of language learners. Languages become systems that determine how people arrange word-forms. Utterances whether spoken or written, are seen as the product of coding. From the perspective of the cognitive integrationist, by contrast, the focus is placed on how writing changes the way that individuals think and act. Instead of asking how training with scripts changes thinking about language.

Harris (1989, 2000) has provided a clear and influential critique of how writing might facilitate a new kind of thought. In adopting the perspective of interactional linguistics, he challenges a romantic tendency in accounts of the origin of writing. This enables him to debunk the view that writing is essentially western or that literacy improves our memory.

This study, confirms the points made by Lave & Wenger (1991) emphasize the movement of the learner from a peripheral position to a central position in activity. As Collins notes, Guided participation and coaching are especially powerful forces for learning in the tailor shop. In the tailor shop, learners were mastering complex tasks that occurred with a web of memorable associations, all in highly meaningful contexts. Learning and teaching were highly situated and highly focused on the specific skills needed for the task.

A key aspect of coaching is Guided participation: the close responsive support which the master provides to help the novice complete an entire task, even before the novice has acquired every skill required. As the learner masters increasing numbers of the component skills the master reduces his or her participation, providing fewer hints and less feedback to the learner. Eventually, the master fades away completely when the apprentice has learned to smoothly execute the whole task (Collins, 2006, p. 48).

Finally, this study notes that an essential component of Guided participation is the notion of inter subjectivity. This is the process by which two individuals achieve a joint focus on a problem. Inter subjectivity must be mutual, but even young infants participate in the process. Research shows that infants as young as 3 months can shift focus and visual engagement with their mothers. This type of interaction provides the starting point for inter subjectivity (Bruner, 1985; Tronick, 1982). While adults can establish general goals for children, and the adult can direct and scaffold children's performance, fine tuning and adjustment to the mutual needs of the particular individuals participating in the interaction is needed for optimal learning and meaning making.

Implications of the Study

Theoretically, the results of the present study can be considered in the latest theories and models of teaching paragraph writing to the other language learners, and enhancement of input called 'Guided tasks' in classroom which is created a more dynamic way of teaching paragraph writing.

Pedagogically, the results of this study sound to be more practical to the Iranian Language learners regarding their paragraph writing problems. The results of this

study are compatible to Iranian EFL learners to strength their ability of paragraph writing. These learners can range from intermediate level to advance who feel a need for the paragraph writing.

The result of this study may also be beneficial in that they can use methods of teaching paragraph writing by using Guided tasks and, in this way, add to the exposures of the Iranian EFL learners to a special situation of English language which can enhance more exposures of the learners to English language paragraph writing.

According to the results of the study, the other implication is material designers can develop new curricula or new books for teaching paragraph writing at intermediate level to advanced one, based on particular conditions, and take more benefit of using Guided tasks to teach paragraph writing.

Suggestions for Further Research

This collection seeks to enrich readers, understanding of nonnative English speaking students and the sociopolitical diversity of the academic discourse communities within which improves the effect of tasks in paragraph writing; First, the future researchers are advised to develop the implications of the study to other language teaching situations in Iran such as universities; Second, this research presents a strategy to teaching EFL compositions that are informed by current theoretical perspectives on writing and writers in a longer time; Third, this study would represent for the students of all levels from beginners to the advanced ones not just intermediate level and explore connections between theory and practice in a variety of instructional contexts; Finally, the researcher should design a beneficial questionnaire to measure the students' actual behavior which is based on the objective forms not subjective ones. Substantial research should be conducted within an exploratory and qualitative framework for generating hypotheses. A good starting point for hypothesis generating studies would be to identify several highly successful ESL programs to study. Such programs would be characterized by students who score well on standards-based assessments; who do well after exiting from ESL programs; who have high school graduation rates similar to mainstream students; and who have high rates of college application, college acceptance, and writing proficiency. Newcomer programs and those that include an emphasis on developing first language literacy along with English literacy, such as dual language programs, could provide fertile ground for generating new hypotheses. Studies of such programs might examine classroom activity, including instruction, interaction, and reading and writing; examine the program in relation to the pattern of school structures; examine the knowledge base of the ESL teachers and the curriculum of the program; examine the knowledge base of mainstream teachers; assess students' oral and written proficiency; and assess students' and parents' attitudes toward and satisfaction with the program.

Another kind of qualitative and exploratory research could be conducted with forms of writing instruction that have been successful at the college level but are mostly untried in middle and high schools. For example, the use of an approach that combines writing process and genre study (as in the socio literate approach) in the writing demands of both English and other content-area instruction could be studied

qualitatively as a means of generating hypotheses about different strategies of implementation or collaboration between content and ESL specialists.

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VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES OF MALAYSIAN LEARNERS OF ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: BELIEFS AND FREQUENCY OF USE

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Abstract

This study investigates the vocabulary learning strategies of undergraduate Malaysian learners of Arabic as a foreign language (AFL) in terms of beliefs and frequency of use. A total of 152 learners of Arabic in two Malaysian universities responded to a questionnaire composed of two main themes- beliefs (20 items) and strategies (45 items). The findings highlighted that Malaysian AFL learners generally agree on the importance of using different approaches -incidental and intentional- in manipulating and learning Arabic vocabulary. Furthermore, Malaysian AFL learners appeared to use vocabulary learning strategies at approximately the same level of frequency. However, it was found that dictionary related strategies were more frequently used in contrast to other strategies, namely, note taking, memorization, and guessing, which was the least usually used strategy.

Keywords: Arabic as a foreign language, vocabulary learning strategies, learners' beliefs.

1. introduction

Recent research in second language acquisition emphasizes the centrality of vocabulary for fluent language use. Researchers suggest that learners' language skills are heavily dependent on the number of words they know, particularly in the early stages of learning a foreign language (Nation & Waring, 1997; Waring & Nation, 2004). It is critically important for language learners to develop an adequate high-frequency vocabulary, which enables them to be successful in other areas of language proficiency (Waring & Nation, 2004; Zhi-liang, 2010; Zimmerman, 2004). The size of learner's vocabulary has been found to correlate closely with reading comprehension as well as with writing ability (Waring & Nation, 2004; Zimmerman, 2004). Lee (2003, p. 538) reports that "research has shown that the lack of vocabulary contributes to writing difficulty for foreign language learners and that vocabulary is one of the most important features that determine writing quality".

However, vocabulary is often regarded as the most problematic area by language learners (Çelik & Toptas, 2010; Mobarg, 1997). Vocabulary involves several types of word knowledge, such as meaning, form, collocation and register (Nation, 2000; cited in Tseng & Schmitt, 2008). Stahl and Nagy (2006) explain the multiple dimensions of word knowledge, which accounts for its complexity. First, word knowledge is incremental, which means that to know a word, one needs to have many exposures to it in different contexts. Vocabulary acquisition is gradual. It starts from the simple recognition of a word, to understanding its syntactic and semantic restrictions, and, finally, to realizing its appropriate use in context (Henriksen, 1999). Second, word meaning is multiple. Words usually have different meanings according to the context in which they appear. Third, word knowledge is interrelated, in that knowledge of one word connects to the knowledge of other words.

Taking the importance of vocabulary for communication on the one hand, and its complexity on the other, it is imperative to equip language learners with effective strategies for vocabulary improvement, so that they can tackle communicational problems caused by unknown words, and, at the same time, "continue to learn new words and, hence, increase their vocabulary size" (Nation & Waring, 1997).

Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are influenced by learners' beliefs about language learning in general and vocabulary learning process in particular. Chang and Shen (2010) reported that research on beliefs about language learning has "proven that learners' beliefs may have the potential to influence both their experiences and actions as language learners". Yang (1999, p. 515) stated that "researchers have suggested that learners' preconceived beliefs about language learning would likely affect the way they use their learning strategies". Therefore, learners' beliefs about vocabulary learning should provide teachers with better understandings of perceptions that inspire their students' choice of VLS and unfold learners' insight on what constructs a better manipulation of vocabulary items.

In the field of learning Arabic as a foreign or second language (AFL) and despite the significant role vocabulary performs in Arabic acquisition, there is a remarkable lack of research concerning Arabic vocabulary learning (Al-Batal, 2006; cited in Khoury, 2008). The current study aims to participate in filling the research gap in this area. It explores the Malaysian AFL learners' beliefs regarding Arabic vocabulary learning and the strategies they use in learning Arabic words.

It is hoped that this study will participate in advancing the knowledge about AFL learners' approaches to vocabulary and the strategies they frequently use in manipulating vocabulary learning. Such knowledge is perhaps important to support and improve the AFL instruction programs. The understanding of the learners' beliefs about vocabulary learning and the strategies they use in dealing with words enables teachers and researchers to design proper materials and activities to assist their students in developing their lexical competence. Findings from the current study may be used as starting point for developing learning materials and concentrate on certain VLS that require more attention. Learners may hold some negative perceptions towards some strategies and prefer some in favor of others. Understanding learners' perceptions will help program designers in planning to equip Malaysian AFL learners with the required knowledge and skills in certain areas regarding the VLS and correct

learners misconceptions. Furthermore, researchers in L2 VLS may find the results of the current study useful in comparing approaches to vocabulary utilized by L2 learners in different languages and learning environments.

2. Vocabulary Learning Strategies

The vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) spring from language learning strategies (LLS), which refer to the learner's effort to learn and which has become widely recognized in the field of second language acquisition since the early 1980s (Pavicic, 2008). One of the early and widely accepted definitions of LLS was given by Oxford (1990, p. 8). She states that LLS are "behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable". Ellis (1995; cited in Pavicic, 2008, p. 51) defines the language learning strategy as "a mental or behavioral activity related to some specific stage in the process of language acquisition or language use". VLS are specific strategies utilized for the purpose of vocabulary learning in the target language. Nation (2001; cited in Pavicic, 2008, p. 51) specifies four essential features for VLS: (1) they involve choice; (2) they are complex, i.e. consisting of several steps; (3) they require knowledge and benefit from training; and (4) they increase the efficiency of vocabulary learning and use.

The importance of language learning strategies, including VLS, lies in enabling learners to "self-regulate their own learning and become autonomous and effective outside the classroom" (Pavicic, 2008, p. 55). The effective use of LLS should help learners building greater self-confidence, improving proficiency, "developing communicative competence" (Oxford, 1990, p. 1), and tackling problems related to language learning (Oxford, 1990, p. 9). Although VLS are considered as being complex, as they consist of several steps, they allow learners to make their own choice of handling vocabulary learning and increase the efficiency of vocabulary learning and use (Nation, 2008).

3. Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Research on language learning has proposed several taxonomies for LLS (Fan, 2003; Kudo, 1999; Oxford, 1990; Pavicic, 2008). Oxford (1990) provides a system of six LLS, divided into two categories, direct and indirect. Each of these two categories is subdivided into three strategies. The direct strategies include memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies, while indirect strategies consist of meta-cognitive, affective and social strategies. Oxford's scheme is considered the most comprehensive detailed taxonomy (Ellis, 1995; cited in Kim, 2008). Research on language learning worldwide and in languages other than English, including Arabic, has utilized Oxford's classification as the basis for investigation (Al-Abdan & Al-Duwish, 1998; Oxford, 1996). In the field of vocabulary learning, several attempts have been made to classify the VLS springing from classifications proposed for general LLS (Çelik & Toptas, 2010; Fan, 2003; Kudo, 1999; Pavicic, 2008; Schmitt, 2007).

Gu and Johnson (1996; cited in Gu, 2002) classify VLS into two main categories, meta-cognitive regulation and cognitive. Each category includes three subcategories: guessing, using dictionaries and note taking for the former; and rehearsal, encoding, and activating for the latter.

Schmitt (1997; cited in Schmitt, 2007) proposed two categories for VLS: discovery, which refers to strategies used for inferring the meaning of new words; and consolidation, which includes strategies relevant to consolidating meaning of words. These categories are divided into five subcategories- determination, social, memory, cognitive, and meta-cognitive.

In his proposed taxonomy, Nation (2001; cited in Pavicic, 2008) classifies VLS into three general classes. The first is planning, which includes choosing what vocabulary item to focus on and when to focus on it. The second is sources, where the learner tries to find information about words through utilizing word analysis, context and references. The third is processes, which relates to establishing knowledge about vocabulary by noticing, retrieving and generating. In brief, Nation (2008) summarizes the VLS into four major groups: (1) guessing from context, (2) deliberate learning using bilingual word cards, (3) using word part analysis to help remember words, and (4) dictionary use.

4. Research on Arabic Vocabulary Learning Strategies

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, it seems that very little research has been conducted on VLS in Arabic as a foreign or second language. Al-Shuwaikeh (2001) found that Arabic learners in Saudi Arabia used different VLS in particular combinations and certain orders. They mainly used the following seven strategies: non-dictionary strategies for discovering the meanings of new words, dictionary use, note taking, memorization, practice, meta-cognitive strategies, and expanding lexical knowledge. Their use of these strategies was mainly affected by course type and the variety of Arabic used out of class.

Al-Nashwan (2006) revealed that Arabic learners had a positive attitude towards dictionaries, especially monolingual ones. The findings from Al-Nashwan demonstrated that learners highly appreciate the teachers' effort in this regard. Moreover, learners show a high awareness regarding using strategies relating to dictionary use.

In his experimental study, Khoury (2008) found that utilizing the root and patterns system of Arabic helped the beginning learners to infer and coin unfamiliar items, however, its effectiveness on the retention of words was not supported.

Another experimental study was conducted by Abdul Razaq (2008). She examined the effectiveness of the keyword method on the retention of Arabic vocabulary. The findings demonstrated that the keyword method was effective on word retention for beginners. Furthermore, learners in this study perceived that this method is a helpful technique in memorizing and building Arabic vocabulary.

5. Research questions

The current study aims to investigate the VLS used by Malaysian AFL (Arabic as a Foreign Language) learners. It is an attempt to provide an insight into how AFL learners deal with Arabic vocabulary in a non-language context. This will hopefully assist in filling the gap in this important field of research in AFL. Specifically, the current study addresses the following questions:

1. What beliefs do the Malaysian AFL learners hold on Arabic vocabulary learning?
2. What Arabic vocabulary learning strategies are commonly employed by the Malaysian AFL learners?

Research methodology

6.1. Participants

A total of 152 fourth year Malaysian undergraduates studying AFL participated in the study, 39 males and 109 females. Of the total sample, 106 students were from University of Malaya (UM) and 42 from University of Islamic Sciences Malaysia (USIM). Their ages are around 23 years old.

6.2. Instrument

To elicit the AFL Malaysian learners' responses regarding their beliefs on Arabic vocabulary learning and the strategies they often use in dealing with new Arabic words, the current study depended on a questionnaire compiled utilizing those used in previous studies (Çelik & Toptas, 2010; Kim, 2008; Leeke & Shaw, 2000; Oxford, 1990; Pavicic, 2008). The questionnaire was written in Arabic and structured to comply with the Arabic vocabulary system and the context in which the study took place.

Using a questionnaire is considered suitable for the purpose of the current study, because it seeks to measure a wide array of VLS by identifying those used by individual learners of AFL and aggregate it into group results. In this regard, Oxford (1996, p. 28) states that "questionnaires are among the most efficient and comprehensive ways to assess frequency of language learning strategies use". Winke and Abbuhl (2007, p. 702) reported that to gather information about the strategies used by different populations of second language learners, the "vast majority of vocabulary strategy studies have relied on questionnaire data".

The questionnaire used in the present study was composed of three main sections. The first was aimed at collecting information about the participants' university, year of study, grade and gender. The second included 20 statements regarding learners' beliefs about Arabic vocabulary learning. This section was mainly adapted from Kim (2008) after alterations and additions. Subjects were instructed to indicate the degree of their agreement with the statements, using a five-point Likert scale; 1= absolutely disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree to some extent, 4= agree, and 5= absolutely agree.

The third section was designed to identify the Arabic VLS the learners frequently employ. It comprises 45 strategies divided into five main categories: (1) strategies used when encountering new vocabulary items, (2) guessing word meaning, (3) dictionary use, (4) note taking, and (5) memory and recall. Participants were asked to define how frequently they use each strategy according to a five-point Likert scale; 1= never, 2= seldom, 3= sometimes, 4= usually, and 5= always.

The questionnaire was judged by specialists in teaching Arabic in the Sultan Qaboos University and modified according to their suggestions. It was then distributed among a group of 30 undergraduate students of AFL in the University Malaya. The purpose of the pilot application was to ensure the clarity of the instructions and statements. As a result, no signs of ambiguity or difficulty in understanding were reported during the

pilot application. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using internal consistency through Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability value for the second section was 0.91 and for the third section was 0.96. The values for the categories of the third section were found to be 0.78, 0.83, 0.88, 0.89, and 0.89 successively. These values indicate that the questionnaire is consistent and reliable to collect the data needed for the current study.

For data analysis purposes, means and standard deviations were utilized to report subjects' responses to the questionnaire. Means were classified into three levels for both sections of the questionnaire as follows:

- 1.00 to 2.33= "disagree" in the second section and "seldom" in the third section.
- 2.34 to 3.66= "agree to some extent" in the second section and "sometimes" in the third section.
- 3.67 - 5.00= "agree" in the second section and "usually" in the third section.

6. Results and discussion

7.1. Malaysian AFL learners' beliefs about Arabic vocabulary learning

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding beliefs on Arabic vocabulary learning. An overview of the results in table. 1 indicates that the means of the responses range from 4.36 to 3.62, which are in the scope of "agree". This implies that Malaysian AFL learners generally believe that to learn Arabic vocabulary it is necessary to combine implicit and explicit vocabulary learning strategies. In other words, successful vocabulary learning should include memorization techniques integrated with scrutinizing the meaning and usage of words within meaningful context, as well as exposure to vocabulary while using language receptively and productively.

Table. 1. Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding beliefs on Arabic vocabulary learning

Rank	Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	Repetition is the best mean to memorize words.	4.36	.83
2.	Words are learned after using them in understanding and expression.	4.07	.76
3.	Using language in listening, speaking, reading and writing is more important than memorizing words.	4.04	.85
4.	Learning words should be related to their usage.	4.00	.80
5.	Words should be learned in a meaningful context.	3.98	.81
6.	Words should be put to use before they are learned.	3.91	.79
7.	Vocabulary can be developed through reading	3.90	.79
8.	The best way to learn vocabulary is to memorize word lists.	3.89	.85

9.	Memorization is necessary for learning new words.	3.88	1.07
10	Attention should be paid to relations among words in the context.	3.88	.80
11	Attention should be paid to the meaning of set phrases and expressions.	3.86	.81
12	The least a learner should know about a word is its form, its meaning, and its basic usage.	3.84	.88
13	Knowing word's relations in terms of derivations and meanings provides a good understanding of the word and its usages.	3.84	.72
14	A good memory is all you need to learn a foreign language well.	3.82	.83
15	Knowing words' homonyms and antonyms can contribute to vocabulary development.	3.81	.81
16	Inferring word meaning from context is one of the best ways to learn vocabulary.	3.76	.85
17	Knowing a word's root and derivations is useful in vocabulary learning.	3.76	.81
18	Meeting a word several times in different contexts helps learning its meaning.	3.72	.81
19	Memorizing word meanings is a language learning goal.	3.70	1.02
20	It is necessary to remember at least one dictionary definition.	3.62	.87

Table 1 shows that Malaysian AFL Learners generally believe that memorization is important for Arabic vocabulary learning (items 1, 8, 9 and 14). It appears from the mean of responses to item 8 that most of the participants to this study regard memorizing word lists as a necessary means for word learning. This memorization should take the form of repetition (item 1). This result is no surprise as research in second language learning found that repetition is a commonly used strategy in vocabulary learning (Fan, 2003; Noor & Amir, 2009; Pavicic, 2008) and is perceived to be helpful by language learners (Zhi-liang, 2010). Nation (2000, cited in Khoury, 2008) emphasizes the importance of repetition, arguing that it is vital to vocabulary acquisition, as it enhances the quality and strength of word knowledge. Schmitt (2007) points out that repetition is one of what he calls "mechanical strategies" that is favored over ones that are more complex. Furthermore, research revealed that learners who often repeat new words show higher vocabulary size compared to those who do not use this strategy (Hamzah, Kafipour, & Abdullah, 2009). This belief concerning the role of repetition may imply that participants use this strategy to overcome the difficulty they encounter in pronouncing Arabic words, as these words contain sounds that are not included in their first language. By repeating a certain word several times, learners can train their speech device to pronounce unusual sounds and to familiarize themselves with that word.

Means of responses to items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 demonstrate that Malaysian AFL learners generally agree concerning the significance of meaningful context in learning Arabic vocabulary. Participants believe that to learn words it is vital to use them (items 2 and 3), relate them to their usage (item 4), put them to use (item 6) and meet them in reading (item 7). Procedures such as these “refer to learning new words from context as opposed to learning new words as discrete items” (Barcroft, 2009, p. 86). Dealing with words in a meaningful context may help learners remember them and endow some notions as to how these words are actually used as parts of language (Oxford & Crookall, 1990). Moreover, the research results in this area emphasize the usefulness of incidental vocabulary learning that is, learning vocabulary through natural exposure while using language for communicative purposes, especially reading and writing (Nassaji, 2006).

Statements 13, 15, and 17 emphasize the importance of vocabulary knowledge, which comprises words’ relations in terms of derivations and meanings. The means of responses to these items suggest that most respondents are, to a certain extent, aware of the role of words’ relations in learning vocabulary. Recognizing the roots of Arabic words is vital for acquiring Arabic vocabulary. The Arabic lexical system is based on roots that are combined mostly of three consonants that imply the semantic core of the word. To form a word a root combined with additive consonants and vowels is shaped according to a certain pattern (Khoury, 2008). The new combined word conveys a special meaning that results from the root and the pattern. Understanding the root’s meaning and the morphological function of the pattern is very important for vocabulary recognition. Relations among words should be realized in terms of roots and patterns. This realization is said to be very important for Arabic vocabulary learning (Khoury, 2008).

The phenomena of homonyms and antonyms in Arabic are old issues that have caused a dispute among Arab linguists past and present. However, it is difficult to deny the occurrence of such phenomena in an old language such as Arabic, which has existed for hundreds of years and is used in different places and communities (Ali, 2007). Although these phenomena are expected to endow language users with a variety of words to choose from when conveying a meaning, it makes it difficult for language learners who find themselves in front of a new word every time. Being aware of such phenomena may encourage the learner to look for cues and words’ relations that enable them to grasp the meaning without giving extra attention to each word separately.

7.2. Malaysian AFL learners’ vocabulary learning strategies

Means and standard deviations were used to elicit the participants’ responses regarding the strategies they frequently use in learning Arabic vocabulary. Results are shown in the following sections.

7.2.1. An overview of the results regarding the main strategies

Results in table 2 demonstrate that Malaysian AFL learners “usually” use dictionary vocabulary learning strategies, while they use the other strategies “sometimes” only. The overall mean (3.63) implies that participants to this study “sometimes” employ different strategies in learning Arabic vocabulary.

Table. 2. Overall means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding the main strategies of Arabic vocabulary learning

Rank	Main strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Dictionary Strategies	3.67	.57
2	Note Taking Strategies	3.63	.58
3	Encountering an unknown vocabulary item	3.62	.52
4	Memory and recall Strategies	3.61	.69
5	Guessing Strategies	3.58	.60
Overall mean		3.63	.52

Dictionary strategies are reportedly the most used strategies by respondents. This means that Malaysian AFL learners refer to a dictionary most of the time when they want to learn about an Arabic vocabulary item. In contrast, the guessing strategies are the least used strategy according to the results in table 2. This may reflect the difficulty inherent in this type of strategy, as they require the learners to examine the word and its surroundings in the context to find out clues that could direct them in inferring the word's meaning. In addition, this result may imply a lack of the skill needed for finding and exploiting linguistic and contextual cues in inferring word meaning.

Looking up words' meanings in a dictionary is a fruitful strategy that may result in obtaining the necessary information about a word's forms, meanings, and usage. However, favoring dictionaries at the expense of guessing may lead to failure in using the abilities to make inferences based on context (Oxford & Crookall, 1990). Oxford & Crookall (1990, p. 13) reported that "relying on a dictionary as the primary way to increase vocabulary does not work because good readers do not think about the definition of individual words as they read". Al-Batal (2006; cited in Khoury, 2008) assumed that guessing is the most important strategy for Arabic vocabulary learners, as they have to deal with a vast body of vocabulary. It is apparent that in this situation relying on a dictionary may result in boredom and frustration.

Detailed results and discussion is given in the following sub-sections.

7.2.2. Strategies used when encountering new words

Table. 3. Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding "strategies used when encountering new words"

Rank	Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	I utilize various means to understand vocabulary items that do not seem clear to me.	3.74	.83
2.	I know words that are important for me to learn.	3.70	.76
3.	I can decide whether I need to remember a certain word or not.	3.64	.81
4.	I know what cues I should use in guessing the meaning	3.64	.88

	of particular word.		
5.	I can identify which word is essential for comprehending a certain paragraph.	3.62	.68
6.	I write down words that seem important to me.	3.60	.78
7.	I have a sense of which word I can guess and which word I can't.	3.52	.85
8.	I only look up words that I'm interested in.	3.49	.85

Table. 3 shows that participants to the current study “usually” use 2 strategies regarding the procedures they take when facing an unknown vocabulary item, while they use eight strategies “sometimes” only. It seems that Malaysian AFL learners “usually” utilize various means to understand new vocabulary items (item 1), they try to identify words worthy of learning and remembering (items 2 and 3) and those necessary for comprehension. Moreover, most learners can sometimes decide which word to guess (item 7) and what cues should be used in guessing the word meaning (item 4). The mean score for item 8 “looking up interesting words” may imply that the respondents sometimes feel uncertain about which words they need to look up.

7.2.3. Guessing the meanings of words

Table. 4. Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding “guessing the meanings of words”

Rank	Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	I make use of my knowledge of the topic when guessing the meaning of a word.	3.65	.87
2.	I make use of the word's structure when guessing its meaning.	3.64	.93
3.	I look for other words or phrases that support my guess about the meaning of a new word.	3.62	.82
4.	I utilize the grammatical function of a word when inferring its meaning.	3.58	.79
5.	I utilize my common knowledge in guessing the meaning of a word.	3.53	.80
6.	I check my guessed meaning by insuring its appropriateness to the wider context.	3.52	.82
7.	I make use of the logical development of the context to guess the meaning of a word.	3.51	.82

The means in table 4 reveal that Malaysian AFL learners “sometimes” utilize their knowledge of the topic and the structure of the word when guessing the meanings of words (items 1, 2, and 4). However, the grammatical function and the wider context and its logical development are less “sometimes” used in the guessing process (items 4, 5, and 7). This result suggests that when learners try to infer the meanings of new

words, they make use of the word itself and their own knowledge of the topic and they try to avoid examining the context clues, which are not easy to find and employ for inferring purposes.

7.2.4. Dictionary use

Table. 5. Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding "dictionary use"

Rank	Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	I use an Arabic-Malay dictionary.	3.99	.98
2.	I read dictionary examples when I look up a word's meaning.	3.83	.81
3.	I look for phrases or set expressions that go with the word I look up.	3.81	.82
4.	I use an Arabic-English-Malay dictionary.	3.80	1.02
5.	I use a dictionary when I want to confirm my guess about a word.	3.77	.89
6.	I refer to a dictionary to discover subtle differences in the meanings of Arabic words.	3.74	.87
7.	When a word hinders my understanding of a sentence or a paragraph, I look it up in the dictionary.	3.73	.82
8.	I only look up words that are necessary to understand a sentence or a paragraph.	3.66	.90
9.	When I see a new word several times I look it up in the dictionary.	3.64	.83
10.	I consult a dictionary when I want to know more about a word for which I already know some of its meanings.	3.58	.83
11.	I refer to a dictionary when I want to know the difference in meaning between certain words.	3.51	.82
12.	I use an Arabic-Arabic dictionary.	3.36	.97
13.	I use an Arabic-English dictionary.	3.30	.95

It appears from table. 5 that 7 dictionary related strategies are "usually" used by most of the participants, whereas 5 strategies are used "sometimes" and 1 strategy is seldom used. Considering the purposes of using a dictionary, it can be inferred that purposes are: confirming guessing the meanings of words (item 5), discovering subtle differences in the meanings of Arabic words (item 6), unfold the meaning of a certain sentence or paragraph (items 7 and 8), and obtaining more knowledge about Arabic words (item 10). While Malaysian AFL learners look up word meanings, they usually read examples given by the dictionary (item 2) and the set phrases that go with the word they are looking up (item 3). The purposes of dictionary use found in the current study are similar to those found by Al-Nashwan (2006), as he discovered that AFL

learners in Saudi Arabia use dictionaries for looking up vocabulary meanings, as well as for understanding the meanings and sequences of words in sentences.

Regarding dictionary type, the results show that the Arabic-Malay dictionary, which is bilingual is most usually used (item 1). Research found that using a bilingual dictionary is one of the most frequently used strategies in second language vocabulary learning (Catalán, 2003; Kim, 2008; Pavicic, 2008; Wu, 2005). Zhi-liang (2010) revealed that Chinese learners of English as a foreign language not only use bilingual dictionaries, but also feel they are helpful. Another type of dictionary “usually” used by participants is an Arabic-English-Malay-dictionary (item 4). It is interesting to mention here that Noor and Amir (2009) reported that (66%) of Malaysian English language learners used an English-Arabic-Malay dictionary. A probable explanation of such a procedure is that learners may seek to learn the vocabulary of the two languages English and Arabic by comparing the words from both languages. Another explanation might be that the learners’ desire to clarify their understanding of words by obtaining their meaning in their first language besides the two languages they are striving to learn.

However, participants reported that they “sometimes” use an Arabic-Arabic dictionary (item 12) with a low mean score (3.36). The reasons behind that are clearly the design of Arabic dictionaries and the absence of a special Arabic dictionary for AFL learners. Arabic dictionaries are difficult to use, because most of them are root-based, i.e. words are listed according to their root and then arranged in an alphabetical order. Therefore, learners must be able to identify the root of the word as a prerequisite for using an Arabic dictionary (Khoury, 2008). Identifying the root of a word is not an easy process. It involves taking out prefixes, suffixes, and extra letters and recognizing the origin of the vowels in some words. This result does not conform to the results found by Al-Nashwan (2006), as he revealed that AFL learners in Saudi Arabia use a monolingual dictionary very often compared with a bilingual dictionary. The reason is perhaps the learning environment; i.e. those learners are studying Arabic in an Arab community, whereas the respondents in the current study are learning the language in a non-language environment. This may lead to learners being able to depend on the Arabic dictionary as they do in their every day live in which they have to use the language.

Regarding using a monolingual dictionary, Zhi-liang (2010) found that the English dictionary is one of the least used strategies among Chinese learners of English as a second language. However, Noor & Amir (2009) found that Malaysian learners of English reported that they mostly use English dictionaries as their first and most frequently used type of dictionary.

Finally, respondents reported that they “seldom” use Arabic-English dictionary (item 13). This is expected, as these learners are only learning English as a second or foreign language and English is not their first language. The reason why some learners reported that they use this type of dictionary is perhaps their desire to integrate their language learning or the absence of a reliable Arabic-Arabic dictionary and Arabic-Malay dictionary.

7.2.5. Note taking

Table. 6. Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding "note taking"

Rank	Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	I make a note of the meaning of a new word when it seems relevant to my interests.	3.74	.83
2.	I write down both the Malay meaning of a word and its Arabic synonyms.	3.73	.78
3.	I take down examples and sentences showing the usages of the word.	3.68	.80
4.	I make a note of the meaning of a new word that I think is commonly used.	3.65	.78
5.	I write down the word's synonym and antonym in my notebook.	3.64	.80
6.	I write down the meaning of a new word to remember with its Malay translation only.	3.62	.88
7.	I note some grammatical information about the word.	3.61	.85
8.	I write down some useful phrases and expressions.	3.60	.78
9.	I write down the Arabic synonyms of the word and its definition too.	3.53	.87
10.	I write down both the English equivalent of a word and its Arabic synonym.	3.48	.89

The means in table. 6 show that participants "usually" take notes of interesting Arabic vocabulary besides their Malay meanings and example of usages (item 1, 2 and 3). Meanwhile, they reportedly "sometimes" write down information about Arabic vocabulary item, such as synonyms and antonyms (item 5 and 9), some grammatical information (item 7), Arabic definition (item 9). Participants reported also that they only "sometimes" write down the English equivalent of a word. The reason behind that is maybe what is mentioned above regarding the learners desire to build some kind of structure for their language learning. Moreover, it can be inferred from table. 6 that Malaysian AFL learners have a sort of vocabulary awareness that qualify them to concentrate on vocabulary items that are interesting and commonly used (items 1 and 4). These results about using most of "note taking" strategies are to some extent different from the findings reported in other studies. Note taking is found to be one of the frequently used techniques in second language vocabulary learning (Catalán, 2003; Kim, 2008; Schmitt, 2007; Winke & Abbuhl, 2007).

7.2.6. Memory and recall

Table. 7. Means and standard deviations of the participants' responses regarding "memory and recall strategies"

Rank	Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
1.	I regularly review new words I have memorized.	3.68	.93
2.	I try to use newly learned words in imaginary situations in my mind.	3.68	.86
3.	I make up my own sentences using the words I just learned.	3.65	.87
4.	When I want to memorize a certain word I repeat it aloud to myself.	3.63	.84
5.	I go through my vocabulary list several times until I am sure I understand them all.	3.60	.89
6.	I organize and keep vocabulary lists.	3.56	.83
7.	I make vocabulary cards and I take them with me.	3.45	.88

It appears from table. 7 that respondents "usually" employ 2 memory VLS relevant to reviewing memorized words (item 1) and imaginary (item 2). Other strategies that relate to making up sentences (item 3), verbal repetition (item 4), revising word lists, and organizing and keeping word lists are reported to be used "sometimes" only. However, these techniques are found to be among the most frequently used strategies in second language vocabulary learning (Catalán, 2003; Fan, 2003).

The least memory related strategy used by participants is making vocabulary cards. One reason behind this is perhaps the need to organize the cards, keep them and learn the words from them, which is a demanding and time consuming procedure. Another reason might be the lack of directions in the way to use these cards, as Pavicic (2008) demonstrates that using word cards is a complex strategy and it is the teacher's task to make learners aware of its benefits and assist them in the usage of this strategy.

7. Conclusions, implications, and suggestions for further research

Three general conclusions may be inferred from the above results and relevant discussion. First, it appears that most Malaysian AFL learners hold some sort of insight into the importance of vocabulary learning and the ways in which Arabic vocabulary could be acquired. From their beliefs, it seems that they are aware of how they could approach vocabulary and what constitutes a good understanding of a vocabulary item.

Second, most of the participants in the current study use VLS to almost the same level of frequency; that is, they use them "sometimes". This implies that they could not integrate different VLS and employ them in their struggle to learn Arabic vocabulary. Using multiple techniques in word learning gives learners flexibility in vocabulary acquisition, and; hence, helps them tackle problems relating to lexical understanding.

Third, in processing a word's meaning, Malaysian AFL learners seem to prefer referring to a dictionary in contrast to guessing the meaning from the context. While in learning and maintaining vocabulary, they prefer mechanical strategies, such as memorization, repetition, and note taking.

Of course, generalization of the above results is limited to the study conditions and sampling. The study is limited to fourth year Malaysian AFL learners' perceptions regarding Arabic VLS and their report on the frequency of using these strategies. Another limitation comes from the use of questionnaire as an instrument for eliciting learners' responses. In this study learners were asked to report their beliefs about vocabulary learning and VLS they frequently use in learning Arabic vocabulary. The problem inherent in this procedure is that learners may respond reporting what they believe true rather than what they really practice in actual situations. To limit the effect of this difficulty in the results of the present study, the questionnaire used is derived from a widely used instrument in this type of research and it was judged and tested before final application.

However, some implications can be made from the findings of the current research. First of all, learners' belief that vocabulary is important for L2 acquisition imposes that AFL program ought to explicitly include learning experiences targeting vocabulary development. Moreover, different tasks and activities need to be designed in the light of what learners believe about vocabulary learning. The AFL vocabulary learning program should focus on introducing Arabic words through meaningful contexts and give learners chances to use word items and relate them to their usage. Learning materials also need to sensitize learners to different kinds of lexical information relevant to Arabic words, particularly roots and patterns.

The results showed that most strategies that the respondents claim to employ in vocabulary learning came within the range of "sometimes". Means fall between 3.51 and 3.99. These means raise two points. Firstly they indicate that learners who claim to use these strategies may lack the proper techniques to use them correctly. Secondly, the means reveal that a considerable percentage of Malaysian AFL learners do not employ these strategies very often. This requires AFL program to focus on introducing these strategies in a purposeful and organized manner. The Arabic vocabulary learning process in Malaysian AFL context is limited to translation and rote learning (Mustafa, et al., 2011). Hence, informed use of VLS is essential to gain the most benefit from utilizing such strategies in Arabic vocabulary learning. Learners should build an awareness of how these strategies work and how they can be invested in facilitating vocabulary learning. Knowing what strategy to use in a certain situation and how it can be exploited for efficient vocabulary learning is presumably very useful. In other words, learners need to see examples of how to employ each strategy, recognize its functions and identify the conditions in which it can be better employed. AFL learning materials must encourage learners to build vocabulary learning habits and become familiar with different VLS.

Guessing related strategies that seem to be reportedly less employed by the participants, although more complex ones, as they demand significant manipulation of information, they can be improved through instruction. Research in second language acquisition found that instructing learners in such strategies could lead to better

retention and more efficient learning than memorization (Pavicic, 2008; Schmitt, 2007). As mentioned above, guessing strategies are of special importance for AFL learners, since they are suitable for the large body of vocabulary with which they need to deal. Moreover, results from the learners' beliefs found that Arabic words are learnt by relating them to their usage and associating them with meaningful context. This implies that participants consider such approach important for vocabulary learning. AFL teachers and material designers need to focus on enhancing learners' skills on inferring words meaning from context via explicit tasks and learning activities. For research in second language vocabulary learning, the findings of the current study seem to correspond in some aspects with those found in research on learning other languages, especially English. It may be said that second language learners hold same perceptions regarding the approaches for processing words' meaning and structuring vocabulary knowledge. Although more research is needed to consolidate this point, until then, AFL teaching programs can benefit from the tested strategies, methods and activities in terms of learning, teaching and testing Arabic vocabulary. Finally, it is hoped that the current study will participate in bringing researchers' attention towards this vital field of research in AFL. The field of Arabic vocabulary learning requires more research in different areas and levels. The strategies employed by AFL learners should be investigated using tests, self-reports, observations and interviews. Such investigation needs to be done with learners in different levels of language proficiency to explore and compare strategies used in different levels. Arabic vocabulary instruction should receive adequate research attention too. Empirical studies in Arabic vocabulary instruction may reveal difficulties that hinder the enhancement of learners' VLS and propose relevant solutions. Moreover, experimenting certain strategies and methods in teaching Arabic vocabulary can shed light on the usefulness of such strategies and methods and improve the vocabulary teaching process.

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THE USE OF ADDRESS FORMS IN IRANIAN RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE: THE CASE OF PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SOCIAL CLASSES OF IRAN

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Abstract

In any social class, nature and types of relationships of the society members are mainly manifested through their language. Accordingly, terms and modes of address are important in the society for the purposes of identification and expression of ideas. This study aimed at determining whether people in the religious class (namely clergies) included in the context of research were different from those in the other social classes (non-clergies) that is, higher social and lower social class members regarding the use of religious address terms or not. In order to do so the researchers chose 90 males and females belonging to religious, higher social and lower social class contexts of Isfahan which is a major city in the center of Iran through live and telephone interviews as their samples by random sampling method. The results indicated differences between the religious (clergies) and the other social classes in using religious address terms for both males and females.

Keywords: Terms of address, Religious Context, Clergies, Social class

Introduction

In every communication activity opening, improving, maintaining and closing this event is very important. Therefore, the study of address terms is of great importance in different speech communities. A variety of social factors governs the choice of terms among them the particular occasion, the social status or rank of the addressee, sex, age, familial relationship, occupational hierarchy, economical status, race, or degree of intimacy of the persons involved in communicative situations are more prominent. But choosing the right terms of address to use may not always be easy. Since prehistory, all societies have perceived hierarchy among their members. Among leaders and followers, strong and weak, rich and poor, social classifications are universal. Humans

have invented numerous ways to classify people by wealth, power, or prestige; by ability, education, and occupation; even by the place of residence.

Belonging to a social class is not merely an objective fact, but is generally accompanied by a perception of class identity. In this sense, social class is not merely a personal attribute, but also a contextual variable that characterizes a group of people. Therefore social class can even influence health. Centuries of observations have linked social class to patterns of disease.

Selection of address terms have been the concern of sociolinguistics studies during the past decades. Yule (2006) asserts that address term is a word or phrase for the person being talked to or written to. Research on the use of address terms in the past decades, beginning with the classical study of Brown and Gilman (1960), has focused on the social dimensions of address terms, primarily, on issues of solidarity, power, and formality. Esmā'li (2011) investigated the impact of social context on the different usage of address terms (first name "FN", pet name "PN", and respect name "RN") according to distinctive contexts between spouses (1. together alone, 2. in the presence of child(ren), and 3. in the presence of husband/wife's parents). He collected the required data through interview and a questionnaire on 200 participants which were selected according to researcher's criteria: being married and having child(ren).

Wardhaugh (2006) notes that a variety of social factors usually governs our choices of address terms. Among these social factors are the particular occasion, the social status or rank of the other, sex, age, family relationships, occupational hierarchy, transactional status, and the degree of intimacy. Afful (2006) in a study of address terms examined the use of descriptive phrases as a form of address terms by students in a Ghanaian public university. Analysis of those address terms suggested the warm and convivial nature of African culture, even in an institutional setting. Afful (2007) in another study investigated address terms usage among university students in Ghana. Using an ethnographic-style design, he examines the use of four descriptive phrases such as denotatively and culturally pejorative: Kwasea Boy ('stupid boy'), Naughty Boy and Foolish Man as address terms by students in a Ghanaian public university.

In a study on Yoruba address forms, Salami (2004) focused on the usage of first names (FN), tekonyms (TKM) and pet names (PN) by Yoruba-speaking women in addressing and referring to their husbands. The study demonstrates how language use helps to carry and reinforce gender relations; and examines the influence of the changing social structure such as the variables of education, age and region of origin on Yoruba women's use of address forms with their spouses.

Brown and Ford's study (1961) of naming practices in English was based on an analysis of modern plays, the naming practices observed in a business in Boston, and the reported usage of business executives and children in the mid-western United States and in 'Yoredale' in England. They report that the asymmetric use of title, last name and first name indicated the equality in power.

Keshavarz (1988) in a study of Persian address terms reports that the revolution in Iran which led to the flight of the Shah resulted in the choice of address terms indicating solidarity and the need to express solidarity led to greater use of terms like / برادر [barādar (bæra:dær)] / 'brother' and / خواهر [khāhar(xa:hær)] / 'sister'. Robinson (1972) states that in those societies in which a person's status derives from his or her

achievements, few distinctions in address are made. However, in societies where status is ascribed, we are much more likely to find sets of finely graded address terms. Such sets reflect the social structures of those societies.

Hudson (1980) points out that an important dimension of variation in address terms has to do with cultural patterns that hold for some particular population in general due to their social values, beliefs and customs.

Definition of religious address terms

Religious orientations have played a major role in influencing the choice of religious address terms in Persian language. One way of religious addressing refers to pilgrimages to one of the three holy Muslim shrines including: Mecca, Karbala, and Mashhad. Accordingly, as a sign of respect in religious situations it is usual to call somebody who has been to these places as: / hāji / حاجی (ha:ʤi:), / karbalaii (kærbæla:i:)/ كربلائی, or / mashhadi (mæ/hæd:i:)/ مشهدی or any other variations which will be discussed in the coming sections.

Another way of religious addressing refers to using the titles of آیت الله / Ayatollah (a:ʤætɔ:lh)/ and حجت الاسلام /Hojatol Eslam (hɔ:ʤætɔ:l esla:m) / which are used before hierarchical rankings of Shia theologians and clergies in Persian language. The following questions will be answered in this study:

1. Do the people belonging to higher social classes use the same religious address terms as the people belonging to lower social classes?
2. Are modes and types of address terms equal among higher and lower social class members in Isfahan?

Methodology

Participants

The survey was done on 90 both male and female middle aged participants belonging to religious, low and high class context of Isfahan through live and telephone interviews by the researchers. A purposive method of sampling was used for this study; this method involved looking specifically for candidates who met the conditions of the researchers, i.e. being clergies and belonging to lower or higher social classes from among researchers' family members, classmates and friends. The participants were asked to answer the questions provided to them orally and the answers were written down by the researchers or for those available they completed the questionnaire in person.

Procedures

In order to be familiar with the kind of religious terms of address used by different males and females, using the questionnaire mentioned above, the researchers personally interviewed people of different social classes of Isfahan which were among their family members, classmates and friends, live or by telephone.

Data analysis

To investigate the stated null questions, the collected data were analyzed to find out the difference of the responses among the two groups. Results show that the null

hypothesis is rejected and there is meaningful difference between the types of religious address terms used by the three groups under study. The detail of observed differences is presented in Results and Discussion section.

Results and Discussion

Based on the feedbacks provided to the questions asked, the following results were obtained:

The use of religious address terms by lower social classes:

People in the lower social class may use the following religious address terms:

For a person who has been to Mecca:

/ hāji (hɑːdʒiː) / حاجی (hɑːdʒiː) / haji (hædʒiː) / حجي , / haj-/ (hædʒ) / حج , for example / haj ali (hædʒ æliː) / حج علی for men and / hāj-khānom (hædʒ xɑːnɒm) / حاج خانم and / haj khanom (hædʒ xɑːnɒm) / حج خانم for women .

([hāji- hɑːdʒiː] (hajji- hɑːdʒiː) (and its other subtitles) is a title of any man who has performed the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca); but it's also used in addressing clergies or middle-aged or older men of high social standing regardless of whether they have performed the Hajj or not. In this regard [hāj-khānom] is used for ladies.

For a person who has been to Karbala:

/ karbalaii (kærbælaːiː) / کربلانی , for example / karbalaii Mohammad / کربلانی محمد / kablaii (kæbælaːiː) / کبلانی or / kal (kæl) / کل for example / kal Mohammad / کل محمد for men of course needless to mention that the last two titles are usually used by lower class people. No religious address term in this case is used for women.

For a person who has been to Mashhad:

/ mashhadi (mæ/hædːiː) / مشهدی , / mash(mæ/h) / مش , for example / mash Ali (mæ/h æliː) / مش علی , and even / mashti(mæ/htiː) / مشتی for men again the last two titles are usually used by lower class people. Again no religious address term is used for women.

People in the higher social class may use the following religious address terms:

For a person who has been to Mecca:

/ haj agha (hɑːdʒ aːqɑː) / حاج آقا for men and / hajieh khanom (hɑːdʒ jɑː xɑːnɒm) / حاجیه خانم and / haj khanom (hædʒ xɑːnɒm) / حاج خانم for women.

For a person who has been to Karbala:

No religious address term is used for men and women.

For a person who has been to Mashhad:

Usually no religious address term is used for men and women of higher social class.

The use of religious address terms by religious participants:

When talking about religious figures of different hierarchy, titles and terms like حاج آقا / hāj agha / , آیت الله (Ayatollah) and حجت الاسلام (Hojatol Eslam) are used before the indirect addressee's name (full name or family name which is usually their nationality). Sometimes the title hazrat (hæraet - Grand) is included before the religious terms of Ayatollah and Hojatol Eslam. It is worth to mention that although there are a great number of women wither studying in seminary schools or graduated and considered as great religious Shia figures but titles of آیت الله (Ayatollah) and حجت الاسلام (Hojatol Eslam) are not common to be used for women and only the term

حاجیه خانم /hajieh khanom (haːdʒ ɤ xa:nɒ m)/ suffices with the family name to address indirectly or without the family name to address directly.

When speaking among themselves or addressing each other directly usually the aforementioned terms are not used and instead the terms حاج آقا /hāj agha / and حاج خانم / hāj khanom / are used even to address husband and wife.

When talking to people in other classes (non-clergies) they behave rather formally and avoid using terms which are prevalent among lower social class people in using more formal terms.

One more case of religious oriented address terms is the use of /sayed (sejəd) / سید for certain males and / sayede (sejəda) / سیده for certain females whose pedigree goes back to Holy Imams. These terms can be used in isolation or with or without first name, last name or full names. Two other terms which are regarded as somewhat religious (besides their ordinary meaning) especially after the Islamic revolution, are the followings:

برادر [barādar (bæra:dær)] - presumably, 'brother in Islam'. It's used by the more Islamic-minded types.

خواهر [khāhar(xa:hær)] - as above but for the ladies.

Conclusion

The results show that the religious address terms which are used by higher social classes are different from those which are used by religious groups (clergies) and lower social classes. In some cases clergies behave like higher social class people in using more formal terms.

Lower social classes are more interested in using religious address terms and they are proud of it especially /hāj agha / حاج آقا and / hāj khanom / حاج خانم maybe because people in the lower social classes are more religious than people in the higher social classes. But higher social classes prefer not to use them especially address terms which are used for Karbala and Mashhad. It should be mentioned that address terms like /hāj agha / and / hāj khanom / are used even for those who have not been in Mecca and for every man and woman.

Two other religious terms which are used before hierarchal rankings of Shia Muslim theologians and clergies are the words of آیت الله (Ayatollah) and حجت الاسلام (Hojatol Eslam).

The last word is that after the Islamic revolution two more words have been considered as religious terms of address including برادر [barādar (bæra:dær)] and خواهر [khāhar(xa:hær)].

Implications of the study

Since this survey is done among low and higher social class people of Isfahan and to some extent reveals the religious address terms used by these people, it can be a starting point to thorough discourse analysis and socio-cultural studies from academic point of view. Furthermore the results of this study are worthwhile for the students who are interested in studying religious and other kinds of address terms used in different social religious classes.

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World Language Teachers: Self-perceptions of Their TPACK

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Abstract

The use of technology in the world language classroom is not a novel concept. World language educators must be familiar with various technological tools to step beyond the artificial classroom boundaries and provide opportunities for learners to interact with other peoples and cultures. The first step in integrating technology in the world language classroom is to establish competency in the content, pedagogy, and technology. Through the lens of TPACK, researchers explored 101 secondary world language teachers' perceptions of their TPACK as well as technology integration. Through an analysis of findings, including quantitative survey data and commentary, researchers discovered a general positive disposition toward teaching with technology. Implications regarding professional development, including connections to Common Core State Standards, are discussed.

Introduction

The use of technology in the world language classroom is not a novel concept. Given the inseparable relationship between language and culture, world language educators must be familiar with various technological tools to step beyond the artificial classroom boundaries and provide opportunities for learners to interact with other peoples and cultures. Although technology plays a critical role in achieving the overall goals of communicative proficiency and cultural competence, "the effectiveness of any technological tool depends on the knowledge and expertise of the qualified language teacher who manages and facilitates the language learning environment" (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language, 2011a, n. p.). Thus, teacher knowledge as it relates to the discipline, pedagogy, and technology plays an integral role in the teacher's decision to integrate technology in students' learning experiences. According to Yardakul et al. (2012), "The lack of teacher knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies related to [the] use of technology in [the] teaching process have been identified as the major barriers to technology integration" (p. 964).

In response to the increasing need to be technologically competent, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the Specialized Professional Association for foreign language education, with the collaboration of the University of Maryland University College advertised a 12-credit certificate program in Instructional Technology specifically for world language teachers (ACTFL, 2012a). This program represents a concerted effort for world language teachers to learn about and practice

using technology tools to assist learners in becoming communicatively competent global citizens.

Before one can begin to understand the effectiveness of such programs that emphasize technology integration in the world language classroom, it is essential to examine how current world language teachers perceive their own content, pedagogical, and technological knowledge. Specifically regarding the technological knowledge of world language teachers, van Olphen (2008) argued that few researchers have examined this particular domain. Additionally, although the *Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* developed by ACTFL/National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 2002 identify the essential knowledge and skills of pre-service teachers, "there is no stand-alone standard pertaining to the integration of technology" (van Olphen, 2008, p. 3).

Literature Review

What is Technology and why is it needed in the WL Classroom?

According to LeLoup and Ponterio (2006), technology emphasizes the application of knowledge for practical purposes. Given the paradigm shift to student-centered communicative language teaching, world language educators strive to provide opportunities for learners to use the language in real world contexts. LeLoup and Ponterio (2006) asserted that technology assists in achieving this goal because it "can be seen as a useful tool providing precisely those learning scenarios that simulate real language use" (p. 153). Further, Ducate, Anderson, and Moreno (2011) emphasized that technology fosters critical thinking by allowing students to participate in meaningful exchange and collaborate with peers who may hold divergent beliefs.

Shrum and Glisan (2010) not only emphasized the role of technology in students' linguistic and cultural growth, but they also underscored addressing students' needs as digital natives. As *digital natives* (Prensky, 2001), 21st century learners come to the classroom eager to manipulate technology. According to Shrum and Glisan (2010), By the time they graduate from college, today's students will have spent 5,000-10,000 hours viewing video games; 10,000 hours on cell phones; and 20,000 hours watching TV, including YouTube online. They will watch 500,000 commercials and will send 250,000 emails and Instant Messages. (p. 450)

Thus, the question is not *why* to use technology but rather *how* to integrate it appropriately in the classroom.

Several types of technology can be integrated appropriately in learning experiences to enhance student knowledge of the language and culture. World language educators must be creative as architects of the learning experience. Thus, it is not uncommon to see students creating school newspapers, advertisements, and digital stories in the target language. Additionally, students often have e-pals and Skype pals with peers in other schools and in other countries. Further, teachers rely on authentic materials such as newscasts, traffic reports, travel information, and other internet resources to provide students with a firsthand glimpse into another culture as well as real world language usage. Ducate et al. (2011) identified several categories of technologies including "communicative (blogs and podcasts), collaborative (wikis and virtual communities of practice), documentative (blogs and e-portfolios), generative (virtual learning worlds),

and interactive (social bookmarking) tools” (p. 496). Such tools have been seen to foster empathy and lead to intercultural competence and proficiency development (Lee, 2012; ter Horst & Pearce, 2010).

What is TPACK?

The unique nature of rapidly evolving technologies necessitates continual growth and change on the part of teachers who integrate technology in their classrooms. These changes, both in knowledge and in practice, reflect the continual change seen in everyday technologies such as cellular phones and computers. Combine this challenge with the already-existing challenges of becoming an effective teacher, and it is clear that teaching effectively with technology requires a dynamic classroom teacher who possesses a very unique and evolving knowledge of technology, pedagogy, and content.

Given this dilemma and building on Shulman’s (1986) construct of pedagogical content knowledge, the TPACK framework or technological pedagogical content knowledge, emerged in order to “form a more integrated whole for the three kinds of knowledge addressed: technology, pedagogy, and content” (Schmidt et al., 2009, p. 123). “At the intersection of these three knowledge types is an intuitive understanding of teaching content with appropriate pedagogical methods and technologies” (Schmidt et al., 2009, p. 125). As seen in Figure 1, seven components are embedded in this framework including: technology knowledge (TK), content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), technological content knowledge (TCK), technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK), and technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK).

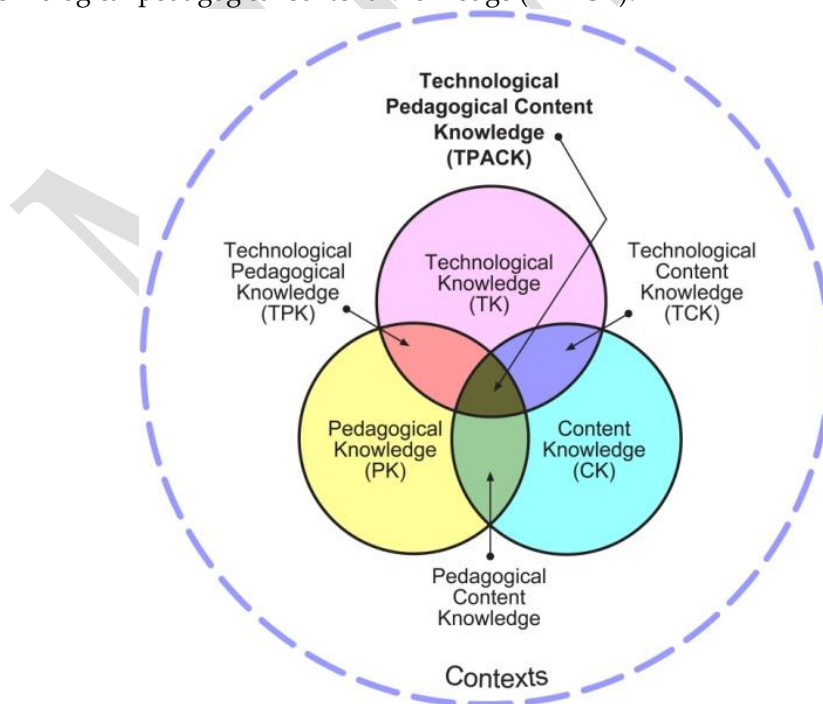


Figure 1. The TPACK Framework. Image is available at <http://tpack.org> (rights free).

Research Related to TPACK in Other Disciplines

Although research abounds regarding the world language teacher's knowledge specifically as it relates to content and pedagogical knowledge (Bernhardt & Hammadou, 1987; Lafayette, 1993; Schulz, 2000), little research exists which examines other domains of the TPACK teacher knowledge framework. Thus, it is necessary to identify relevant TPACK research in other disciplines.

In mathematics, Niess et al. (2009) developed a framework for considering the TPACK of classroom teachers. This framework specified standards and introduced a development model that took into account four themes: curriculum and assessment, learning, teaching, and access. The framework also introduced five levels of the development of TPACK for mathematics teachers, with teachers beginning at the recognizing level and potentially moving up through the accepting, adapting, exploring, and advancing levels. It has also been noted that the availability of instructional technologies in mathematics classroom only rarely aligns with the use of technologies in the classroom for teaching and learning, that is, many teachers are not using available technologies (Dunham & Hennesy, 2008).

Additionally research highlighted that teachers are faced with many extrinsic and intrinsic barriers to technology integration. Common extrinsic barriers include lack of resources such as time, training opportunities, technical support, or space. Intrinsic barriers are those barriers which cannot easily be manipulated and are more difficult to describe, including teachers' existing attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, skills, level of confidence and practices (Ertner & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2009; Hew & Brush, 2007; Norton, McRobbie, & Cooper, 2000; Swan & Dixon, 2006). Author 2 (2009) studied secondary mathematics teachers' perceptions of their integration of instructional technologies through the lens of the TPACK developmental model and noted that participating teachers tended to perceive themselves to be at higher TPACK levels than indicated by other primary data including classroom observations and lesson samples.

Specifically regarding the teacher's lack of confidence with technology, Graham et al. (2009) found that science teachers were hesitant to allow students to use technology for inquiry, a fundamental component of science learning. Rather the participant teachers used the technology for demonstration purposes or used the technology prior to instruction and reported its use in their classes. Certainly limiting students' exposure to technology limits the opportunities students have to learn with technology.

Given the dearth of research related to world language teacher knowledge using the TPACK framework, this study fills a gap in existing research that currently emphasizes teacher knowledge in other disciplines. Further, both the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century and the National Educational Technology Standards advocate the use of technology in the world language classroom as a tool for helping students achieve language and cultural goals (National Standards in Foreign Language Project, 1999; ISTE 2000).

Research Questions

Building on research by Shulman (1986) and Mishra and Koehler (2006), researchers examine how teachers perceive their own knowledge, specifically their content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), technological knowledge (TK) and the intersection of these domains. This study was designed to explore the following research questions:

- a) What are secondary world language teachers' perceptions of their CK, PK, TK and intersections of those domains?
- b) How do their perceptions differ from one knowledge domain to another?

The Survey

The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Survey for world language teachers constructed for this study consisted of a total of 21 questions (see Appendix A). It was developed based on existing research (Sahin, 2011; Schmidt et al., 2009; Yurdakul et al., 2012) that introduced valid and reliable instruments to explore pre-service and in-service teachers' technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge as well as the intersections of those domains. To our knowledge, this research is the first study in this area specifically related to the world language educator.

The survey is comprised of several questions to elicit demographical information as well as seven main knowledge domain sections. Each of the seven main sections was designed to examine one of the following knowledge domains: TK, CK, PK, PCK, TCK, TPK, and TPACK. Each section is comprised of "can do" or "know how to" statements. The statements related to TK, PK, TCK, TPK were taken from previous research that investigated this domain (Sahin, 2011; Schmidt, et al, 2009). Other knowledge domains (CK, PCK, and TPACK) were altered to reflect the knowledge base of the world language educator. It should be noted that this survey was constructed by the researchers to explore the world language teacher's self-reported perceptions of their knowledge base rather than their actual teaching practices. Thus, participants may report that they are knowledgeable in one of the component areas; however, they may fail to demonstrate that particular skill in their world language classroom as they develop and deliver lessons.

The section used to gauge the participants' CK included statements from the *Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* (ACTFL, 2002). These same standards provide a framework for what beginning language teachers should know and be able to do at the end of their teacher preparation program. Although not all participants were identified as novice teachers, these standards provide a benchmark for all language educators entering the field. Specifically, regarding this domain, statements were included to explore knowledge related to (a) the language system including its history, evolution, phonology, morphology, and syntax; (b) the awareness of language acquisition and the theoretical underpinnings of language development as well as comparisons to the first language; (c) language proficiency in the three communicative modes (e.g., interpersonal, interpretive, presentational); and (d) the target cultures (e.g., products, practices, and perspectives as well as connections to the roles of major cultural figures and icons). These statements, derived from the Program Standards, are also directly related to the student standards which identify what

learners should know and be able to do following a sequence of language instruction. Thus, it is logical that teachers must master this critical content knowledge in order to prepare learners to meet their language and cultural goals.

The statements used to explore the PCK of the participants, like the CK section, were developed using the Program Standards. Included in this area were items related to (a) target language usage during instruction (how to engage students to negotiate meaning, to provide target language input, to create authentic tasks that facilitate multiple ways for meaningful interaction); (b) knowledge and use of language acquisition to create a supportive learning environment; (c) knowledge of the five goal areas of the student standards (e.g., Communication, Cultures, Comparisons, Connections, and Communities) and how to integrate these in planning, selection of materials, and delivery of lessons; and (d) awareness of assessment models (especially those specific to language learning such as the Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Writing as well as the Performance Guidelines) and how to reflect on and use both formative and summative assessments to monitor and report on student progress.

The integration of all of the knowledge domains, TPACK, was explored through statements created by the researchers using the 21st Century Skills Map for World Languages (P21, 2011). Statements examined the integration of technology in order to address the 21st century student outcomes. These areas include critical thinking/problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity/innovation, information, media, and technology literacy, flexibility/adaptability, initiative/self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility. Although these 21st century skills are uniform across the core K-12 disciplines, the statements used in this survey were rooted in the student standards for world language education.

The survey was sent to ACTFL and a link was uploaded to their online community on June 21, 2012. Participants could respond to the survey on or before September 21, 2012. One hundred seventy-one participants began the survey; however, most questions were completed by 130 participants.

Limitations

Before presenting the findings of this study, the following limitations should be highlighted. First, because the survey was advertised via the ACTFL website, it can be assumed that most, if not all, participants were members of this association. Consequently, it may be possible that the results do not represent the perspectives of the majority of foreign language teachers, or at the very least, may not present an accurate picture of the knowledge base of those teachers who choose not to participate in their national language teaching association. Research (Allen, 2002; Fraga-Cañadas, 2010; Author 1, forthcoming; Swanson, 2012) indicates that the most effective and qualified teachers are those teachers who are involved in professional development and are members of professional teaching organizations. Thus, the participants of this study may represent the most qualified, effective, and knowledgeable teachers in the field. It is vital to note that due to the self-reported nature of the survey, the data are suggestive rather than conclusive. Additionally, through the survey data, researchers explored the knowledge base of world language teachers rather than actual teaching

practices. Thus, there may be a dislocation between teachers' self-reported knowledge and their actual teaching practices. Lastly, the delivery of the survey using electronic means limits our sample and assumes certain technological knowledge.

Given the aforementioned limitations generalizing the results to other world language educators should be completed, if at all, with caution. Although these data must be interpreted carefully, they provide a timely snapshot of world language teacher knowledge, specifically as it relates to technology integration, as the profession focuses on improved teacher preparation.

Results

Demographics

Although 174 individuals responded to the survey, given the scope of this study, only the responses provided by those participants with language teaching experience at the secondary level within the last academic year will be reported ($n = 101$). Of the 101 participants, the majority was female ($n = 89$; 89%) and was above 42 years of age ($n = 74$; 73%). Almost all respondents reported English to be their primary native language ($n = 90$; 89%). Regarding teaching experience, the majority of respondents ($n = 68$) appeared to be veteran teachers with 12 or more years in the classroom as a language educator. Only five respondents reported being a novice teacher (0-3 years).

Regarding education and pathway to certification, 83 participants (82%) indicated that they had a graduate degree (Master, Doctor of Education, or Doctor of Philosophy). Forty respondents (40%) pursued certification via alternate pathways, added endorsements/lateral entry, or were not certified. Approximately half of the participants were certified to teach Spanish ($n = 52$; 52%), while 32% were certified in French, 4% in German, and 2% in Latin. Additionally, 8 respondents obtained their initial certification in an area other than the foreign language, and two were not certified to teach.

The survey highlighted that the majority of respondents ($n = 77$, 77%) had completed nine or more credit hours specifically related to the teaching of foreign languages. However, fewer respondents cited having completed coursework related to technology integration in the classroom. Among those that reported coursework of this type, 45 participants had completed six or more credit hours. On the other hand, coursework specifically related to technology integration in the world language classroom was less common because 60% ($n = 61$) reported to have taken fewer than three credit hours.

Knowledge Domains

Technological Knowledge

The data revealed that these participants perceived themselves to be knowledgeable with regard to each of the domains. Specifically regarding technological knowledge, at least 60% ($n = 60$) of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed to every statement in this section. Although they indicated that they were knowledgeable about basic technologies and felt comfortable learning about and playing with new technological tools, fewer participants (66%) reported that they had sufficient opportunities to work with different technologies when compared to other statements

in this section. This finding is important because only 66% cited knowing about different technologies.

Their qualitative comments regarding their technological knowledge are also noteworthy because they provide information about various challenges and issues related to technology integration as well as several advances that facilitate opportunities to use technology in the world language classroom. Many responses indicated that teachers were proactive in their quest to learn about and use various technologies as language teachers. For example, one participant reported that "My knowledge comes from trial and error, owner's manuals, and technology classes given by the technology specialists at my district." Another indicated that "I have taken professional development courses through our school for re-certification purposes."

In addition to being proactive, many respondents asserted that their schools were providing them with more technological tools to use in the classroom. Comments included that "My school district provides a laptop to each teacher. My school site provides an LCD projector and many teachers are receiving iPads" and "Our school has a 1 to 1 student laptop program and we receive training from an IT person each year."

Although participants were often proactive and reported that their schools were assisting them in using technology, others were met with challenges related to technology integration. Reported difficulties included the lack of available tools, the challenge to share equipment and spaces with teachers of other content areas, and the difficulty to stay abreast of new technologies. Some of these comments included: "Technology is constantly evolving and I find it difficult to keep up due to the lack of time I can devote to learning, despite the many skills I already have," "Lack of time, not lack of willingness or intent, is the greatest barrier to being proficient with technology," "The foreign language lab was turned into an all high school lab so I have very little access to a lab. We have wireless labs for the classrooms but [there are] only 2 carts to share among 40 communication skills teachers," "At one point, there were programs and websites I wanted to access for my classes but school policy prevented such."

Content Knowledge

The data revealed that respondents reported having strong content knowledge. With one exception, all statements were agreed upon by at least 80% of the participants. While they claimed to be knowledgeable related to the target cultures, language system, and language acquisition theories, only 49% ($n = 48$) agreed or strongly agreed to the statement "I have an oral proficiency rating of Advanced-Low or higher which has been measured via an official Oral Proficiency Interview, Advanced-Level check, or computerized Oral Proficiency Interview (OPIc)." As written, it may have been difficult for participants to answer using the Likert scale provided. For those participants who did not agree, it is unknown whether they have not reached oral proficiency at the Advanced-Low level or if they have never been assessed formally. Thus, the question makes it difficult to interpret the data accurately. However, qualitative comments provided by the participants provide additional information to assist in understanding this particular statement. For example, "My proficiency has

never been "officially" rated," and "I consider myself proficient, but have never been OPI rated" were some of the comments related to oral proficiency assessment. Additionally, one participant highlighted the difficulty in improving proficiency by stating that "It is very difficult to find cost-effective oral proficiency training."

Among all of the qualitative responses in this section of the survey, most were related to the target language cultures and the challenge to know about and address all of the diverse products, practices, and perspectives of those peoples. One such response included "With 20 plus countries, it is impossible to keep up with all of them." Lastly, comments identified the lack of coursework in target language linguistics. One respondent claimed, "My degrees did not require a linguistics course."

Pedagogical Knowledge

The survey results indicated that participants felt confident in their pedagogical knowledge. At least 91% ($n = 91$) of the participants agreed with all of the statements in this section, with the greatest perceived strength in their ability to adapt their teaching based on what students can understand and do (96%) and a familiarity with common student understandings and misconceptions (96%). Notable areas of positive response also included knowing how to assess student performance (95%), adapting teaching styles to different learners (95%), using a wide range of teaching styles and learning theories (95%), and assessing learners in multiple ways (95%).

Multiple participants described professional experiences as a factor that allowed them to "keep up with changes in the profession." These experiences included national and state level conferences and workshops, professional journals, and online professional learning communities of foreign language teachers. Participants qualitatively identified some key areas for improvement in their pedagogical knowledge including "managing the time involved in teaching and presentation" and using differentiated instruction. One reason offered for a weakness in time management was a "disparity in student ability."

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

The data revealed that participants were not only knowledgeable about pedagogy and their world language content area, but they also had strong pedagogical content knowledge. Participants reported being knowledgeable with regard to using a variety of instructional methods, providing opportunities for students to interact and negotiate meaning, integrating the standards in designing lessons and creating materials for the classroom, and developing content-based, interdisciplinary language lessons. Although at least 80% of the participants agreed to almost all of the statements in this section, there were three instances where responses lacked this uniformity. Specifically regarding usage of the target language, only 72% reported using the target language for at least 90% of instructional time. There was less agreement among participants concerning the knowledge of assessment practices. For example, only 61% indicated that they know how to measure students' communicative ability via the K-12 Performance Guidelines and the Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Writing. Additionally, only half of the participants (54%) reported that

they could design authentic tasks using the 21st Century Skills Map for World Languages.

Their qualitative comments provided additional data to examine their pedagogical content knowledge. The majority of responses confirmed that participants were unfamiliar with the 21st Century Skills Map as well as assessment tools/guidelines for the world language classroom. One participant stated, "I don't know what [the 21st Century Skills Map] is," and another affirmed, "I am unfamiliar with the ACTFL Performance Guidelines, but I'm sure I could measure communication with those guidelines in front of me." Additionally, comments highlighted that resistance to using new tools impacted their knowledge regarding those tools. For example, one participant indicated, "My colleagues are resisting the use of IPA and the 21st Century Skills Map and so it is taking some time to learn it myself."

In addition to comments related to the unfamiliarity with new tools, other participants referred to issues that adversely impacted the attainability of the goals of foreign language education. One participant insisted, "As the number of preparations per year increases, the time I have to be creative and thoughtful about each lesson design decreases." Another responded, "I have observed many FL teachers who have embraced the 5Cs. I'm concerned that I see a lot of English being used. Plus there are curricular gaps. I don't see continuity from one unit/theme to another. I tend to see more teacher-centered teaching going on."

Technological Content Knowledge

Most participants in the study identified positively with statements regarding technological content knowledge. For the four items that addressed this domain, at least 84% (n = 84) agreed or strongly agreed. Of the 100 participants that responded in this section, 97% indicated that they could prepare a lesson that requires the use of instructional technologies, while the remaining 3% had a neutral response. When participants were asked to consider whether they knew about specific technologies that can be used to teach foreign language, 84% responded positively, 14% provided a neutral response, and 2% responded negatively.

The qualitative comments provided by participants offer insight into the specific technologies they have access to. Participants noted available technologies to include interactive whiteboards, language laboratories, and laptop computers. Two participants noted that they felt that technology should be used in a supplementary manner, but not as a replacement for face-to-face instruction. One participant noted room for improvement, "I know that there are a lot of technology resources out there that I don't know how to use that could be even more beneficial for language students." Participants' responses indicated that they were convinced of the importance of technology and possessed some of the skills to implement the limited technologies available.

Technological Pedagogical Knowledge

Survey results indicated that participants felt like they had a strong technological pedagogical knowledge. At least 86% (n = 86) of the participants provided a positive response to the four items that addressed this domain. The strongest item (92%)

regarded participants' abilities to select technologies in their teaching careers. While 90% of participants indicated an understanding of how to use computer software to support student learning, 3% indicated a negative response, and 7% provided a neutral response.

In qualitative responses, participants noted areas for continued improvement with statements including, "I know that I could integrate even more technology if I took the time to learn" and "I am still in the process of learning many of the new technologies." Participants also noted the barriers they experience with regard to integrating technology in instruction including insufficient bandwidth, server issues, and limited resources.

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Although many participants reported being unaware of the 21st Century Skills Map for World Languages, they were generally knowledgeable about its applicability to the world language classroom. Still, when compared to other knowledge domains, participants did not agree to these statements as uniformly as others. Seventy percent of the participants agreed to all with the exception of three statements in this section. Only 65% of the participants reported being able to choose and use technologies that would allow students to collaborate across cultures. Additionally, participants (67%) were less familiar with technologies that require students, as global citizens, to interpret and evaluate authentic content in legal and ethical ways. Lastly, 65% were able to choose and use technologies to encourage students to be responsible, fair, and accepting.

Specifically regarding their qualitative statements, although they were proactive by collaborating with colleagues and participating in professional development regarding technology integration, many participants were still faced with numerous challenges. Among all of these challenges was the lack of time to search and evaluate appropriate technologies for language learning. One such comment included, "When I am made aware of a new/interesting tech method/program, I then consider how best it fits in my curriculum. I do NOT (emphasis in original comment) have time to search and evaluate during the year for something to fit a particular need." In addition to time constraints, one participant urged other teachers to consider the importance of using technology: "I'm concerned that I see many teachers jumping on a bandwagon but have not thought first how technology can support an objective... not vice versa. I've seen school systems do the same thing." Others reported that they felt left to their own devices given the lack of professional technology training: "I have not had formal tech courses. I mostly learn myself or get ideas from colleagues." Lastly, one comment highlighted the challenge related to global citizenry: "Global citizens? Whom are you kidding? Most American kids can't even label a basic map [of the] United States, let alone function as global citizens. Voter-participation in this country is only about 60%. My incoming freshman can't even locate France or Argentina on a map."

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine secondary world language teachers' perceptions of their knowledge base. First, it should be noted that the majority of the

participants in this study believed that they were knowledgeable with regard to all of the TPACK knowledge domains. This is not surprising given the results of Author 2 (2009) who underscored that participating teachers reported a strong TPACK, often an inflation of their actual knowledge.

The data of this study highlighted several interesting findings that may lead to the development of professional development for in-service world language teachers as well as the improvement of current teacher education programs.

Of particular interest is that although the participants reported having completed two to three courses in methodology, few cited having taken formal courses specific to the integration of technology in the world language classroom. It is not surprising that they would be less knowledgeable about different technologies, given this finding. Additionally, participants highlighted several challenges that adversely impacted their ability to find and use technologies in the world language classroom. Parallel to the research (Hew & Brush, 2007) regarding barriers in technology integration, the participants of this study cited difficulties including time constraints, the lack of technology-related courses for world language teachers, and the lack of available resources. Unlike findings in extant research, however, these world language teacher participants reported having to share available resources with teachers of other disciplines who were often given precedence. On a positive note, regardless of these aforementioned challenges, the participants were proactive in their quest to learn about and use technologies that would enhance the world language learning experience. Although no concrete examples of technology integration were provided by participants, the majority appeared to be knowledgeable with regard to technological knowledge, technological pedagogical knowledge, and technological content knowledge. It should also be mentioned that participants reported that many schools and districts were making several advances that afforded teachers and students with more up-to-date technology resources.

Specifically regarding content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, the participants reported being especially competent. This may be directly related to their decisions to be involved in professional world language teacher organizations which, according to one participant, assisted them in “keep[ing] up with the changes in the profession.” Although competent, they reported being less knowledgeable about the various target language cultures and linguistics which reflects research by Fraga-Cañadas (2010), Cooper (2004) and Author 1 (forthcoming). Further, the oral proficiency of participants, a fundamental component of world language teacher knowledge, cannot be confirmed. It is possible that participants were not rated using the official Oral Proficiency Interview; however, it is equally as plausible that they had not reached that level of proficiency as recommended by ACTFL/NCATE for pre-service teachers.

The possible deficiency in target language oral proficiency may have adversely impacted their pedagogical content knowledge. For example, only 72% of the participants reported using the target language for at least 90% of instructional time. This is surprising given the recommendation by ACTFL (2010) to do so at all levels of language instruction. In addition to target language usage, other deficiencies in pedagogical content knowledge arose from the data. Specifically, the participants

were less familiar with assessment practices and guidelines such as the K-12 Performance Guidelines, the Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Writing (ACTFL, 2012b), and the 21st Century Skills Map for World Languages (ACTFL, 2011). Qualitative comments confirmed their unawareness of these guidelines for world language teachers, in addition to highlighting resistance to change and limitations of standards in general.

Although participants were generally knowledgeable with regard to the intersections of the knowledge domains, the TPACK, several noteworthy findings emerged from the data. Since participants reported being less knowledgeable with regard to the target cultures, it is not surprising that they were unaware of technologies that would assist learners in collaborating across cultures. Additionally, since participants reported having taken fewer courses related to technology integration, it is understandable that they would also cite being unaware of technologies that would assist students in evaluating authentic content. Lastly, the participants reported being less knowledgeable regarding technologies that could encourage students to be responsible, fair, and accepting.

Qualitative comments with regard to the TPACK highlighted the participants' difficulties managing time as effective practitioners, as well as their concerns about technology integration and student abilities. Thus, although the majority of participants considered themselves to be technologically knowledgeable, they believed that technology as an instructional tool must be justified before its integration in learning experiences. Further, they argued that lofty goals for global competence may be unrealistic given students' current knowledge and abilities.

Pedagogical Implications

This research has direct implications for world language teachers' professional growth. Although generally knowledgeable, potential deficiencies in the participants' TPACK point to areas where professional development is warranted. Specifically, it seems logical that future workshops should focus on raising awareness of assessment tools, as well as their function in the world language classroom. Professional development, therefore, should emphasize the role of the Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners and the Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Writing (ACTFL, 2012b) in assisting students in setting and meeting realistic goals following a sequence of language instruction. To that end, world language teacher education should make a concerted effort to prepare future language educators by including topics reflected in this study.

In addition to aforementioned professional development, it appears that courses, such as those advertised by ACTFL/UMUC (2012a) that emphasize technology integration in the world language classroom, are needed. Participants who noted successes with classroom technologies described a process of trial and error in discovering how to use the available technologies. These teachers were left with remaining issues such as time constraints and integration into assessment practices, indicating a need for further assistance beyond reflective individual troubleshooting.

Since approximately half of these participating teachers had not experienced coursework in this capacity, courses that train educators to find and use technology to assist 21st century learners are warranted. They may also provide information about

the practicality of the 21st Century Skills Map by providing educators with concrete examples of technology integration for the world language classroom. Further, courses of this nature assist classroom teachers with the quandary cited by these participants regarding the lack of time to search, evaluate, and use appropriate technological resources.

It is noteworthy that a unique challenge reported by these participants was the need to share technological resources with teachers of other disciplines. This finding was further confirmed in these participants' comments regarding not having sufficient opportunities to practice with various technologies. It is possible that this particular difficulty is related to the unintended effects of NCLB. In light of the test-driven environment in academic core areas and the focus on student achievement as evidenced on high stakes testing, technology resources that may assist students are often reserved for certain disciplines such as math, science, and English Language Arts. Although foreign language is considered a core subject under NCLB, Catherine Keatly (2008) of the National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC) notes, "There is mounting evidence that the impact of NCLB...has resulted in a number of state and district boards concentrating their efforts and resources in the subject areas to be tested to the detriment of other subjects, such as foreign languages" (n. p.).

In the current era of transitioning to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for mathematics and English Language Arts, we would be remiss not to discuss the broader implications related to this state-led initiative. Although world languages are not currently tested, their role in the CCSS is undeniable. According to Dane Linn, the Director of the Education Division of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, "Exposure to a foreign language supports the development of the critical literacy skills outlined in the Common Core Standards as well as critical 21st century skills. These skills will better position students for success in their careers and communities" (ACTFL, 2011b). The increased focus on language in all content areas may highlight what world language teachers do in the classroom, especially as it relates to technology integration, to assist students in developing effective communication skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Additionally, since the CCSS are set to be assessed using computer-based assessments, all classroom teachers, regardless of content area, must effectively integrate technology to provide students with opportunities to practice using these crucial tools. Further, students must understand the interdisciplinary nature of the CCSS. Consequently, teachers must encourage students to communicate effectively by using research and technology to connect ideas and themes across content areas. The increase in rigor and the alignment of states to a common set of standards are certainly steps toward producing students who are college- and career ready. By increasing the role of language and communication skills, specifically through world language education, students are not only college and career ready, but they are also "world ready" (ACTFL, 2012c).

Suggestions for Future Research

Data from this study indicate a positive perception and openness toward technology amongst world language teachers. Teachers are increasingly aware of the importance

of technology in their classroom, and they perceive themselves to be competent in all of the TPACK knowledge domains. Still, more research is needed. Specifically, it has yet to be determined whether their self-perceived knowledge is sufficient to affect pedagogical practices resulting in students who are able to effectively integrate concepts, language, and cultural ideas beyond the classroom contexts. Future studies may want to qualitatively investigate the relationship between teacher knowledge and actual teaching practices in the world language classroom through observations and interviews. Specifically, do teachers who claim to know how to integrate technology actually do so appropriately to facilitate student learning in authentic, meaningful, and relevant ways? Further, how is this teacher knowledge and performance directly or indirectly related to the communicative goals of world language education, and how do they impact intercultural understanding?

Future research should include in-depth survey studies that examine the quality of concrete examples of students' engagement in and use of technology in the world language classroom. It is clear that world language teachers perceive themselves to be integrators of technology, but is this integration sufficient to enhance student learning? Lastly, what are the opportunities that instructional technologies provide for teachers' professional growth? Are there technologies available that help teachers to stay abreast of cultural trends and/or maintain and improve their fluency with the languages they teach?

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Appendix

TPACK Survey

Technology is a broad concept that can mean a lot of different things. For the purpose of this questionnaire, technology is referring to digital technology/technologies – that is, the digital tools we use such as computers, laptops, iPods/iPads, handhelds, interactive whiteboards, software programs, etc. Please answer all of the questions, and if you are uncertain of or neutral about your response, you may always select “Neither agree nor disagree.” We encourage you to respond to all questions to the best of your knowledge.

Section A. Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
2. What is your age?
 - a. 18-22
 - b. 23-26
 - c. 27-32
 - d. 33+
3. Please mark each of the degrees that you have received:
 - a. Associate
 - b. Bachelor
 - c. Master
 - d. Educational Specialist
 - e. Doctor of Education
 - f. Doctor of Philosophy
 - g. Other: please explain
4. Which of the following was your initial licensure area?
 - a. Chinese
 - b. French
 - c. German
 - d. Italian
 - e. Japanese
 - f. Portuguese
 - g. Russian

- h. Spanish
 - i. Other: please explain
5. Specifically regarding your initial licensure area, how many years of teaching experience have you had?
- a. 0-3
 - b. 4-7
 - c. 8-11
 - d. 12+
6. How did you obtain your initial licensure in a foreign language (FL)?
- a. Traditional pathway (major in education)
 - b. Alternate pathway (obtained major in another area and sought certification later through an alternate program)
 - c. Added endorsement (obtained licensure in another area through either traditional or alternate pathway but added FL with credit hours or the Praxis II)
 - d. I am currently working on certification in FL
 - e. I do not have my license in FL and am not planning on obtaining it
7. Please check all levels of FL that you have taught within the last academic year.
- a. Elementary (PK-6)
 - b. Secondary (7-12)
 - c. Post-secondary
8. How many credit hours have you completed specifically related to the teaching of foreign languages?
- a. 0-2
 - b. 3-5
 - c. 6-8
 - d. 9+
9. How many credit hours have you completed specifically related to technology integration in the classroom? Please include any courses which integrated technology as a tool for learning in ways which were transferable to your teaching.
- a. 0-2
 - b. 3-5
 - c. 6-8
 - d. 9+
10. Among those credit hours, how many were completed that specifically related to technology integration in the FL classroom? Please include any courses

which integrated technology as a tool for learning in ways which were transferable to your teaching.

- a. 0-2
- b. 3-5
- c. 6-8
- d. 9+

Section B: Technological Knowledge (TK)

Strongly Disagree= SD; *Disagree*= D; *Neither Agree/Disagree*= N; *Agree*= A; *Strongly Agree*= SA

1. I know how to solve my own technical problems.
2. I know about basic computer hardware (e.g., CD-Rom, mother-board, RAM) and their functions.
3. I know about basic computer software (e.g., Windows, Media Player) and their functions.
4. I can use a word-processor program (e.g., MS Word)
5. I can use an electronic spreadsheet (e.g., MS Excel)
6. I can communicate through the Internet (email, Instant Messenger)
7. I can use a presentation program (MS PowerPoint)
8. I can learn technology easily.
9. I keep up with important technologies.
10. I frequently play around with the technology.
11. I know about a lot of different technologies.
12. I have the technical skills I need to use technology.
13. I have had sufficient opportunities to work with different technologies.

General Comments:

Section C: Content Knowledge

Strongly Disagree= SD; *Disagree*= D; *Neither Agree/Disagree*= N; *Agree*= A; *Strongly Agree*= SA

1. I have a strong knowledge base of the linguistic elements of the target language system. This knowledge includes but is not limited to the history of the target language, its phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics.
2. I understand and can describe how words are formed, how sentences are put together, and how meaning is conveyed.
3. I understand agreement, word order, interrogatives, prepositions, and the pronominal system as well as the verb system including time, aspect, and mood.
4. I am aware of the changing nature of the language system and can make appropriate connections and comparisons between the native language and the target language systems.

5. I am highly proficient in the target language.
6. I have an oral proficiency rating of Advanced-Low or higher which has been measured via an official Oral Proficiency Interview, Advanced-Level check, or OPIc.
7. I can communicate successfully in the three modes of communication (e.g., interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational).
8. I have a strong knowledge base of geography as well as the history and social structure of the target society.
9. I have a strong knowledge base of the contemporary lifestyles of the target society including the customs and cultural patterns of the target society.
10. I can make the connections and comparisons between the target culture and my own.
11. I can make connections among the perspectives of a culture and its practices and products.
12. I am knowledgeable about major writers, thinkers, artists, and cultural icons and can make connections to the roles they play.
13. I have a strong understanding of language acquisition at various developmental levels.

General Comments:

Section D: Pedagogical Knowledge (PK)

Strongly Disagree= SD; Disagree= D; Neither Agree/Disagree= N; Agree= A; Strongly Agree= SA

1. I know how to assess student performance in a classroom.
2. I recognize and can utilize both formative and summative assessment models to gauge student performance.
3. I can adapt my teaching based upon what students currently understand and can do.
4. I can adapt my teaching styles to different learners.
5. I can assess student learning in multiple ways.
6. I can use a wide range of teaching approaches and learning theories in a classroom setting.
7. I can select and use materials appropriate to individual learning styles.
8. I am familiar with common student understandings and misconceptions.
9. I know how to organize and maintain classroom management.
10. I know how to organize students for effective whole-class, small-group, and individual work.

General Comments:

Section E: Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Strongly Disagree= SD; Disagree= D; Neither Agree/Disagree= N; Agree= A; Strongly Agree= SA

1. I know how to use appropriate teaching methods by maximizing the use of target language.
2. I can use the target language for approximately 90% of classroom instructional time.
3. I address the five goal areas of the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* (e.g., Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) during a unit.
4. I can identify these goal areas (Communication, Culture, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities) and standards in instructional and classroom activities.
5. I am cognizant of the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development of K-12 students and use this information to plan instruction and assessments.
6. I can provide multiple opportunities for students to express and negotiate meaning within the three modes of communication (e.g., interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational).
7. I can adapt language instruction to address students' multiple ways of learning and to foster critical thinking.
8. I can build lessons around topics drawn from a variety of subject areas, such as content-based lessons that integrate language, culture, and student interests.
9. I know how to provide guided assistance to students to help them learn to negotiate meaning and to take risks with the language as they use it to express thoughts and ideas.
10. I can design tasks that require students to interact meaningfully with one another, with me, and with native speakers of the target language.
11. I can use the organizing principles of the standards as I evaluate, select, and create instructional materials.
12. I can measure interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational communication using my knowledge of the *ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners* (1998), and the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Writing* (2012).
13. I can design authentic tasks at various levels by using the *21st Century Skills Map for World Languages* as a guide.

General Comments:

Section F: Technological Content Knowledge (TCK)

Strongly Disagree= SD; *Disagree*= D; *Neither Agree/Disagree*= N; *Agree*= A; *Strongly Agree*= SA

1. I know about technologies that I can use for understanding and using a foreign language.
2. I know that using technologies can help reach course objectives easily in my lesson plans.
3. I can prepare a lesson that requires the use of instructional technologies.

4. I can develop class activities and projects that involve the use of instructional technologies.

Section G: Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK)

Strongly Disagree= SD; Disagree= D; Neither Agree/Disagree= N; Agree= A; Strongly Agree= SA

1. I can choose technologies appropriate for my teaching/learning approaches and strategies.
2. I know how to use computer applications to support student learning.
3. I can select technologies useful for my teaching career.
4. I can evaluate the appropriateness of a new technology for teaching/learning.

Section H: Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)

Strongly Disagree= SD; Disagree= D; Neither Agree/Disagree= N; Agree= A; Strongly Agree= SA

1. I can choose technologies to assist students in being effective communicators of the language (e.g., Facebook, Blogger, Skype, Twitter, etc.).
2. I can choose technologies to encourage students to collaborate across cultures (e.g., diigo, wikispaces, etc.).
3. I can choose technologies to encourage critical thinking and problem-solving (e.g., Bubbl.us, Spicynodes, etc.).
4. I can choose technologies that foster student creativity and innovation (e.g., Animoto, Prezi).
5. I can choose technologies that require students to be informed global citizens that manage, evaluate, and interpret authentic sources in ethical and legal ways (e.g., Flickr, GoogleEarth, morgueFile, etc.).
6. I can use technologies that require students to be flexible, adaptable, and open-minded (e.g., Newseum, newsmap, PBworks).
7. I can use technologies so that students are motivated, productive, and accountable for their own language proficiency and cultural knowledge (e.g., Linguafolio, Rubistar, Lingro).
8. I can use technologies so that students can appreciate diverse perspectives and use appropriate sociolinguistic skills to function in diverse contexts (e.g., Doodle, historypin, voicethread).
9. I can use technologies to encourage students to be responsible, fair, and accepting.
10. I can teach successfully by combining my content, pedagogical, and technological knowledge.
11. I know that my content, pedagogical, and technological knowledge is dynamic and will change given the lesson and its objectives.

12. I can think critically about how to use technology in my classroom.
13. I have attended professional development that addressed technology integration in the foreign language classroom.
14. I have seen model teachers integrate technology successfully in their foreign language classrooms.
15. I can select technologies to use in my classroom that enhance what I teach, how I teach, and what students learn.
16. I can provide leadership in helping others to coordinate the use of content, technologies, and teaching approaches at my school and/or district.

MJLTM

The Praxis II World Language Test: Perspectives of Spanish Faculty and Teacher Candidates at One University

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Abstract

Research that examines the knowledge base of prospective foreign language teachers abounds; however, there has been scant attention to the licensure exams used to measure candidates' content knowledge. Following the ratification of the ACTFL/NCATE Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (2002), which addresses what language teachers should know and be able to do, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) altered the certification tests for foreign language licensure. The Praxis II: World Language Test (French #5174; German #5183; Spanish #5195) was developed to hold NCATE institutions accountable for providing candidates with programs that emphasize proficiency, literature, culture, linguistics, second language acquisition, and pedagogy. Given the dearth in research regarding the certification exams for prospective foreign language teachers, this study fills a large gap in research that impacts language teacher education. This qualitative study examines the perspectives of a small number of faculty members and teacher candidates regarding their experiences with the World Language Test (Spanish: Test #5195). The data revealed that their perspectives were heavily influenced by previous learning experiences and beliefs about language teaching and learning. Faculty member and teacher candidate participants underscored several concerns about the test including the integration of complex vocabulary, time constraints, and the inclusion of misleading questions as well as cultural factoids. Implications for foreign language teacher preparation, specifically program development or modification, are included.

Keywords: Praxis, teacher certification, licensure tests, NCATE standards, teacher education, foreign language

Introduction

Research that examines the knowledge base of prospective foreign language teachers has resulted from the questions posed in the seminal article by Bernardt and Hammadou (1987) regarding what language teachers should know and be able to do.

The lack of empirical research led to their claim that “no genuine concern has been exhibited for the pre-service education of foreign language teachers” (p. 293). Since that time much progress has been made. Glisan (2001) underscored that three professional efforts which included the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) reached an “. . . agreement about what teachers should know and be able to do” (p. 168).

The Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachersⁱ (ACTFL, 2002) were developed through collaboration between the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and NCATE. These standards require prospective Spanish teachers to demonstrate proficiency at the Advanced-Lowⁱⁱ level in addition to having knowledge of language, literature, culture, and linguistics. To accomplish these goals, researchers have emphasized the importance of a collaborative relationship between the faculty in foreign languages and education (McAlpine & Dhonau, 2007; Pearson, Fonseca-Greber, & Foell, 2006; Schulz, 2000; Tedick, 2009).

So that licensure exams reflected the expectations of the Program Standards, “NCATE also joined with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to make significant changes in the PRAXIS examinations for teacher licensing” (Glisan, 2001, p. 170) which resulted in the development of the Praxis II: World Language Test (French #5174; German #5183; Spanish #5195)ⁱⁱⁱ in October 2010. The creation of a new licensure test was vital because previous versions were not aligned with the student standards but had, in the past, been submitted as evidence of subject-matter competence for NCATE accreditation reporting (Abbott, personal communication, October 2011).

Although the licensure test was changed to reflect what the profession identified as its core content knowledge, several challenges have emerged that directly impact the success of prospective teachers on this assessment. First, Cheatham (2004) asserted that the structure of language courses has changed very little to reflect these new expectations. Additionally, Wilkerson, Schomber, and Sandarg (2004) asserted that few students take a particular Praxis II test due to low enrollment in programs leading to foreign language certification. A program with fewer than 10 completers over a three-year period is exempt from NCATE’s 80% requisite pass rate on licensure tests, and often, these small programs do not submit reports for accreditation. This exemption provides little incentive for foreign language programs to implement the necessary changes to their curricula in order to assist teacher candidates. Furthermore, although urged to collaborate, departmental insularity makes it difficult to insist upon content area curricular change when faculty responsible for teacher preparation are housed in separate departments (Fraga-Cañadas, 2010; Pearson, Fonseca-Greber, and Foell, 2006; Schulz, 2000; Tedick, 2009).

Given these obstacles, it is not surprising that recent data by ETS (Table 1) indicated that in all three languages, graduate and undergraduate test-takers received lower scores nationwide on the Praxis II: World Language Test in comparison to the previous versions (e.g., Content Knowledge Test and Productive Language Skills Test). This finding raises additional questions about the preparation of prospective language teachers. In simple terms, are the expectations of the Program Standards and the

Praxis II: World Language Test realistic? Can prospective language teachers be successful on the Praxis II: World Language Test if an institution does not recognize the vital role of the Program Standards in teacher preparation?

Table 1 Praxis II Data

(Spanish)			
	CK Test	PLS Test	WL Test
Number of Undergraduate Test-takers	3436	713	451
Mean Score	172.12	169.35	166.27
Number of Graduate Test-takers	2189	766	242
Mean Score	178.21	175.69	172.50
(French)			
	CK Test	PLS Test	WL Test
Number of Undergraduate Test-takers	513	117	86
Mean Score	174.67	176.97	165.08
Number of Graduate Test-takers	734	244	82
Mean Score	183.00	183.67	174.18
(German)			
	CK Test	PLS Test	WL Test
Number of Undergraduate Test-takers	199	25	35
Mean Score	172.29	173.36	165.80
Number of Graduate Test-takers	219	39	21
Mean Score	184.29	189.31	176.00

Derived from data provided by ETS^{iv}

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Undergraduate Test-takers have indicated their standing as Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior

CK denotes Content Knowledge Test, PLS denotes Productive Language Skills Test, WL denotes World Language Test

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the perspectives of a small number of Spanish teacher candidates and foreign language faculty members regarding the Praxis II: World Language Test. Examining their perspectives may assist language educators in preparing prospective teachers for the challenges presented on

the licensure test. Further, Schomber and Sandarg (2009) argued that “the licensure exam is an important but unexamined area of teacher preparation” (p. 53).

Literature Review

The Role of Previous Learning Experiences

Although research regarding the Praxis II subject-matter tests is rather scant, there have been contributions by researchers (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Lafayette, 1998) to identify what language educators should know and be able to do. As Johnston and Irujo (2001) contended, “the topic of teacher knowledge and the nature of the knowledge base has emerged as one of the central concerns of research in language teacher education” (p. 3). Possibly the most influential theoretical framework contributing to the research in this area was proposed by Freeman and Johnson (1998) who identified language teaching as a social, evolving process.

Given the social context of the learning-to-teach process, it is likely that prospective teachers develop preconceived notions about teaching their content through previous experiences as language learners. Ponte (2001) asserted, “Researchers have recognized the importance of teachers’ previous educational experiences in creating implicit teaching models” (p. 53). Vélez-Rendón (2002a), Bailey et al. (1996), Gutiérrez (1996) and Moran (1996) also underscored this phenomenon by referring to Lortie’s (1975) apprenticeship of observation, or the “13,000 hours in direct contact with classroom teachers” (Lortie, 1975, p. 61). In simple terms, prospective teachers may teach using the same instructional methods as their previous language teachers.

The Role of Beliefs about Language Teaching and Learning

Since research reveals that previous learning experiences have a profound impact on prospective teachers’ beliefs and instructional decisions, it is vital to examine the preconceived notions of language learners and educators. Several researchers have examined the beliefs of foreign language teachers and learners (Bell, 2004; Brown, 2009; de Saint Léger & Storch, 2009; Fraga-Cañadas, 2010; Gorsuch, 2009; Horwitz, 1988; Levine, 2003; Polat, 2009; Tse, 2000). These studies point to the fact that in many cases, there is disagreement regarding what constitutes effective teaching specifically with regard to grammar instruction, error correction, and communicative language teaching. Additionally, teachers and learners may in fact have very different perspectives about good language teaching (Brown, 2009; Tse, 2000).

Given the relationship between beliefs and instructional practices, it may be difficult to alter teachers’ instructional decisions. Glisan (1996) argued, “the only way to realize reform and pay attention to the new standards is by altering the way in which teachers think about teaching” (p. 74). Similarly, Allen (2002) explained that, “rewriting state frameworks and local curriculum is not enough to ensure that standards-based foreign language teaching and learning will take place in the classroom. When it comes to modifying classroom practices, teachers are the most powerful agents” (p. 518). Thus, the first step in altering instructional practices may be identifying beliefs about language teaching and assisting educators in modifying those preconceived notions (and practices) through professional development and exposure to best practices in the field.

The Role of Content and Pedagogical Content Knowledge

It is impossible to discuss the language teacher's knowledge base without identifying the different categories of knowledge highlighted in Shulman's (1987) pivotal work (Johnston & Irujo, 2001). These categories include both content- and pedagogical-content knowledge among others. In identifying what teachers should know and be able to do, Lafayette (1993) examined the contributions of national language-specific organizations. Although he examined teacher knowledge prior to the development of the Praxis II: World Language Test, Lafayette affirmed that prospective teachers must be proficient in the language and be cognizant of the language system. He asserted, "Knowledge that teachers have about language, literature, and culture must be used to communicate effectively" (p. 135). Additionally, he criticized the traditional paradigm of foreign language study given the lack of focus on communication in all courses. Lafayette also emphasized the role of applied linguistics in professional training claiming that superficial knowledge about the language is insufficient. Since he recognized that each language organization emphasized diverse components, Lafayette argued that "it is somewhat distressing to imagine institutions of higher learning and state departments of education having to deal with documents addressing each of the different languages" (p. 133). It is perhaps this type of frank assessment that led to the development of the Program Standards.

Schulz (2000) identified several persistent issues in the field of foreign language teacher education. Calls for additional coursework in the target language, an emphasis on literature, culture, and methodology, and the recommendation of a joint curriculum were all recommended to improve the training of future language educators. Schulz provided three suggestions to improve language teacher education: (a) the need for extended study abroad to improve the lack of proficiency of language teachers, (b) the need to reach a consensus regarding the competencies of teachers for initial certification, and (c) the need for collaboration between faculties in education and foreign languages.

In addition to knowledge of the subject-matter, pedagogical-content knowledge is an essential component of the language teacher's knowledge base. Whereas subject-matter knowledge pertains to the structures, concepts, and organization of knowledge in the mind of the teacher, pedagogical content knowledge alludes to the illustrations, examples, and representations that make the material comprehensible to the student audience (Shulman, 1987). Glisan (2001) argued that the profession must recognize the reciprocal relationship between proficiency and successful teaching. Reiterating the concerns of Lafayette (1993) and Schulz (2000), Glisan (2001) pinpointed several reasons why teacher candidates are "ill-equipped" (p. 171) to communicate effectively including outdated foreign language programs that fail to utilize the standards at the postsecondary level or require a specific level of oral proficiency prior to certification. She insisted that teacher preparation must be reframed to address the shortage of language educators while simultaneously maintaining academic rigor.

Method

Participants and Setting

The present study included the perspectives of three teacher candidates and two faculty members of one department of foreign languages in the United States. The three teacher candidates were (a) seeking licensure in Spanish, (b) required to take the Praxis II: World Language Test, (c) enrolled at the same university, and (d) non-native learners of Spanish. At the time of this study, the college of education at this university did not adhere to the requirements specified in the Program Standards for foreign language teacher preparation. There was little collaboration between the faculty in education and foreign languages, and teacher candidates' oral proficiency had not previously been assessed by means of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)^v.

The two faculty members were both native speakers of Spanish. They were chosen because they were responsible for both (a) beginner and intermediate Spanish language instruction, and (b) academic advising of Spanish language students. Similar to teacher candidates, faculty member participants also took the Praxis II: World Language Test (Spanish).

Interview Protocol

A semi structured interview was used for teacher candidates and foreign language faculty member participants. These questions allowed for lengthy explanations, and could vary from one participant to another. Follow-up probes were dependent upon the participant's answers to the pre-determined questions. All interviews with teacher candidates were completed after they had taken the Praxis II: World Language Test.

Interviews with faculty members consisted of focus groups and one individual interview with each faculty member participant. The focus group was conducted prior to the Praxis II experience. Questions were designed to examine the expectations of the faculty members regarding the certification test. The *Test at a Glance* (ETS, 2010), a test description for test-takers, was distributed to faculty member participants and guided the researcher in asking probing questions during the focus group. Each faculty member was interviewed individually after taking the test. Questions during this phase were similar to those asked of teacher candidate participants to allow for constant comparison. Additionally, the researcher examined how faculty members' perceptions prior to and following the test may have evolved. A second focus group was conducted after the researcher was able to identify common trends among the teacher candidates' and faculty members' comments. All interviews were digitally recorded and were transcribed by the author. It should also be noted that in addition to interviews, the Praxis II results and academic transcripts were obtained from each of the three teacher candidates.

Analysis

Interview data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using the constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 2009). This method for data analysis was chosen in order to "compare one segment of data with another to determine similarities and differences...The overall object of this analysis is to identify patterns in the data" (Merriam, 2009, p. 30). First, each case was analyzed individually. Second a

cross-case analysis was done to compare each teacher candidate case with others in the group. This was completed to search for relevant themes and to refine codes. Finally, the teacher candidate group was compared as a whole to the faculty member group.

Findings

Before presenting the findings of the present study, it should be noted that transfer of the findings to other instances should be done, if at all, with extreme caution. Given that few teacher candidates and faculty members participated in this study, the data is suggestive rather than conclusive. Furthermore, since all teacher candidates and faculty members were recruited from one university, it cannot be assumed that those from other universities would interpret the Praxis II: World Language Test in the same way. However, given research that highlights the pervasive influence of departmental insularity, this study provides a timely snapshot of test-takers' perspectives of the Praxis II which may assist others responsible for teacher preparation with regard to program development and curricular modification.

All aforementioned limitations aside, interview and document data will be presented using three main categories: (a) Praxis II Experience, (b) Previous Experiences as Language Learners, (c) Consequences of the Test: Changing Beliefs.

Praxis II Experience

Examining the Score Report

None of the teacher candidates were successful on the Praxis II: World Language Test. Although according to the *Test at a Glance* (ETS, 2010), each category is weighted differently, comparing their scores may provide additional insights regarding their strengths and weaknesses (Table 2). For Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel, the weakest area was Presentational and Interpersonal Speaking, with 4/18 points or 17% representing the highest score. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that the speaking ability of teacher candidates may need attention (Fraga-Cañadas, 2010; Ricardo-Osorio, 2008). Regarding their strengths, both Rachel and Kelsey's scores pointed to Cultural Knowledge with Rachel's 7/11 points or 64% as the highest score. Based on the score report, Colleen performed the best in the Interpretive Listening area with 18/25 points or 72%.

Table 2 Test Scores Received by Component Area

	IL (25)	IR (24)	CK (11)	IPW (18)	PIS (18)	TOTAL (200)
Colleen	18	15	7	7	2	144
Kelsey	11	11	6	4	3	123
Rachel	14	13	7	7	4	137

The above letters refer to specific sections of the test. IL: Interpretive Listening, IR: Interpretive Reading, CK: Cultural Knowledge, IPW: Interpersonal and Presentational Writing, and PIS: Presentational and Interpersonal Speaking.

The number in () refers to the possible points.

Although the speaking component area was their weakest, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel performed almost as poorly in the Interpersonal and Presentational Writing section of the test. This particular finding is noteworthy since all three teacher candidates expressed confidence regarding the writing tasks. As Colleen explained, "I felt most confident about that [the writing]. I don't know what the problem was though. I finished that part and felt really confident" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011).

Feelings of Frustration

Taking their score reports into consideration, it should come as no surprise that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel were discouraged after taking the Praxis II. Rachel remarked, "I just thought I would be tested on what I know. This test just frustrated me" (Interview 1, February 22, 2011). When asked about their pre-test expectations, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel all highlighted their astonishment with the test content which deemphasized discrete knowledge. Colleen explained, "I just thought it was going to be grammar. I thought this because I took a test [in one of my classes] and it was all about grammar. It gave you a score and that was how good your language was" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011). In fact, the preparation strategies of all three teacher candidates consisted of reviewing grammatical knowledge.

Although they all began by studying grammar, all three teacher candidates failed to alter their Praxis II preparation even after viewing the online test material. This resistance may not be due to their reported "not knowing how to prepare differently" (Rachel, Interview 1, February 21, 2011), but instead to the lack of time to prepare adequately. Colleen, who confessed that she reviewed the online test material only two days in advance, described her anxiety when discovering the inconsistency between her expectations of the test and the actual exam. She asserted, "I saw on the website that it was about listening and other stuff and nothing about grammar. Obviously grammar, but not testing straight your grammar knowledge. So I freaked out" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011).

Challenges

Interpretive listening

Since their preparation for the Praxis II was inadequate, it is logical that when discussing the test, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel highlighted several challenges. Beginning with the first portion of the test, Interpretive Listening, all three teacher candidates expressed difficulty with the speed of the audio passages that paralyzed them. As Rachel explained, "Yes, it was native speakers, but they were speaking way faster than I've ever heard in a listening exam. I am not accustomed to that" (Interview 1, February 21, 2011). Colleen affirmed this same predicament and stated, "Well, I feel like when I hear Spanish, like when I am talking to people, I can understand, but the audio it was just so fast" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011). Kelsey also noted, "I had never listened to anything like that before" (Interview 1, February 22, 2011). Their performance in the listening section of the test was even further exacerbated due to the insufficient time allowed. Rachel described this difficulty: You got to listen to it, and it showed us the questions and it played again. That was nice. I was glad that it played again, but after that, it showed you a question for

twenty seconds and then the question went away. Then it showed you another question which I hated because some questions I finished in five seconds but others I didn't even have time to read the whole question. If it is a multiple choice and the (a), (b), (c), and (d) are all lengthy and I'm having to translate in my head quickly and then go back and think of the listening [passage] and choose the right one, it takes more than a couple of seconds. (Interview 1, February 21, 2011)

Given these complications, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel offered several suggestions that may have positively impacted their performance regarding listening. One such recommendation is provided by Colleen who stated, "I wish that there would have been a set time for the entire section or passage. This way, I could take my time on the ones that I didn't know right away" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011). This desire to regulate one's own time was reiterated by Rachel who suggested, "Maybe you could have all of the questions [and answers] on the screen at the same time. You can still see the time up there so maybe the time just runs out after each passage. This way you can move to the next question on your own." (Interview 1, February 21, 2011)

Although test-takers can indeed manage their own time in the other sections of the test, faculty members, like the teacher candidates, observed this lack of flexibility in the Interpretive Listening section. This is disconcerting since both faculty member participants were native Spanish speakers. Dr. Nichols shared her opinion, "For me, reading the options took some time. To think a little and even to re-read the options. There was not enough time. Perhaps they do not want you to think. Maybe it is supposed to be automatic" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011). For Dr. Nichols, this imposed time constraint after hearing the listening passages was unnecessary given the nature of the task which was already challenging. She commented, "The listening is difficult in the sense that you do not have control" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011). In addition to these temporal issues, similar to Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel, the faculty members were astonished by the speed of the authentic passages. Dr. Logan affirmed, "It was extremely fast. I think a native speaker can catch it, but a [non-native speaking] student, I'm not sure. I think it was too fast" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011).

While reflecting further upon the Interpretive Listening section of the test, the faculty members reported a challenge that was not mentioned by the teacher candidates. For Drs. Logan and Nichols, the greatest obstacle of the entire Praxis II was related to the "misleading" (Dr. Logan, FG 2, and February 23, 2011) and "too interpretative" (Dr. Nichols, Interview 1, February 17, 2011) questions that followed the listening and reading passages of the test. Dr. Nichols explained, "The questions, again, were sometimes not clear. I mean the questions were clear. What was not clear were the options. . . . Sometimes it was not clear how they wanted you to answer" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011). In fact, although they reported quickly ruling out two of the possible responses, the faculty members were perplexed and found it difficult to choose among the remaining two. Dr. Nichols argued, "For me, I knew that two were wrong immediately. The other two, it was just difficult. I found myself asking, 'What do they want me to mark?'" (FG 2, February 23, 2011). This particular issue of interpretive questions confirms the concerns of faculty in English who took the Praxis

II in their content area (Bowen, 2002; Zigo & Moore, 2002). Interestingly, among the points deducted from the faculty members' scores, the majority were in this Interpretive Listening section. Dr. Logan, after reviewing the report, questioned, "I saw that, and I thought, 'How could I have lost points in the listening?' It doesn't make sense. I understood everything" (Email Follow-up, March 2011). It was perhaps this unexpected outcome that made the faculty members criticize the interpretive nature of the questions more than they would have.

Vocabulary

In addition to the aforementioned challenges related to listening, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel reported that the inclusion of complex vocabulary throughout the test adversely affected their performance. Offering examples that concretized this difficulty, the teacher candidates referred to the questions assessing their knowledge of linguistics. Colleen, in the context of these "grammar questions" asserted, "There was one question where I compared two words, and I didn't even know either of the words so I couldn't even answer the question. I had never heard or seen those words before" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011). Confirming the teacher candidates' concerns, faculty members cited the same question as Colleen before reaching the conclusion that, "The weird thing was that the grammar wasn't really grammar. It was more about theory or linguistics" (Dr. Nichols, FG 2, February 23, 2011). Dr. Logan also commented, "The three or four grammar points that I saw on the test were kind of out of whack" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011).

In addition to lack of success on the grammar-related questions, the teacher candidates remembered another situation where vocabulary increased the difficulty of the task. Rachel explained the integrated writing-speaking task, "Whatever that word that the article was about, you know, the main word. I didn't know it. So for me, the whole point was lost" (Interview 1, February 21, 2011). Colleen recalled the same integrated speaking and writing task:

The main word, I don't know what it was. I don't know what it was about because that one word was used throughout the whole thing. I mean, I know that they gave me that article so I would be more familiar with it [before speaking about it], but I didn't understand it from the get-go, so I still didn't understand it every time that I saw it. (Interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Although they appreciated the diverse and interesting reading and listening passages, the faculty members suggested that language learners would be unaccustomed to such technical vocabulary due to their unfamiliarity with realia such as newspapers, television, or magazines in the target language. Dr. Nichols reiterated, "Well the vocabulary was native-speaker vocabulary. Probably if you had not lived abroad, because they were articles from newspapers and things like that, it could be difficult" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011). Similarly, Dr. Logan stated, "The vocabulary is too technical. There are things in there that I think students do not know" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011).

Cultural knowledge

In addition to being overcome by the complicated vocabulary and the listening section of the test, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel also underscored challenges related to the discrete cultural items of the test. Given the concerns of Wilkerson et al. (2004) who compared these items to the game of Trivial Pursuit, it appears that the nature of several cultural questions remains unchanged from the previous version (e.g., Content Knowledge Test.) Although none of these teacher candidate participants implied that culture was an insignificant component of foreign language competence, two of the three teacher candidates were also concerned with the incorporation of these questions on such an important test. Their uneasiness may have been grounded in their apparent lack of cultural proficiency given their ignorance of the answers when measured discretely. Rachel declared, "I feel like I might have learned some of those [cultural things] at some point in time. . . . I just guessed on those questions, really. It was like a 50/50" (Interview 1, February 21, 2011). Kelsey also expressed difficulty answering these questions. She remarked, "The [cultural] pictures were tough" (Interview 1, February 22, 2011). Referring to previous findings of this study, although these two teacher candidates were reticent in claiming cultural knowledge as a strength, they received the highest scores in this area.

Similar to the teacher candidates, prior to the test the faculty members expressed dislike that cultural knowledge was assessed on the test. Dr. Logan, due to their often discrete nature, expected these questions to be "stereotypical" (Dr. Logan, FG 1, February 11, 2011) and unfair given the teacher candidates' lack of personal experience with other cultures. It was perhaps the inclusion of cultural factoids that caused one of the faculty members to lose points in this area. Dr. Nichols recalled, "*No sé si te dije que lo que tuve mal fue una pregunta de cultura.* [I don't know if I told you that what I got wrong was one culture question.]" (Email Follow-up, April 5, 2011). Regardless of this incorrect response, it appeared that their perspectives regarding the inclusion of these questions evolved after taking the Praxis II. For example, Dr. Logan explained her change in viewpoint, "I would think that if a student paid attention to the [cultural] information in class, they could do it. . . . They should have that information clear in their minds, and if you are going to teach, you should know it" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011). Dr. Nichols also understood why these questions might be included. She asserted, "These people are going to be teachers. So, I guess the test is looking at their ability to teach the language and culture" (Dr. Nichols, Interview 1, February 17, 2011). In light of all of the challenges presented on the Praxis II, Drs. Nichols and Logan were especially appreciative of this test experience. Dr. Logan asserted, "It was eye-opening to take the test. I couldn't avoid being shocked. Now I know why some of the students fail" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011).

Previous Experiences

Examining their Program

Given their inadequate performance, it is important to examine the academic program that was responsible for preparing these teacher candidates. According to their transcripts, of the required 32-credit hours in Spanish, all three teacher candidates had received mostly as. Regarding the courses taken, only Colleen and Kelsey were

enrolled in a target language literature course when they took the Praxis II since the majority of credit hours were obtained from completing beginner and intermediate-level coursework. All three teacher candidates had only taken one senior-level Spanish course prior to taking the Praxis II. Although this was a literature class for Colleen and Kelsey, for Rachel, the course was in Spanish linguistics. None of the students were required to take a sequence of courses in foreign language methodology, culture, linguistics, or literature. Their transcripts also revealed that none of the teacher candidates took courses specifically related to foreign language pedagogy or second language acquisition.

When discussing the foreign language program, Dr. Logan clearly believed that it was not their department's responsibility to prepare prospective teachers. She argued, "Our program is not to prepare students to pass the Praxis [II]" (FG 2, February 23, 2011). The faculty members emphasized that language learners must be active and self-empowered by seeking outside exposure to the target language. Dr. Nichols contended, "The point is not just to prepare for this test. We can do our best, but it is up to the students to prepare. You do it yourself" (FG 2, February 23, 2011). Dr. Logan agreed, "We have to give them what they need, but I cannot make them do it. . . . It depends on personal responsibility" (FG 2, February 23, 2011).

Regardless of this well-accepted notion to seek exposure to the target language, among the three teacher candidates, only Kelsey chose to study abroad. Her decision to do so was largely based on her previous Praxis II failures. According to her, "After failing again, [My advisor] told me that I have all the knowledge, but I just have to study abroad" (Interview 1, February 22, 2011). Colleen and Rachel, however, reported economic difficulties as the primary factor that impacted their inability to go abroad. According to Rachel, "If you can travel abroad, that is awesome, but I couldn't financially" (Interview 1, February 21, 2011).

Since two of the three teacher candidates had not studied abroad and Kelsey's experience was only eight weeks in duration, it was vital to investigate how they practiced Spanish outside of the classroom environment. All three teacher candidates referred to listening to music which research (Hammadou-Sullivan, 2011) has revealed to be one of the least effective strategies in promoting proficiency. Colleen described her activities by saying, "I've listened to songs in class. I've heard native speakers in a conversation but I've never listened to the news or anything. I've watched educational soap operas on TV, but that is different" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011).

Instructional Practices

Based on the information gleaned from their academic transcripts as well as their comments regarding the lack of additional exposure to the target language, it is not surprising that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel were unsuccessful on the Praxis II. Since these teacher candidates obtained the majority of their Spanish practice in the classroom, their comments regarding these experiences are significant. Beginning with their teachers' instructional practices, Colleen, Rachel, and Kelsey perceived their classes to be largely grammar-centered. Colleen asserted, "Well, obviously my Spanish one through four was all grammar. Then my writing class was all grammar as well" (Interview 1, February 20, 2011). Kelsey also expressed similar concerns

regarding her previous experiences as a Spanish language learner. She highlighted that, "I've done so much grammar over the past five years" (Kelsey, Interview 1, February 22, 2011).

Given their collective recollection of this grammatical focus, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel all blamed their language teachers for their lack of communicative competence as measured by the Praxis II. They questioned their teachers' instructional decisions that failed to prepare them adequately. Colleen commented,

They advertise that the Praxis [II], you know the listening part, comes from newscasts or interviews. So, since we know that is where it comes from, teachers should know that and incorporate that in their classrooms. This way you will be more prepared. You have heard a lot more. You've done it. You would have expected it. I never did any of that. (Interview 1, February 20, 2011)

Kelsey agreed and recalled, "We didn't have to do speaking in our classes much" (Interview 1, February 22, 2011). Additionally, the teacher candidates were extremely critical of their program given the lack of courses specifically designed to improve their proficiency. Rachel explained,

I took one class, *one* (emphasis on the word *one*) class that was conversational. I've taken a lot of Spanish classes in my life and only one was conversational and that one really helped me. That class was really hard because it was on the spot and you had to think. (Interview 1, February 21, 2011).

Faculty members, who neglected to report whether or not they specifically employed communicative methods, recognized their reliance upon grammar instruction. For example, although Dr. Nichols said, "We teach grammar" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011), she also mentioned:

Well, I think in class I try to work on all four categories. I speak in [the target language] all the time. So at least with the listening part of the test, [they should be prepared.] We read all of the time so they should be able to read these passages. They have to speak and write too. So I cover all of that. I do everything already. I think if one of my students is thinking of taking this test, I think they should be prepared as far as my class is concerned. I even use realia like the test uses. (Interview 1, February 17, 2011)

In order to explain her own instructional decisions, Dr. Logan highlighted, "We don't have technology in our classrooms where they can listen to all of the accents. I am reading everything for them. So, they are used to the sound of my voice, the pattern of my speaking, my rhythm, my intonation" (Interview 1, February 17, 2011).

This particular comment may provide an explanation for why the teacher candidates failed to understand the diverse audio passages in the Interpretive Listening section of the Praxis II. Furthermore, Troyan (2012) underscored the "lack of attention to listening skills during instruction" (p. S121) which impacted Spanish students' ability to interpret authentic listening tasks.

Previous Spanish Tests

In addition to criticizing their teachers' instructional practices, the teacher candidates also contrasted their previous Spanish tests to the Praxis II. Rachel explained how her previous classroom tests influenced her pre-test expectations. She remarked,

Our tests are like here's vocabulary and here's grammar. You know, here's vocabulary in this section, and now here's grammar in this section. You know what to expect. I've never taken a test like this. Never, ever. . . . I just feel like they need a normal test with tenses. I know that they are trying to see application, and they'll be able to tell that from your speaking and writing, but that is what we're all used to seeing. That is how we are used to being tested. (Interview 1, February 21, 2011).

This predictability of their classroom tests was reiterated by faculty members who recalled using discrete-item rather than authentic or performance-based assessments. According to Dr. Nichols, "Like when it is test time, there is the grammar. It is time for this section and this section. They predict it" (Focus Group 2, February 23, 2011).

In addition to this predictability, the teacher candidates discussed how the superficial treatment of culture on tests may have impacted their performance on the Praxis II. Rachel believed that there was a relationship between her guessing on the culture questions and her teachers' failure to hold her accountable for such information in class. She explained,

I guess if you are not assessed on something, then you tune it out, especially if you are not held accountable. It's almost like something they throw in at the end. You know, oh, we got to get our culture day in. In most classes, it shows up as five extra questions on a test. (Interview 1, February 21, 2011)

Consequences of the Praxis II: Changing Beliefs?

It appears that the teacher candidates' beliefs about language learning were greatly impacted by their previous classroom experiences. Confronting the inconsistencies between their preconceived notions, classroom practices, and the Praxis II influenced Colleen and Rachel's decision to forego any additional Praxis II attempts. Rachel explained, "I just knew that it wouldn't be possible. I didn't know how to do it or where to begin. That makes it not passable for me" (Interview 2, May 5, 2011). Failing the test made Colleen realize that, "I wasn't sure when I took the Praxis [II] if I wanted to be a teacher. After taking it, I knew that I didn't want to. I was so discouraged" (Interview 2, April 14, 2011). Kelsey, who took and failed the Praxis II three times (one with the previous version and two with the World Language Test), sent an email with the subject line reading "I am a failure. I give up" (August 23, 2011). The email included details of her future plans to pursue alternate route certification in English and bypass the Praxis II in Spanish.

When discussing their own beliefs about language learning, given their recollection of grammar-heavy classes, it makes sense that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel continued to highlight this component. Colleen explained,

I thought knowing Spanish meant knowing the grammar structures and the vocabulary of the language. Most of the classes I took were strictly based on grammar, and there was hardly an emphasis on speaking. My confidence has definitely gone down because the Praxis [II] was based on pure understanding of the language and not just grammar like I have been studying for so long. (Interview 2, April 14, 2011)

Rachel also noted the role of grammar in her perception of language learning. She explained,

Grammar was the most stressed aspect of the language, followed by vocabulary, not necessarily fluid communication. This influenced my idea of whether I thought I knew Spanish because I felt as if I knew it by knowing all of the general grammatical rules. (Interview 2, May 5, 2011)

Faculty members expressed different beliefs about language learning than did Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel. As Drs. Logan and Nichols reflected on the Praxis II, although they believed that some tasks were at the "Superior level" (Dr. Logan, Interview 1, February 17, 2011), they were adamant that teacher candidates should be able to complete these types of communicative activities. Dr. Nichols argued, "You should be able to enter a debate and form an opinion" (FG 2, February 23, 2011). Dr. Logan responded to Dr. Nichols's comment and stated, "Yeah, because if not, what can you expect of your students? If you can't do it, the cycle never gets broken. It never gets broken" (FG 2, February 23, 2011). Additionally, Dr. Nichols expressed opinions that were more in line with communicative language teaching approaches. Although she did not refer directly to integrating the communicative modes or using authentic tasks, she at least emphasized the goal of communication. According to her, "Usually they [the important components] are the four skills. The students are supposed to learn those skills so the teacher is supposed to [know them]" (FG 1, February 11, 2011). Possibly one of the most profound impacts of the Praxis II for faculty members was related to the clarification of expectations for teacher candidates. Their experience with the Praxis II provided Drs. Logan and Nichols with a clearer idea of the communicative goals of language learning. According to Dr. Logan, "Maybe we should require all of our faculty to take it, not for passing it, but to be aware of the expectations of our students. Most of our students and many at the graduate level go into teaching. So, we should all take it. I think it really changes everything when you know what is expected. (Interview 1, February 17, 2011)"

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perspectives of a small group of teacher candidates and faculty members regarding the Praxis II: World Language Test for initial licensure in Spanish. The data revealed that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel described their Praxis II test experiences in similar ways. Confirming the findings by Albers (2002) regarding the Praxis II tests used for licensure in English, although they were all high achievers according to their academic transcripts, all teacher candidates expressed difficulty with tasks that they believed ran contrary to their previous Spanish coursework. It is perhaps their success in their Spanish classes that provided them with a false sense of confidence prior to the Praxis II. Additionally, this misplaced confidence may explain their decision to have procrastinated by perusing the online test material at the last minute.

Since they highlighted the role of grammar in their previous Spanish tests and classes, it is not surprising that as apprentice observers Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel expected this type of activity to appear on the Praxis II. Their test preparation logically consisted of reviewing grammar rules given their recollection of its dominant presence in their previous classes. In fact, the absence of discrete grammatical items as anticipated explains their adamant claims that the Praxis II was "unfair". Colleen's

comment that the test developers “have not been in my classroom and do not know what I have learned” highlighted her frustration.

It is clear that, due to numerous factors, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel were faced with multiple challenges throughout the Praxis II. Although they claimed to be most confident when writing, their scores in this section were among the lowest of all component areas. The Score Report also underscored that all three teacher candidates were unable to communicate well orally. This is not shocking considering Kelsey’s comment that “We didn’t do much speaking in our classes.” A careful analysis of these two productive categories together makes one surmise that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel were only minimally, if at all, able to express themselves using the target language.

Given the teacher candidates’ difficulty to produce target language output, the claim by Dr. Nichols regarding the treatment of all four skills in her classes is quite perplexing. If all skills were consistently addressed in their Spanish classes, one wonders why Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel were so frustrated with these authentic, communicative tasks. Furthermore, they were unsuccessful in all component areas of the Praxis II. For example, even though they obtained the lowest scores in speaking and writing, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel were possibly more frustrated in the Interpretive Listening section of the test. Dr. Logan’s comment regarding the lack of technology may justify why these teacher candidates were so unaccustomed to rapid speech and authentic dialog. Further, none of the teacher candidates took advantage of readily available authentic material on TV or online to gain more exposure to the target language. Hearing only their teachers’ voices failed to expose them to all of the divergent Spanish dialects which were incorporated on the Praxis II.

Specifically regarding the Interpretive Listening section of the test, it is noteworthy that both faculty members and teacher candidates highlighted the same concerns regarding the speed of the passages and the inadequate allotted time. Their surprise regarding the pace of these listening passages may have been avoidable if the *Test at a Glance* (ETS, 2010) included audio in addition to the script. Reading the audio script contributes to a false sense of security since it fails to represent the fast pace of the actual recording. Furthermore, reading and listening are two different skills, and Dr. Nichols’ comment concerning the lack of control while listening underscored this very issue. Given these concerns, Colleen and Rachel’s suggestion to provide test-takers with the flexibility to manage one’s own time is warranted. Why would test-takers be confined to a 20-second time limit per question? Was Dr. Nichols correct by assuming that this time constraint was intended to measure automaticity? Given that both Drs. Logan and Nichols, both native speakers of Spanish, also reported difficulty registering answers during the allotted time, this particular issue warrants further attention. Additionally, it is equally disconcerting that although Dr. Logan understood the audio passages, her score in this area was less than perfect. Could this be due to the faculty members’ claims that questions were often too “theoretical” or “interpretive?”

In addition to the challenges related to the Interpretive Listening section, the incorporation of complex vocabulary on the Praxis II also stifled Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel. If Dr. Nichols’ comment regarding the use of realia rings true, one might

question why the teacher candidates were so paralyzed by the vocabulary. Furthermore, Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel's concerns regarding their inability to grasp the main idea of a passage when confronted with an unfamiliar lexical term may point to their unawareness of strategies to overcome linguistic gaps.

In addition to the difficulties with vocabulary, the teacher candidates' reliance on guessing during the Cultural Knowledge component of the test is equally troubling. Rachel's comment regarding the superficial instruction and assessment of culture provides a justification for why these questions were so difficult. The use of a few isolated cultural questions makes it difficult to ponder how the Praxis II can measure one's awareness of the products-perspectives and practices-perspectives of the target cultures. These factoids may be partially responsible for the incorrect response registered by Dr. Nichols in this section. Although Dr. Nichols did not receive a perfect score in this component area, after experiencing these questions, both she and Dr. Logan understood why they might included on the test. Dr. Nichols' statement that teachers are responsible for teaching the language and culture explains her evolving belief.

Given all of these challenges, it is logical that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel reacted by blaming their previous Spanish teachers who they believed failed to prepare them for the communicative expectations of the Praxis II. Yet, the personal responsibility of these teacher candidates should not be underestimated. According to Veléz-Rendón (2006), "Language learning is a long, complex process and much of language acquisition happens outside the confines of the classroom, therefore candidates must seize every opportunity available to them to enhance competencies" (p. 331). Drs. Logan and Nichols emphasized the importance of being active learners by seeking exposure beyond the classroom context. Unfortunately, two of the three teacher candidates did not study abroad, and Kelsey's experience was rather short in duration. Since study abroad is only one way to surpass the limitations of the four-walled classroom, it is alarming that Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel neglected to take advantage of other opportunities to experience the target language in the real world.

Pedagogical Implications

Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel's expectations of and experience with the Praxis II provide us with the opportunity to examine foreign language teacher education. Their difficulty with the listening tasks and cultural questions may reinforce the findings of previous research (Fraga- Cañadas, 2010) that scant attention is paid to the development of listening proficiency and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, the teacher candidates' concern that complex vocabulary led to their demise was reiterated by other language students who reported that this component adversely affected their overall success as learners of language (de Saint Leger & Storch, 2009). Colleen, Kelsey, and Rachel's immediate realization that the Praxis II expectations differed from their beliefs and experiences as Spanish language learners resulted in their labeling of the test as "not passable." If they were aware of the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999), why would they not expect the Praxis II to measure their communicative ability? Additionally, one questions why these teacher candidates

were not required to take courses in language, literature, culture, and linguistics especially since the Praxis II and the Program Standards emphasize their importance. A decade after their inception, do we still not understand the vital role of the Program Standards in restructuring foreign language teacher education?

Dr. Logan's comment that "Our program is not to prepare students to pass the Praxis [II]," provides a clear picture of her perceived lack of responsibility in teacher preparation. This narrow view contradicts the statement by the ACTFL (2011) that, In institutions where most of the pedagogical training occurs in the College of Education, faculty [members] from the language departments have an obligation to work closely with their education colleagues in making programmatic changes, instituting proficiency requirements, and gathering candidate performance evidence and data. (p. 5)

Could the faculty members' unfamiliarity with the certification demands, a result of departmental insularity, be to blame? Although research (Fraga-Cañadas, 2010; Pearson et al., 2006; Schulz, 2000; Tedick, 2009) points to this pervasive influence, have we forgotten the fundamental goal of foreign language instruction? Do we need to be reminded that "the heart of language instruction is the ability to teach students to communicate, which can only be possible if teachers themselves exemplify effective communicative skills" (ACTFL, 2002, p. 4)? By recognizing this very fact regardless of how we view our roles in teacher preparation, we can at the very least prepare teacher candidates for the communicative expectations of the Praxis II.

Finally, their Praxis II experience provided both Drs. Logan and Nichols with a more concrete understanding of the expectations of prospective foreign language teachers. This firsthand experience may be crucial since Pfeiffer (2008) argued that, although we may all, in a variant of the adage, know advanced language abilities when we see them, we are much less able to characterize 'advancedness' well enough to agree on sound pedagogical approaches to developing it. But without even a basic working knowledge of these matters, little can be accomplished. (p. 297)

Taking the Praxis II as recommend by Dr. Logan may be the first step in examining curricula and understanding the communicative requirements of prospective teachers. In this way, we become active participants in teacher preparation by "do[ing] all we can do to ensure that our students are ready to take the Praxis II exams" (Wilkerson et al., 2004, p. 39).

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ⁱ These standards are in the process of revision and will be available in Fall 2013.

ⁱⁱ For additional information about proficiency levels, see <http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org/>

ⁱⁱⁱ For detailed information about the Praxis II World Language Test and suggestions to test-takers, see Author (2012) and <http://www.ets.org/s/praxis/pdf/5195.pdf>. Additionally, an eBook study guide can be purchased at <http://www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/materials/5195>.

^{iv} The opinions set forth in this publication are those of the author and not ETS.

^v For additional information about the OPI, see http://www.languagetesting.com/acad_opi.htm