Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods

Jahan Elm Institute Of Higher Education

Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods (MJLTM)

ISSN: 2251 - 6204

www.mjltm.com
submit@mjltm.com
hamedghaemi@ymail.com

Editor – in – Chief

Hamed Ghaemi, Assistant Professor in TEFL, Islamic Azad University (IAU)

Director

Mohammad Shahbazi Rad, PhD in English language and Literature, Yerevan State University, Armenia

16. Kaviani Amir, Assistant Professor at Zayed University, UAE
17. Kirkpatrick Robert, Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Shinawatra International University, Thailand
18. Mehrani Mehdi, PhD in TEFL, University of Neyshabur, Neyshabur, Iran
19. Morady Moghaddam Mostafa, PhD in TEFL, University of Tabriz, Iran
20. Mouton Nelda, PhD in Education Management, North-West University (NWU), South Africa
21. Najafi Sarem Saeid, PhD Candidate in TEFL, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Tehran, Iran
22. Naicker Suren, Department of Linguistics and Translation, University of South Africa
23. Ndhlovu Finex, PhD, Linguistics Programme, University of New England, Australia
24. Raddaoui Ali Hechemi, PhD, Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Wyoming in Laramie, USA
25. Rezaei Saeed, PhD in TEFL, Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, Iran
26. Rolstad Kellie, PhD, Associate Professor of Education, University of Maryland, USA
27. Roohbakhshfar Hamid, PhD in TESOL, Islamic Azad University, Neyshabur Branch, Iran
28. Sanatifar Mohammad Saleh, PhD in Translation Studies, Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad, Iran.
29. Shafiee Sajad, Department of English, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord, Iran
30. Stobart Simon, PhD, Dean of Computing, Teesside University, UK
31. Suszczynska Malgorzata, Senior Assistant Professor, University of Szeged, Hungary
32. Tabeifard Sayed Javad, PhD in ELT, University of Tehran, Kish International Campus, Iran
33. Weir George R. S., PhD in Philosophy of Psychology, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK
34. Zabihi Reza, PhD in TEFL, University of Neyshabur, Neyshabur, Iran
35. Zegarac Vladimir, PhD, University of Bedfordshire, UK

Abstracting/Indexing

Index Copernicus 2011

Linguistics Abstract

EBSCO Publication

Lulu Publication

Directory of Open Access Journals

ProQuest

Modern Language Association

Cabell's Directories

COPE

Directory of Research Journal Indexing (DRJI)

Indian Citation Index

International Society of Universal Research in Sciences

J-Gate

Ulrich's

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ali Gholami Mehrdad

S. Dariush Ahmadi

MA STUDENTS' VIEWPOINTS ABOUT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, ITS REASONS AND ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN IRAN

Azadeh Nemati

IRANIAN TERTIARY LEVEL FIRST-YEAR EFL STUDENTS' AUDITORY PERCEPTION PROBLEMS

Sara Nowrouzi

Gholamreza Zareian

Esmat Noroozi

Tam Shu Sim

IMPACT OF LEARNING TASKS ON RETENTION OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN PERSIAN EFL LEARNERS

Fariba Rahimi Esfahani

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF OPINION-GAP TASKS ON ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Leila Rajabi

Ali Gholami Mehrdad

Lotfollah Karimi

THE EFFECTS OF OPINION AND REASONING TASKS ON MALE AND FEMALE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

Ali Faghihi

Sajad Shafiee

THE ROLE OF COGNITIVE AND LEARNING STYLE IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Akram Kazemi

Rezvan Shojaei

Mohammad Zare

THE RHETORICAL STRUCTURE OF M.A ABSTRACTS WRITTEN BY STUDENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN IRAN

Seyyed Parsa Tabatabaei

Zahra Najafi

Hamidreza Gobadirad

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEPTH AND BREADTH OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE AND WRITING PERFORMANCE OF IRANIAN MA STUDENTS OF TEFL

Mojtaba Varnaseri

Mohamad Taghi Farvardin

THE EFFECT OF PREFABRICATED PATTERNS ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' ORAL TRANSLATION ABILITY

Hamid Zarrabi

Ramin Rahimy

THE EFFECT OF TEST FORMS ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

Sara Zafari[1], Reza Biria[2]

تفکر انتقادی: اهمیت، فواید و محدودیت های آن درمحیط های آموزشی

اشکان پشنگ زاده

مسعود کشاورز

INVESTIGATING THE SYNTACTIC ERRORS IN IRANIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT WRITING

Ramin Rahimi

Department of English, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran

rahimy49@yahoo.com

Marzie Taheri

Department of English, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran

Taheri_ell@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT STUDY EXAMINES THE STATUS OF DIFFERENT GRAMMATICAL ERRORS MADE BY STUDENTS IN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY. TWO JUDGMENT TESTS AND ONE COMPLETION TEST ARE CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO EXAMINE THE ERRORS. THE RESULT SHOWED THAT THE STUDENTS HAVE MORE PROBLEM WITH PREPOSITIONS, AND ALSO THE WRONG USE OF ERRORS WAS MORE FREQUENT THAN THE OMISSION OR ADDITION OF ERRORS AND THAT THESE ERRORS COMMITTED DUE TO BOTH INTER-LINGUAL AND INTRA-LINGUAL INTERFERENCES. AMONG THE PROPOSITIONS, THE MOST FREQUENT ERRORS THE PARTICIPANTS COMMITTED WERE IN THE USE 'OF /FROM'. THIS MAY RESULT FROM THE FACT THAT EFL LEARNERS USE ONE PREPOSITION FOR BOTH 'OF AND FROM' IN PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND THAT SOME ERRORS ARE FOSSILIZED IN THE MIND OF THESE LEARNERS. THIS STUDY ALSO INDICATES THAT THERE ARE SOME DEVELOPMENTAL ERRORS THAT WILL BE REMOVED AS THE RESULT OF PROFICIENCY LEVELS OF STUDENTS.

KEYWORDS: DEVELOPMENTAL ERRORS, INTERLINGUAL AND INTERALINGUAL ERRORS, OMISSION, ADDITION AND WRONG USE ERRORS

1. Introduction

In the field of second language acquisition, errors which are the results of lack of knowledge (i.e. lack of competence) have been treated in various ways ranging from complete ignorance to avoidance at all costs. Errors are no longer perceived as signs of bad language and learners as criminals committing them. In fact, errors have recently perceived as signs of progress in second language learning and many researchers believe that errors are evidences that tell us much about the underlying system of individual learning. Cordor (1967) stated that errors can provide evidences of how language is learnt and also those they serve as devices by which students discover the rules of language.

The procedure of data collection in error analysis is very important since it can influence the result of error analysis to great extend. Lococo (1976) reported differences in the number and type of errors in samples of students' language collected by means of free compositions, translation or picture composition. Eliss (2008) presented some of the factors that need to be considered in collecting a sample of students' language asserting that "many EA studies paid little attention to these factors with the results that they are difficult to interpret and impossible to replicate" (p.47). These factors include: proficiency level, other languages, language learning experience, medium, genre, content, planned and unplanned.

2. Review of the related literature
2.1. Identification and Types of Errors

Scholars presented different definitions for error. According to Eliss (2008), errors may range from grammatical errors (i.e. well-formedness) to acceptability errors. Cordor (1967) makes a distinction between Errors and Mistakes and he defines errors as deviations as a result of lack of knowledge and mistakes as performance phenomena, reflecting processing failure and as a result of memory limitation and lack of automaticity. Errors can also be classified as *Overt* or *Covert.* While overt errors are easy to spot because of clear ungrammaticality, covert errors happen when the sentence is correct at the surface level but do not mean what the learners intended them to mean.

Another issue regarding the criteria for defining errors is whether "infelicitous uses of L2 should be considered erroneous. There are instances where a learner produces a form that is grammatical (i.e. conforms to the norms of thecode) but this may not be the form *preferred* by native speakers of the code. While there are different classification of errors proposed by different scholars, Cordor's (1974) listed a classification framework for describing errors:

1. *Presystematic Errors* occur when the second language learner is not aware of the particular rule in the target language. These errors are random.

2. *Systematic Errors* occur when the learner has discovered a rule but it is the wrong one.

3. *Post systematic Errors* occur when the learner know the correct target language use but uses it inconsistently (i.e. makes a mistake)

In addition to the framework proposed by Cordor (1974), other sources of psycholinguistic errors have been identified by Richards(1971):

1. *Interference Errors* occur as a result of „the use of elements from one language while speaking another.

2. *Intralingual Errors* „reflect the general characteristics of rule learning such as faulty generalizations, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply.

3. *Developmental Errors* occur when the learner attempts to build up hypothesis about the target language on the basis of limited experience.

2.2. Studies in Error Analysis

In 1970s error analysis studies was very popular among scholars, because they believed that it is the best method for investigation the learners' language. While critics of EA believe that there is no way of investigating avoidance within EA framework, many researchers still believe that the study of error can pave the way for future understanding of how the underlying system in learners' mind work. Eliss (2008) explains the steps for performing error analysis: According to Eliss (2008), "the first step in carrying out an error analysis is to collect the data which is a sample of learners' language. The sample could consist of the learners 'natural language use or be elicited either clinically or experimentally. The second stage is identifying errors in the in the collected data". Cordor distinguishes errors of competence from mistakes in performance and believes that EA should investigate only errors not mistakes. According to Eliss (2008) the third stage of error analysis is description. There are two types of taxonomies for Linguistic and surface strategy. Linguistic strategy provides an indication of the number and proportion of errors in either different levels of language or in specific grammatical categories. The fourth stage is explaining the errors pscholinguistically. Pscholinguistic explaining of errors argues that errors can result from transfer, intralingual and unique processes.

Eliss (2008) listed some recent error analysis research. The first study done by Felix (1981) and Pavesi (1986). Felix and Pavesi compared the language produced by instructed and naturalistic learners. Bardovi-Harling and Bofman (1989) studied on the differences between a group of learners who passed the Indiana University Placement exam and a group who failed to pass it. They investigated the nature of the errors which the two groups produced in one part of examination –written compositions. They found that the pass group made fewer overall errors than the non pass group and the main differences in their errors were in the number of lexical and morphological rather than syntactical errors.

In 1975, Burt has done a research in which he asked non-expert native speakers to judge comprehensibility of 300 sentences containing multiple errors, and then correct them. The results of the study showed that subject found the less comprehensible sentences as erroneous than more comprehensible ones. In 1980, Albrechtsen , Henriksen and farch) asked 120 non-expert adult native speakers(e.g. hotel workers in UK:180 British sixth formers) to listen to samples of oral language with various level of difficulty. The results of the analysis showed that the oral texts containing few errors (syntactic and lexical) and few communication strategies received positive evaluation by the subjects. Frequent use of communication strategies had greater negative influence than the number of errors.

Some researchers have studied the impact of task design and implementation on learners' production. Foster and Skehan (1996) computed the amount of target like use of vocabulary. Crookes (1989) computed the amount of target like use of plurals. Mehnert (1998) computed the number of errors per 100 words. Eliss (2008) states that "none of these studies included any report of the kinds of problems with error identification; Ellice also believes that the reliability of the accuracy measures they employed is doubtful".

Eliss (2008) also presents a summary of selected evaluation studies. As an instance in 1987, Santos, selected 40 university teachers in physical science and asked them to rank 4 written compositions; in two of them, 5 errors of the marked to unmarked kind were inserted and in the other 2, 5 errors of the unmarked to marked kind. The teachers were also asked to highlight each error and assess the degree of irritation it caused. The result of the study showed no significant difference in rankings of the compositions. The results also showed that the overall unmarked to marked errors were more irritating than marked to unmarked errors. Syntactic errors were also found more irritating than morphological errors.

Based on the objectives of the study the following research questions have been raised:

1. What are the most common errors in English that are committed by the learners?

2. What are the most common errors in prepositions that are committed by the learners?

3. What types of errors in the of prepositions (omission of prepositions, addition, and wrong use of prepositions) are more likely to be made by Iranian EFL students?

4. Why do the learners commit errors, due to interlingual, intalingual or other kinds of interference?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants in the present study are 13 intermediate, 13 upper-intermediate and 13 advanced EFL learners with the age range of 26 to 36 (17 male students & 22 female). These participants were selected based on the results of Oxford Proficiency Test that was conducted to determine the level of university students. These learners are studying post graduate English language degrees at different universities of Sari.

They were all Iranian and native and they were chosen by random sampling.

3.2. Instruments and Procedures

A 52-item grammaticality judgment test was developed by the researcher and 4 other teachers on the basis of IELTS, TOEFL, TOLIMO, MCHE and MA or PhD Entrance Exams.

The result was as follows.

Table 1. Common errors committed by the post graduate students

Common Errors	Number of students commit errors		
	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced
Incorrect use of word	6	4	2
Incorrect selection of adverbs	1	0	0
Incorrect use of preposition	11	9	6
Incorrect use of articles	8	7	4
Incorrect plural	3	1	0
Incorrect use of tenses	5	2	1
Incorrect use of pronoun	2	0	0
Subject verb agreement	4	2	0

Incorrect use of verbs	5	2	0
Incorrect use of ground	3	2	1
Incorrect use of auxiliary	5	4	1
Incorrect use of voice	3	1	0
Incorrect use of part of speech	6	3	1

As it is obvious in Table 1, most students learning English as a foreign language commonly commit mistakes in prepositions. An experienced English teacher is well aware of the fact that English prepositional usage is one of the most difficult areas for EFL learners (Khampang, 1974: p. 215). As it is said by Mukattash, "Prepositions are the most serious problem for EFL learners" (Mukattash, 1976, p. 269).

As a result of this finding, a completion test of 40 items was taken in order to diagnose and investigate the most common errors in the use of English prepositions. The three groups of subjects under study commit more errors related to the use of wrong prepositions as compared with errors related to the omission or addition use of prepositions in L2. Table 2 shows these errors.

Table 2. wrong use of propositon

Items	Number of errors		
	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced
Number of students	13	13	13
Total number of questions	520	520	520
Total number of errors	326	216	108
Total number of wrong use errors	205	134	68
Total number of additional errors	63	43	21
Total number of omission errors	58	39	19
Percent of wrong use errors	62/88%	62/03%	62/96%
Percent of additional errors	19.32%	19.90%	19.44%
Percent of omission errors	17.79%	18.5%	17.59%

Then all the errors were analyzed one by one to determine whether the errors are the result of the interlanguage, intralanguage or other interferences. The result is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. interlingual, intralingual and other types of interference

Types of errors in percent	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced
Interlingual	53.7%	29/4%	13.2%
Interlingual and other types of interference	46/3%	70/6%	86/8%

As a result of this finding, most errors are due to the intralingual and other types of interference rather than interlingual interference. Then, the same learners are given another grammatical judgment test of 40 items to test their proficiency of using the prepositions. The prepositions selected for this purpose were into/to, in/ at, with/by, of/ from, over/on. These prepositions selected due to the fact that each pair has the same meaning in Persian, for instance 'into' and 'to' mean 'be', 'in' and 'at' mean 'dar',

'with' and 'by' mean 'ba', 'of' and 'from' mean 'az' and 'over' and 'on' mean 'roye'. The result is in Table 4.

Table 4. Common proposition errors

Items	Number of students commit errors		
	Intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced
Number of students	13	13	13

Total number of prepossession questions	520	520	520
Total number of errors	302	198	109
At/in errors	24	16	8
By/with errors	52	30	17
From/of errors	165	111	67
In/into errors	39	29	10
On/over errors	22	12	7
At/in errors in percent	7.94%	8.08%	7.33%
By/with errors in percent	17.21%	15.15%	15.59%
From/of errors in percent	54.63%	56.6%	61.46%
In/into errors in percent	12.91%	14.64%	9.17%
On/over errors in percent	7%	6.06%	6.42%

4. Results

Significantly more errors were made due to the fact that learners find some problems in learning English patterns that are similar to, but in some way different from patterns of their own language. The key to this problem may be the fact that learners try to resort to literal translation before they form English patterns. The present study shows that among the most common errors are prepositions as it is shown in Figure 1.
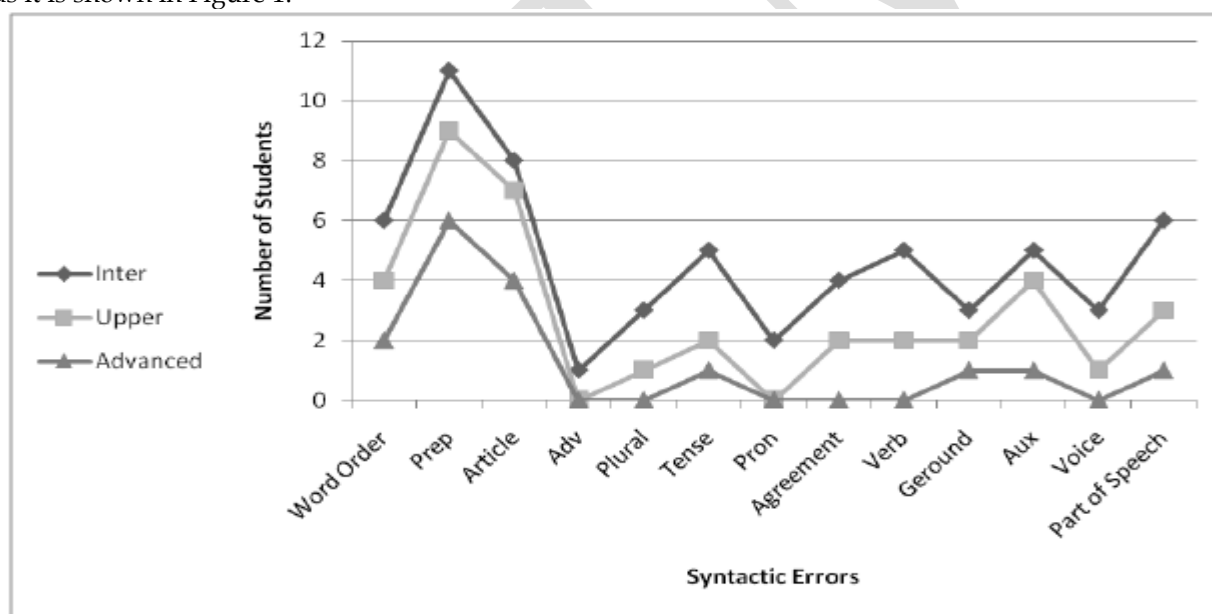
Figure 1. Syntactic analysis of errors

Prepositions are difficult because usually the EFL learners compare them with their mother tongue prepositional system. In other word, when learners intend some meaning, verbs and other parts of speech play a great role in the omission, addition or selection of a wrong preposition in English. Figure 2 shows the number of omission, addition and wrong use errors among the students.

The main problem for these learners lies in the fact that there are various prepositions in English that have the same function and meaning in Persian. When students are not sure which preposition to use in a certain sentence, they often compare that sentence with its Persian equivalence; however, prepositions seldom have a one to one correspondence in English and Persian and a Persian usage may have several English translations. Indeed, Iranian learners use, add or omit certain English prepositions as it happens in Persian usage and by literal translation. In other words, when the Persian context requires a preposition (or requires none), learners make a mistake as illustrated in the following examples:

My brother married *with Parvin. (Ø is a correct form)
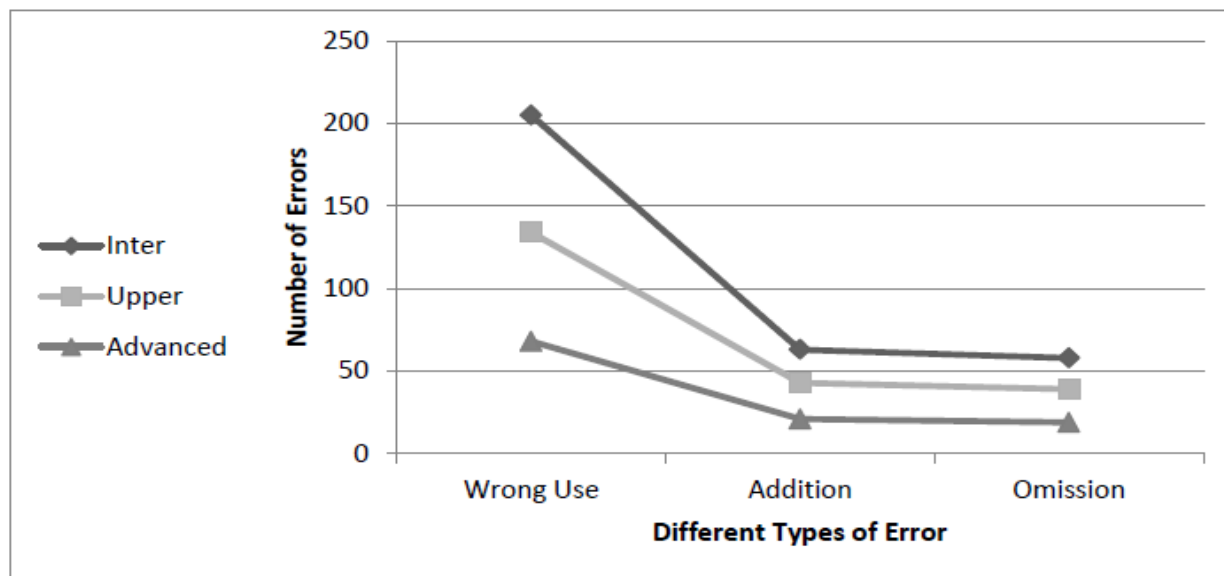
Figure 2. Different types of errors

In Persian, it is necessary to insert 'with' as preposition to make a relationship between marriage and Parvin; otherwise, the Persian sentence will have no sense. Therefore

Iranian learners are likely to insert unnecessary prepositions when they want to express themselves in English. Sometimes they may omit necessary prepositions as illustrated by the following example.

I live *Ø my father and mother (with is a correct form).

The other type of errors that occurs among all groups of EFL students with different mother tongue is caused by the interference of English itself. The following incorrect response is not due to L1 interference.

She came back *at home.

Based on this research, it is found that the errors made by the subjects are caused by two main factors: inter- lingual errors as a result of transfer from L1 and intra- lingual errors for example as a result of overgeneralization in L2 system. A comparison, as it is shown in Figure 3, shows that at upper intermediate and advanced levels, most of Iranian EFL learners' do intra- lingual errors than inter-lingual type; whereas at the lower level, more errors are made due to interference from Persian than due to other learning problems. This is because students find more difficulty in learning English patterns that are similar to, but in some way different from patterns of their own language.
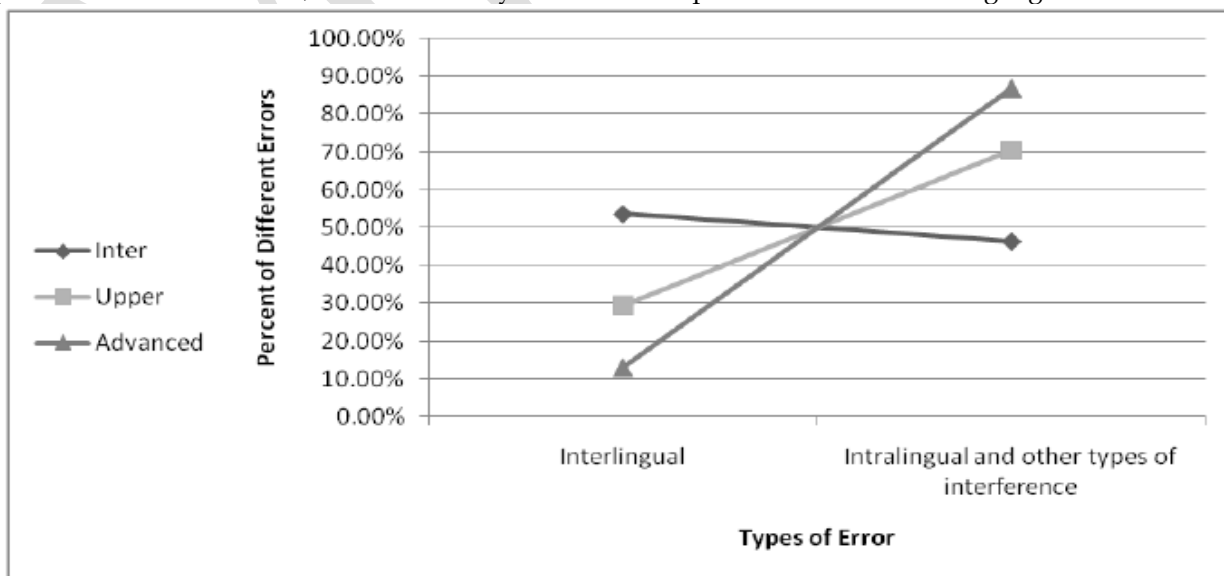
Figure 3. interlingual, intralingual and other types of errors

The key to this problem in the lower level is the fact that students always resort to literal translation before they form English patterns. In other words, they translate the English into Persian and then the Persian back into English, word for word (not phrase by phrase). So, errors made by these learners due to Persian interference occur and due to other learning problems.

Regarding other aspect of preposition errors, the researcher also examined the errors committed by the learners as they use the kinds of prepositions in English that have the same meaning in Persian. The English pairs of prepositions as shown in Figure 4 have one correspondence in Persian and perhaps this is the main reason of errors. In this case, like the other mentioned case, as the result of proficiency level of learners and as the result of the learners' awareness of prepositions type, forms and function, some of the errors will be removed.
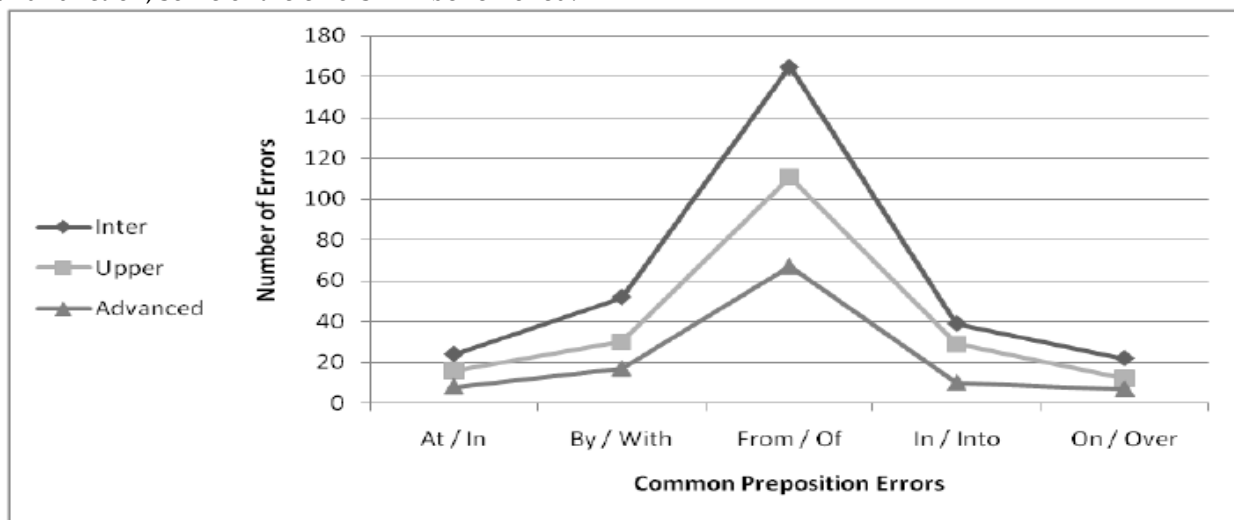
Figure 4. most frequent proposition errors

Figure 4 shows that even at advanced levels, students have still some problems with a specific pair, for example 'of, from'. 'Of/from' are used in a wide variety of situations, but they are often confused and many English learners have difficulties to correspond them in English. This comes from the fact that a number of languages, including Persian, use the same preposition for both 'of and from'. Of course, the same errors committed by Persian speakers while they want to use other pairs; however, there is a slight distinct difference between 'at/in', 'into/in', 'on/over', 'by/with' and ''of/from' in Persian and more acceptable justification for Persian speakers as they implement the latter pair.

The mentioned findings are in line with Henning (1978), Koosha and Jafarpour (2006) who claimed that the learners' proficiency level had a significant impact on their prepositional errors. But it is noteworthy to mention that despite the fact that the prepositional errors gradually disappear from students' writings, there are error types which are placed in the fossilized category, even at the advanced level. Thus, teachers need to be well conscious of these consequences in order to prepare appropriate exercises and help learners to avoid further repetition of these problems. In so doing, it is not enough just to teach the learners that there is no one to one correspondence between English and Persian prepositions but to raise learners' awareness of the most common errors types and the reason behind them. Besides, the learners should be well informed of the fact that 'practice makes perfect' that is practice is a key that enriches their language skills.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors students make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the Target Language (TL) and that TL itself. Pit Corder as the "Father" of Error Analysis in his article entitled "The significance of Learner Errors" (1967) indicated that errors used to be "flaws" that needed to be eradicated. Corder presented a completely different point of view. He contended that errors are 'indispensable,' since the making of errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses in order to learn. In 1994, Gass & Selinker defined errors as "red flags" that provide evidence of the learner's knowledge of the second language.

Researchers are interested in errors because they contain valuable information on the strategies that people use to acquire a language (Richards, 1974; Dulay and Burt, 1974). Moreover, according to Richards and Sampson (1974, p. 15), "At the level of pragmatic classroom experience, error analysis will continue to provide one means by which the teacher assesses learning and teaching and determines priorities for future effort." Corder (1974) believes that error analysis has two objects: one theoretical and the other applied. The theoretical object aims to "elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies a second language." And the applied object wants to enable the learner "to learn more effectively by exploiting the knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical goals."

The studies on errors can be at the same time diagnostic and prognostic. It is diagnostic since it can tell us the learner's current state of the language (Corder, 1967) at a given point during the learning process, and prognostic because it can tell course organizers to prepare language learning materials on the basis of the students' current problems.

In this paper, the researcher defined interlingual/transfer errors as those attributed to the native language (NL). There are interlingual errors when the students' native language habits (patterns, systems or rules) interfere or prevent him/her, from acquiring the second language patterns and rules (Corder, 1971) and interference (negative transfer) as the negative influence of the mother language (L1) on the performance of the target language learner (L2) (Lado, 1964). Many scholars have attempted to explain the mentioned phenomenon. Meanwhile, many have attempted to discover why fossilization in the errors occurs, what kind of linguistic material is likely to be fossilized and what type of students are more prone to fossilize. However, there has been almost no investigation by SLA theorists on the possibilities of preventing or overcoming fossilization. Indeed, there is a lack of needed research, especially considering that fossilization can be considered the most distinctive characteristic of adult SLA.

The present study gives us an overall picture of the most frequently occurring prepositional errors in students' writings. It also presents that that some of the errors are fossilized even in advanced learners and that the developmental errors will naturally disappear through the stages of the language. Depending on the proficiency achievements of the learners, the sources of these errors can be interlingual, intralingual, etc.

References

Albrechtsen, D.B.Henriksen, and C.Farch. (1980) Native Speaker Reaction to Learners" Spoken Interlanguage. *Language Learning* 30:365-396.

Bardovi-Harling,k. and T.Bofman. (1989). Attainment of Syntactic and Morphological Accuracy by Advanced Language Learners, *Studies in second language acquisition*: 11: 17-34.

Cordor, S.P. (1967). The Significance of Learners" Errors, *International Review of applied Linguistics*, 5:161-169

Cordor, S.P. (1971). *Idiosyncratic errors and Error Analysis*. IRAL, 9, 2, 147-159. Reprinted in Richards (1974).

Cordor, S.P. (1974). Error Analysis in J.P. Allen and S.P. Cordor (eds), *The Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics*, Volume 3.London: Oxford University Press.

Crooks,G. (1989). Planning and Inter language Variability, *Studies in Second Language Acquistion* 11:367-383.

Dulay, H. S., and Burt, M. K. (1974). Natural sequences in child second language acquisition. *Language Learning, 24*, 37-53.

Ellis, R. (2008). the study of Second Language Acquisition, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York.

Felix, S. (1981). the Effect of Formal Instruction on Second Language Acquisition, *Language Learning* 31:87-112.

Foster P. and P. Skehan. (1996). the Influence of Planning on Performance in Task Based Learning, *Studies in Second Language Acquistion* 18/3299-324.

Gass, S.M. and Selinker, L. (Eds.). *1994. Language transfer in language learning* (re.ed.).Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Henning, G. H. (1978). A developmental analysis of errors of adult Iranian students of English as a foreign language.*Language Learning*, *28*, 387- 397.

Koosha, M. & Jafarpour, A. (2006). Data-driven Learning and Teaching Collocation of Prepositions: The Case of Iranian EFL Adult Learners. *Asian EFL Journal, 8*(4), 192- 209.

LoCoco V. (1976). a comparison of Three Methods for the collection of L2 Data : Free Composition, Translation and Picture Description , *Working Papers on Composition*8:59-86.

Mehnert U. (1998). the Effect of Different Length of Time for Planning on Second Language Learning , *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*20:52-83.

Mukattash, L. (1976). *A Pilot Project In Common Grammatical Errors in Jordanian English*. Amman: The University of Jordan.

Richards, J. (1971). a Non Contrastive Approach to Error Analysis, *ELT Journal* 25: 204-219.

Richards, J. C. (1974). *Error analysis: Perspectives on second language acquisition.*London: Longman Group Ltd.

Richards, J.C. (1974). A non contrastive approach to Error Analysis. *English language teaching journal,* 25, 204-229.

Richards, J.C. and G.P. Sampson (1974). *The study of learner English*. In J.C. Richards (ed.) *Error Analysis. Perspectives on second language acquisition*, pp. 3-18.

Santos, T. (1987). Markedness Theory and Error Evaluation: an Experimental Study, *Applied Linguistics* 8:207-218.
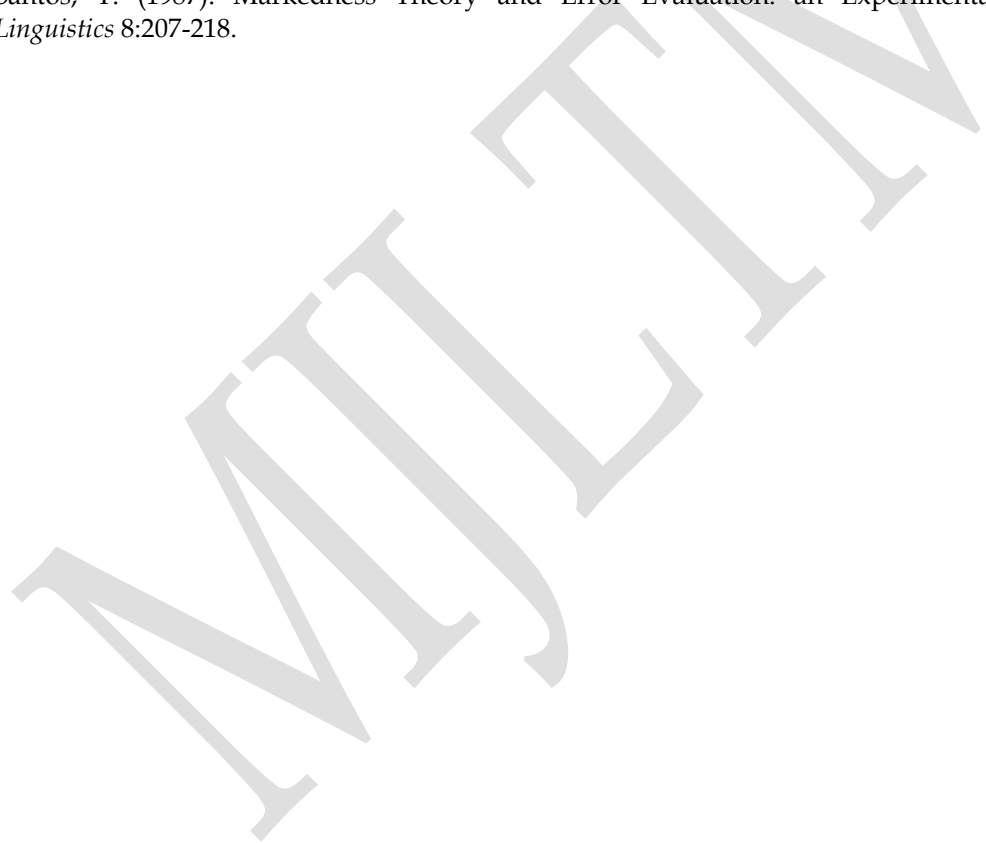
ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE IRANIAN EFL TEACHER`S SENSE OF COMMITMENT AND THEIR SELF-ESTEEM

Samane khoshbakht
Islamic Azad University (Torbt-e Heydarieh)
E-mail: Samanekhoshbakht69@gmail.com
Address: Mashhad, Iran

Zargham Ghapanchi
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad
E-mail: ghabanchi@um.ac.ir
Address: Mashhad, Iran

ABSTRACT

THIS STUDY INVESTIGATED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS 'SENSE OF COMMITMENT AND THEIR SELF-ESTEEM. 378 PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ALL IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGE INSTITUTIONS OF DIFFERENT CITIES WERE SELECTED. THEY WERE BOTH MALES AND FEMALES FROM DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS AND WITH 3-20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE. THE RESEARCHER USED TWO QUESTIONNAIRES: THE FIRST ONE WAS ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE (ENGLISH VERSION, 1965), THE TEST-RETEST RELIABILITY IS .85. THE SECOND ONE WAS THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (FARSI VERSION, BY ALLEN AND MEYER 1990). THE RELIABILITIES OF ALL THE COMMITMENT SCALES WERE ABOVE .60. SUBJECTS WERE CONSIDERED PROFESSIONAL AND EXPERIENCED TEACHERS WITH HIGH LEVEL OF EDUCATION. THEIR FIELD OF STUDY WAS ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING, TRANSLATION, AND ENGLISH LITERATURE. THIS STUDY ADOPTED A QUALITATIVE AND CORRELATIONAL METHOD. FOR COLLECTING THE DATA, RESEARCHER USED "GOOGLE DOC" WEBSITE TO SPREAD OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRES. GATHERING DATA WAS SUMMARIZED IN SPSS SOFTWARE. THEN, THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SENSE OF COMMITMENT AND SELF-ESTEEM WAS CALCULATED. IN CURRENT RESEARCH KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV STATISTICS USED TO TEST THE NORMALITY. THE TEST PORTRAYED THAT THE SELF-ESTEEM WAS NOT NORMAL SINCE THE P – VALUE OF SELF-ESTEEM IS LESS THAN 0.05. NONPARAMETRIC COEFFICIENT SPEARMAN STATISTIC REVEALED THAT THERE IS NOT SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSE OF COMMITMENT AND SELF-ESTEEM.

KEYWORDS: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, SELF-ESTEEM, ORGANIZATION, RELOCATION RATE, PERFORMANCE

1. Introduction

Recent research shows that teachers have great power to affect students' educational outcomes (Anderson, 2004). The teacher is an educational leader and decision maker, who directly affects and indirectly influences the students and responsibility of the teachers to guide and inspire students, to enrich his disciples. Research on teacher effectiveness has yielded a wealth of understanding about effective teacher characteristics (Hughes, Abbott-Campbell & Williamson, 2001 cited in Fatemi &Shahabi, 2015) on education and learning. Researches indicated that employees with high commitment try more to fulfill what is expected from them and achieve organizational objectives

(Oberholster and Taylor, 1999 in Atak, Erturgut, 2010)**.** Organizational commitment means employees adopting aims, goals and values of the organization and having high faith in these, having a strong will to remain in the organization". (Cited in Atak, Erturgut, 2010, p.3472). Self-esteem is the sum of self-confidence; a feeling of personal capacity and self-respect; a feeling of personal worth". (Cited in Alizadegani, Fitriana Zaini, Delavari, 2013 p.712

Finding of this study could help managers to increase employees' self-esteem and minimize the relocation rate. Organizations in the information age understand that learning means competitive advantage; therefore, they determine their primary purpose as becoming effective learning organizations. Organizational commitment is a serious issue with respect to effective usage of human resources which has become the basic value for organizations. (Cited in Atak & Erturgut, 2010).

The limitations of the study can be elaborated through the following aspects. The researcher samples randomly from 378 (confidence level of 0/95 and 0/05 degree of accuracy) Iranian EFL Teachers from Mashhad, Zahedan, Rasht and Orumeieh. The participants are females and males with 3-20 years of experience and different social background who teaches at private language institutions.

Organizational commitment helps to increase employee performance (Shore & Martin, 1989; Meyer et al. 1989; Meyer et al. 1993; Meyer et al. 2002; Siders et al. 2001; Jaramillo et al. 2005 cited in Uygur et al. 2009) and helps to decrease turning up late to work, absenteeism, and leaving.

Self-esteem continues to be one of the most commonly researched concepts in social psychology (Baumeister 1993; Mruk 1995; Wells & Marwell 1976; Wylie 1979). Self-esteem refers most generally to an individual's overall positive evaluation of the self (Gecas 1982; Rosenberg 1990; Rosenberg et al. 1995 cited in Cast and Burke, 2002).

The concept of organizational commitment aroused from studies exploring employees- organization linkages. According to Mowday and Spencer (1981, in Nordin, 2011), committed employees would be useful because of the potential for increased performance, reduced change in numbers of employees and absenteeism. According to Chan, Lau, Lim & Hogan (2008 in Hamid et al. 2013) positive results of employees' organizational commitment include higher job satisfaction, lower turnover rate, minimized absenteeism, improved organizational citizenship behavior and increased students' achievement

Self-esteem is seen as one of the multiple parameters that ensures life success and psychological health of the people. Self-esteem is defined as a form of self-admission, self-appreciation and self-respect (Brase & Guy, 2004, in Goreyshi, kargar and Noohi et al. 2013). Zembat and Gursoy(2012) represented a weak positive relationship between pre-school teachers' self-esteem and teacher attitudes.

Research Question
Q1: Is there any significant relationship between the Iranian EFL teacher`s sense of commitment and their self-esteem?
Research Hypothesis
H01: There is a significant relationship between the Iranian EFL Teacher`s sense of commitment and their self-esteem.
2. Method
To collect the required data 378 based on confidence level of 0/95 and 0/05 degree of accuracy (according Morgan table) , Iranian EFL language teachers from Mashhad, Zahedan, Rasht and Orumieh, teaching in different Foreign Language Institutions were selected. They were considered professional and experienced teachers had university education (Bachelor or Master or PhD degree). They were both males and females and from different age groups and with 3-20 years of experience. Their field of study was English language teaching, Translation, and English literature. All of them were supposed to pass the Teacher Training Course (TTC) whether in University or Institute.
To conduct the study, the following instruments were employed:
The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965) was a 10-item self-report measure of explicit self-esteem. This questionnaire use a 4-point Likert-scale to find the degree to which they (strongly agree=4) to (strongly disagree=1) with each item or the degree to which items were (agree) to (disagree). Scores were summed to provide a total self-esteem score. Rosenberg (1965) reported

test-retest reliability.85. (Cited in Ryeng and Kroger, Martinussen, 2013). The overall alpha coefficient score was 0.87 for this global self-esteem scale. (Cited in Rai Nho,1999). Criterion Validity is 0/55 and Construct Validity is 0/64. (Cited in Rosenberg, 1965).

To assess the organizational commitment, this study used Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) by Allen and Meyer 1990. There were 24 items was used in this study and was likert scale. The reliabilities of all the commitment scales were above .60 (Abdullah, 2011).

3. Procedure

In this study, 378 participants who were all Iranian EFL teachers in different language institutions of different cities were selected. They were from both genders and from different ages with 3-20 years of experiences. For collecting the data, researcher used "Google Doc1" website to spread out the questionnaires. Collecting data started at December 2014 and lasted for about two months. The probable needed time for filling out the questionnaires was about 30 minutes. Gathering data was summarized in SPSS software. Then, the correlation between sense of commitment and self-esteem was calculated by using SPSS software.

This study adopted a qualitative method. A Correlational study was used. In current research normality of variables was examined using Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics and because of one abnormal variables (self-esteem), nonparametric coefficient spearman statistic was used, because self-esteem is not normal. This study was going to investigate any significant relationship between two independent variables of Iranian EFL teachers' self-Esteem, sense of commitment .

4. Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics of **years of experience** (frequency and percent) shows, the total sample is 378. 82 teachers, their years of experience is 9-10 that is the highest frequency.

Descriptive Statistics for Self-esteem and sense of commitment are reported in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1.
Descriptive Statistics for Self-esteem and sense of commitment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
self esteem	378	14.00	38.00	23.3466	3.45935
sense of commitment	378	32.00	92.00	65.9683	8.37129

As table 4.1 shows, Minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation for self-esteem is 14.00, 38.00, 23.34, 3.45. Minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation for sense of commitment is 32.00, 92.00, 65.96, and 8.37.

4.1. Test of normality for variables

The output shows the Asymp. Sig. (2 - tailed) value of self-esteem is 0.001 and, the Asymp. Sig. (2 - tailed) value of sense of commitment is 0.512. Since the p – value of self-esteem is less than 0.05, this variables is not normal, nonparametric coefficient spearman statistic was used and since the p – value of sense of commitment is greater than 0.05, this variable is normal.

4.2. Inferential statistics

For checking hypothesizes of research based on two abnormal variables, nonparametric coefficient spearman statistic was used.

4.2.1. The correlation between sense of commitment and self-esteem

The question this research investigated was whether there was a relationship between the Iranian EFL teacher`s sense of commitment and their self-esteem. The SPSS output (version 19) for correlation between sense of commitment and their self-esteem is presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2
The Correlation between the Iranian EFL Teacher`s sense of commitment and self-esteem

		sense of commitment
Self esteem	Spearman's rho Correlation	.097

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.060
	N	378

As table 4.2 shows, Spearman's rho Correlation between sense of commitment and self-esteem is 0/09 and the level of significance of the variables is 0/06. Null hypothesis (H0) is rejected when the level of significance is less than 0/05 (sig < 0.05). Since the level of significance is 0/06 and more than 0/05(Sig=.06 > 0.05) with the confidance of %95, the null hypothesis (H0) is accepted that means there is not relationship between sense of commitment and self-esteem. Thus, the first hypothesis is rejected.

4.3. Discussion of the findings
The analysis of the data leaded to this conclusion that there is not meaningful relationship between sense of commitment and self-esteem. As stated by Organ (1988 cited in Devin et al, 2012) (Organizational Citizenship Behavior) OCB advances the effective operation of the organization and the self-efficacy and self-esteem of the employees. The impact of OCB on self-esteem may be attributed to the fact that teachers who work better in their job and have cooperative and helping behavior are more likely to believe in themselves and view themselves as being important and worthwhile. Organ views OCB as including of contributions of participant and may be chosen by the participant to join to the organization without thinking of formal award. Uçar and Ötken (2010) stated that the findings relating to organizational commitment reported a significant and positive relationship between self-esteem and commitment and showed that employees with high levels of self-esteem are more committed to their organizations than their low self-esteem colleagues.
According to social identity theory, when people think that their organization appreciates and values them, this showed organizational respect for them (Tyler, 1999). This can be interpreted as a form of organizational support. Additionally, having a noticeable social identity involves seeing oneself as part of a larger whole (Rousseau, 1998). They can belong to multiple groups or collectives, including an organization, division and work team. This is likely to increase individuals' organizational commitment because it improves their social identity. Moreover, social identity is reflected in people's self-esteem (Chattopadhyay, 1999). Thus there is a relationship between organizational commitment and self-esteem. İhsan Sarı et al (2011) found that self-esteem positively correlated with overall commitment to team.

5. Conclusion
The culture of workplace includes shared values and beliefs, working conditions and predictions about expectations (Schein, 1996 cited in Karslı & iskender, 2009). In education, one of the significant factors influencing the performance of teachers is the motivation levels of them. The task of motivating teachers should be firstly realized by school administrators. Teachers naturally are in the need of being approved and respected by school administrators and other teachers. They attempt to determine their place and roles in the school through comparing themselves with other teachers. If their need to be appreciated is taken into consideration, it may lead to high levels of organizational achievement. Administrators' attention to such need and attempts to meet them help the teachers to feel themselves valuable, able, functional and necessary. In turn, such positive approach held by the teachers leads to commitment to their institutions.
Roots and examining the personality correlates of self-esteem across the life span might provide insights into the nature of self-esteem and its development.
Here in this investigation , the relationship between sense of commitment and self-esteem was examined and the results showed that there is not significant relationship between sense of commitment and self-esteem.

5.1. Implications of the study
Managers must have the mission to develop their employees' self-esteem in order to contribute to the achievement of organizational goals and as well as the personal goals of the members. The results of

this study suggest that managers should seek to increase the level of support given to the employees by the organization. By implementing policies, work processes and fair reward systems that show employees that the organization cares about the employee's well-being and values his/her contributions, the company will both increase employee self-esteem as well as their level of organizational commitment. EFL students who have low self-esteem should be trained to overcome their negative feelings about themselves and look positively at their EFL learning capabilities. School administrators must attend to organizational commitment to teachers, so they will identify with organizational goals, beliefs and values to strive for their job and like to be an organizational member to develop their expertise in teaching. In that case, teachers will overpass individual interests and like to stay in the school to spend more time and energy in their teaching.

References

Abdullah. (2011). Evaluation of Allen and Meyer's Organizational Commitment Scale: A Cross Cultural Application in Pakistan. *Journal of Education and Vocational Research, 1*(3), 80-86. www.researchgate.net

Alizadegani, F., Fitriana Zaini, M., & Delavari, G. (2013). Stress free and high self-esteem: Approaches of motivation towards teachers and school students. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 114*, 711 – 714. www.sciensedirect.com

Anderson, L. (2004). Increasing teacher effectiveness (2nd edition). *UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning.* www.unesdo.unesco.org

Atak, M., & Erturgut, R. (2010). An empirical analysis on the relation between learning organization and organizational commitment. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*, 3472–3476. www.sciensedirect.com

Baumeister, R. F. (1993). Preface to Self-Esteem: The Puzzle of Low Self-Regard, edited by Roy F. *Baumeister. Plenum.* www.springer.com

Brase, G. L. G., E. (2004). The demographics of mate value and self-esteem. *Personality and Individual Differences, 36*(2), 471-782. www.k-state.edu

Cast, A. D., & Burke, P. J. (2002). A theory of self-esteem. *Social Forces, 80*(3), 1041-1068. www.oxfordjournals.org

Chan, W. Y., Lau, S., Lim, S., & Hogan. (2008). Organizational and personal predictors of teacher commitment: The mediating role of teacher efficacy and identification with school. *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(3), 597-630. www.eric.ed.gov

Chattopadhyay, P. (1999). Beyond direct and symmetrical effects: The influence of demographic similarity on organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal, 43*, 273-287. www.amj.aom.org

Devin, H. F., Zohoorianb, Z., Peymanizad, H., & Sane, M. A. (2012). Investigating the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and self-esteem among physical education teachers. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 46*, 1203 – 1207. www.sciensedirect.com

Fatemi, M. A., & Shahabi, B. (2015). Exploring the relationship among iranian EFL teachers' cultural intelligence, their selfesteem, and gender. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW), 8*(3), 57-67. www.ijllalw.org

Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annul Review of Sociology, 8*, 1-13. www.annualreviews.org

Goreyshi, M. K., Kargar, F., Noohi, S., & Ajilchia, B. (2013). Effect of combined mastery- cooperative learning on emotional intelligence, self-esteem and academic achievement in grade skipping. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 84*, 470 – 474. www.sciensedirect.com

Hamid, S. F., Nordin, N., Adnan, A. A., & Sirun, N. (2013). A study on primary school teachers' organizational commitment and psychological empowerment in the district of klang. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 90*, 783-784. www.sciensedirect.com

Hughes, P., Abbott-Chapman, J., & Williamson, J. (2001). Teaching competencies in the classroom: Deconstructing teacher experiences. *Education Research and Perspectives, 28*, 1-24. www.researchgate.net

Jaramillo, F., Mulki, J.P., & Marshall, G.W. (20005). A meta-analysis of the relationship between organizational commitment and salesperson job performance: 25 years of research. *Journal of Business Research, 58*, 705-714. www.sciensedirect.com

Meyer, J. P., & Allen N.J. (1991). A Three-Component Conceptualization of Organizational Commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 1*, 61-89. www.sciensedirect.com

Meyer, J. P., Allen, N.J. & Smith, C.A. (1993). Commitment to organizations and occupations: extensions and test of a three-component conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*, 538-551. www.sciensedirect.com

Meyer, J. P., Paunonen, S.V., Gellaty, I.R., Goffin, R.D., & Jackson, D.N. (1989). Organizational commitment and job performance: it's the nature of the commitment that counts. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 74*, 152-126. www.psycnet.apa.org

Meyer, J. P. H., L. (2001). Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model. *Human Resource Management Review, 11*, 299-326. www.researchgate.net

Mowday , R. T., & Spencer, D. (1981). The influence of task and personality characteristics of employee turnover and absenteeism. *Academy of Management Journal, 24*, 634-642. www.jstor.org

Mruk, C. J. (2008). The psychology of self-esteem: A potential common ground for humanistic positive psychology and positivistic positive psychology *Humanistic Psychologis, 36*, 143-158. www.tandfonline.com

Nordin, N. (2011). Assessing emotional intelligence, leadership behaviour and organizational commitment in a higher learning institution. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 29*, 129 – 138. www.sciensedirect.com

Oberholster, F. R. T., J. W. (1999). Spiritual exerience and the organizational commitment. *Info, 2*(1), 57-78. www.ojs.aiias.edu

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey*. Retrieved from www.worldcat.org

Ryeng, M. S., Kroger, J., & Monica. (2013). Identity Status and Self-Esteem: A Meta-Analysis. *An International Journal of Theory, 13*, 01–213. www.tandfonline.com

Shore, L. M., & Martin, H. J. (1989). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment in relation to work performance and turnover intentions. *Human Relations, 42*(7), 625-638. www.researchgate.net

Siders, M. A., George, G., & Dharwadkar, R. (2001). The Relationship of internal and external commitment foci to objective job performance measures. *Academy of Management Journal, 44*(3), 570-579. www.amj.aom.org

Tyler, T. R. (1999). Why people cooperate with organizations: An identity based perspective. www.psycnet.apa.org

Uçar, D., & Ötken, A. B. (2010). Perceived organizational support and organizational commitment: The mediating role of organization based self-esteem. *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi, 5*, 85-105. www.dergi.iibf.deu.edu.tr

Wylie, R. C. (1979). *The Self-Concept: Theory and Research on Selected Topics.* University of Nebraska. Retrieved from www.worldcat.org

Zembat, R., Gursoy, R. C. (2012). Effects of pre-school teachers' self-esteem on teacher attitudes. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 46*, 2983 – 2988. www.sciensedirect.com

Appendices

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you strongly agree, circle SA. If you agree with the statement, circle A. If you disagree, circle D. If you strongly disagree, circle SD.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.   SA   A   D   SD
2.*At times, I Think I am not good at all.   SA   A   D   SD
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.   SA   A   D   SD
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.   SA   A   D   SD
5.* I feel I don't have much to be proud of.   SA   A   D   SD
6.*I certainly feel useless at times.   SA   A   D   SD

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.   SA   A   D   SD
8.*I wish I could have more respect for myself.   SA   A   D   SD
9.*All in all, I am inclined to feel that I Am a failure.   SA   A   D   SD
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.   SA   A   D   SD

Tables

Table 4.1.
Descriptive Statistics for Self-esteem and sense of commitment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
self esteem	378	14.00	38.00	23.3466	3.45935
sense of commitment	378	32.00	92.00	65.9683	8.37129

Table 4.2
The Correlation between the Iranian EFL Teacher`s sense of commitment and self-esteem

		sense of commitment
	Spearman's rho Correlation	.097
Self esteem	Sig. (2-tailed)	.060
	N	378

A REVIEW STUDY OF THE POSITION OF IDEOLOGICAL INSTRUMENTS IN POSTCOLONIAL CRITICISM

Asghar Moulavi Nafchi

Senior Lecturer, of English Language and Literature at Hakim Sabzevari University, Iran

Reyhaneh Sadat Shadpour*

Instructor of English Language and Literature at Hakim Sabzevari University, Iran.
*Corresponding Author: jusminsmith@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
COLONIALISM STARTED AROUND THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY AND LASTED UNTIL 1930S. IT SADLY COVERED ALMOST ALL THE WORLD. THE LIVES OF MORE THAN THREE-QUARTERS OF THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SHAPED THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF COLONIALISM. THE COLONIZED COUNTRIES, AFTER GAINING INDEPENDENCE, ASSUMED THAT THEY WERE NO LONGER UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE COLONIAL POWER, BUT THEY WERE WRONG. SOME OF THE CRITICS CALL THE PERIOD AFTER INDEPENDENCE AS POSTCOLONIAL PERIOD. OTHER CRITICS BELIEVE THAT POSTCOLONIALISM IS NOT A CHRONOLOGICAL PROCESS; IN FACT IT GOES BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD. THE COLONIZERS HAVE ALWAYS USED POWERFUL TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS TO MAKE THE COLONIZED ACCEPT THE COLONIAL POWER WITH THEIR OWN CONSENT. EDUCATION AND RELIGION ARE THE TWO IMPORTANT IDEOLOGICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE SOCIAL IDEOLOGY AND HAVE ALWAYS HAD A GREAT INFLUENCE ON THE FORMATION OF THE MENTALITY AND LIFE OF THE PEOPLE. COLONIAL COUNTRIES USE THESE INSTRUMENTS TO CONTROL AND APPEASE THE COLONIZED AND EXTINGUISH THE FIRE OF REVOLUTION AMONG THEM. THE POSTCOLONIAL STUDIES CONSIDER THESE METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS AND TRY TO CHALLENGE THEM. IN FACT, THE WORD POSTCOLONIALISM HAS DIFFERENT IMPLICATIONS, AS THIS TERM INCLUDES COLONIALISM AND SOME OTHER RELEVANT KEY TERMS WITHIN ITSELF. THIS REVIEW CONDUCTS A DETAILED BACKGROUND STUDY ON THESE INTERRELATED CONCEPTS AND MEANWHILE ATTEMPTS TO CONSIDER THE VIEWS AND VISIONS OF DIFFERENT WRITERS AND CRITICS ON THE TERMS AT HAND TO EXPRESS THEIR DIFFERENT IMPLICATIONS AND TO DISCUSS THE CONSEQUENCES THAT BEST FIT A RELEVANT STUDY.

KEYWORDS: COLONIALISM, EDUCATION, IDEOLOGICAL INSTRUMENTS, POSTCOLONIALISM, RELIGION

1. Introduction
1.1 Colonialism
According to *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, the word 'colony' refers to a country which is ruled by a powerful country, and the word 'colonialism' refers to the process through which this powerful country controls other countries.

Loomba (1998) defined colonialism as "the taking and control of other people's land and goods which started from the sixteenth century. Colonialism, along with the spread of European powers into Asia, Africa or America, has had a conspicuous place in the history of human being." (p. 2)

By the end of 1930s colonialism had covered at least 84 percent of the world. Most of the countries in the world were under the power of colonialism. Colonialism has two archives. The first one refers to

those countries which were formerly colonies of Europe. The other one relates to the first archive and also refers to resistance to colonialism, colonial ideologies and forms. (Childs & Williams, 1997, p.4)

According to what Memmi (1965) described in his book, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, a colonial is a European that lives in a colony, but their life condition is like the colonized and has no property of their own. Consequently those Europeans, who have lots of properties in the colonies, are not considered as colonial. The colonial people protect the interests of their masters and at the same time gain some profit for themselves. They do not know that in protecting their limited profits, they also protect the infinite profits of the great colonizers of whom they are a victim (p. 10). A colonialist is a colonizer who accepts to be a colonizer and tries to legitimize their condition. To do this, he tries to magnify the merits of the colonizer while demeriting the colonized (p. 45). The colonizer's industry justifies their eminent position and the colonized's indolence justifies their destitution. The former is described as an active nation and the latter is described as lazy (p. 79). When the colonized accepts their position, he completes the legitimacy of the colonizer; therefore their positions are fixed. (p. 88)

Bhabha has borrowed Lacan, the post-Freudian theorist's, idea about identity as negation. He contends that the colonizer's identity is derived from that of the colonized and lives in an uneasy symbiosis with it. In his analysis of the colonizer's identity, Bhabha has examined the psychic and cultural faults of the system which created the white and black distinction in colonial societies. (Waugh, 2006, p. 355)

Childs & Williams (1997) expressed Cesaire's idea about the effects of colonization on the colonized. Cesaire believes that colonization turns the colonizer in to a savage, so that all of his sympathies toward the colonized people are distorted and the colonized are dehumanized and reduced to objects. He calls this process "thingification" which is equal with colonization. Cesaire like Sartre and Fanon attacks the pseudo-humanism of the colonizer and believes that colonizer always has a stealthy racist approach toward the colonized. He continues:

They (colonizers) talk to me about progress, about 'achievements', diseases cured, improved standards of living. I am talking about societies drained of their essence, cultures trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic creations destroyed, extraordinary possibilities wiped out. (p.41)

Cesaire claimed in his 1955 *Discourse on Colonialism* that there is no human relation between the colonizer and the colonized, but relations of domination and submission which turn the colonizing man into a "classroom monitor, an army sergeant, a prison guard, a slave driver, and the indigenous man into an instrument of production." (Bertens, 2001, p. 206)

Based on Said (1993) in *Culture and Imperialism*, Fanon compared the master and slave relationship in Hegel and colonialism. He argued that this relation in Hegel's philosophy is different from the one in colonialism. For Hegel there is reciprocity between master and slave, but in colonialism the master does not want recognition from the slave. The only thing that he wants from him is to work. (p. 253)

Memmi (1965) in *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, said that colonial situation cannot last forever because it cannot arrange itself properly. Lots of colonial countries, after the end of the Second World War, had not enough capital to manage their colonies, so they had to give them up. After all he believes that colonialism itself creates its destruction.

1.2 Imperialism

Colonialism and imperialism are often used interchangeably. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines 'imperial' as "connected with an empire" and 'imperialism' as "the fact of a powerful country increasing its influence over other countries through business, culture, etc." 'Imperialism' is defined as the settling on and controlling the land that you do not possess, that is in distance and others live in it.

Gandhi analyzes imperialism as a system which is always increasing its products, so its demand for colony, where the raw material for these products is provided and has a lot of consumers is never-ending (Childs & Williams, 1997, p.33). Edward Said defines imperialism as the practice, the theory, and the opinions of a powerful country ruling over a distant territory, and 'colonialism' which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, as the establishment of the imperial settlements on a distant colony. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 40)

Based on what Said defined and the opinions of other critics, colonialism is a consequence of imperialism and is defined as the establishing of settlement on distant territory. An empire is a state which controls the political sovereignty of another political state. This relationship can be maintained by force, by political collaboration or by cultural and social dependency. Although nowadays we do not have direct imperialism, it has been implemented through ideological, social, cultural, and economical relationship.

Lenin and Kautsky, in the beginning of the twentieth century, gave a new meaning to imperialism by linking it to capitalism. The expansion of colonial power was coterminous with development of capitalism, so the colonies were the raw materials for the colonial powers. Lenin argued that in western countries the growth of industry and finance produced an enormous capital. As this capital was much more than their labour force, they tried to subordinate the colonial countries, in which the amount of labour was much more than their capital. This process led the western countries to continue their growth. This global system is called imperialism. (Loomba, 1998, p. 5)

Post-colonial theorists, especially those with Marxist ideology, consider this globalization of capitalism as imperialism. Since the late fifteenth century, the expansion of capitalism from the Western Europe has been a continuous process. Loomba (1998) defined imperialism as the highest stage of colonialism. She believed that in modern time, we can recognize the difference between colonialism which is the taking of people's lands and goods and imperialism which is a global system that originates from Eurocentric country and leads to domination over the colonized. (p. 6)

Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin (2001) said that the entire history of cultural imperialism is based on the classification of the science; that is, it classifies the narrative dominated oral world as belonging to a savage, primitive mentality and the written word as belonging to the sophisticated mentality.

1.3 Decolonization

Different forms of colonization have given rise to different forms of decolonization. Decolonization is defined as the process of disclosing and destroying different kinds of colonial power. This power can be in the form of a cultural or institutional power and it remains even after gaining political independence. For instance, besides the economic control of the colonizer, different aspects of colonial culture are valued over the colonized culture. The colonizers value their language over colonial language, their writing over orality, and so on. One of the decolonizing actions is to revive the colonial language and evaluate it again. This act will also change the attitudes toward colonized culture. (Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H., 2007, pp. 56-57)

Along with the theory of decolonization comes the theory of resistance, but resistance cannot be considered as a theory by itself. Rather theories can be used in a way to resist the colonial power. Even theories can be developed as means to rebel against colonialism. (Childs & Williams, 1997, p.28)

According to Memmi (1965) in *The Colonizer and the Colonized,* one form of resistance in the process of decolonization is revolt. Colonization in itself will end in revolution. It is the only way for the freedom of the colonized. Their culture and traditions are being destroyed. They have no language, no flag, no knowledge and even no international existence. They possess nothing and have no hope to have one. (p. 127)

Fanon believes that "revolutionary violence" is the best way against colonialism. He said that the colonized shall not compromise with the colonizer. It is only through violence that the colonized can make their identity and be a historical agent (Waugh, 2006, p. 347). But the problem was that this independence could not bring the freedom that they were looking for. After throwing aside colonialism in different continents like Africa, Asia, people were optimistic about gaining political, cultural, economic and social independence. However, after a while this optimism turned into disillusionment. The colonized even at the height of their revolt bear the signs of the colonizer. They fight according the colonizers values and use their techniques. (Memmi, 1965, p. 129)

1.4 Anti-colonialism

In comparison with decolonization, anti-colonization is a more radical approach. "Anti-colonialism is the political struggle of the colonized peoples against the specific ideology and practice of ideology" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 11). After the end of World War II, anti-colonialism considered decolonization as a compromising movement and tried to be stricter in its approach toward colonialism. In fact they demanded for complete independence. Besides the liberation of political

structures, they wanted the obliteration of what Ghosh named colonization of the psyche. "By this they meant the *arsenal of complexes* (Fanon's term for feelings of inferiority and of social invisibility) created by the experience of having been colonially marginalized and oppressed". Along with these movements, the indigenous culture was being animated as an anti-colonizing approach. (Waugh, 2006, p. 344)

2. Primary Discussion

2.1 Postcolonialism

The term 'postcolonialism' has become so diverse and unorganized that it is somehow impossible to define it clearly or describe what its study may imply. Postcolonialism often means anti-colonialism and is synonymous with post-independence. This word has variable implications and may refer to a collection of studies which are always changing. Loomba (1998) said that "it is a vague condition for people anytime and anywhere all over the world". The dependence of this theory on the literary, cultural and post structural theories makes it even vaguer. (p. 17)

"Post-colonialism may then refer in part to the period after colonialism, but the question arise: after whose colonialism? After the end of which colonial empire? Isn't it unacceptably Anglocentric or Eurocentric to be foregrounding the mid-twentieth century and the end particularly of the British and French empires? What about, for example, early nineteenth-century Latin America and the end of Spanish and Portuguese control? Or the late eighteenth century and the independence of the United States of America?" (Childs & Williams, 1997, p.1)

"The word postcolonialism is used after the Second World War and has chronological meaning. However after 1970s, critics used this term to discuss cultural effects of colonization." (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 168)

Bertens (2001) believes that postcolonial studies in its current theoretical form started in 1978, when Said's work named 'Orientalism' was published. He said that Said used the ideas of Foucault and Gramsci and changed the study of non-western literatures and their cultures.

Literary critics and theorists cannot say what the word postcolonialism exactly refers to, but since there has been an obsession during the historical process with the meaning of this word, Childs & Williams (1997) "preferred to use the term 'post-colonial' to refer to all the cultures which have been influenced by the imperial power from the moment of colonization until now." (p. 3)

In Said's footholds, as the Occident and the Orient reflect each other, all postcolonial societies recognize their identity based on difference not essence. They recognize themselves by their difference from the imperial country. In Said and Foucault's terms, the term postcolonial invokes thinking about language, truth, and power. "Truth is what counts as true within the system of rules for the particular discourse; power is that which annexes, determines and verifies truth. Truth is never outside of power, or deprived of power, the production of truth is a function of power and as Foucault says we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth." (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001, p. 165)

In Lazarus (2004), it has been claimed that from the early 1970s, 'post-colonial' or 'postcolonial, the American variant' was a historical term with no political or ideological concept. The colonial countries which had been decolonized were called postcolonial. The terms like capitalism, imperialism and socialism were active but apart from postcolonialism. When a novel was described as postcolonial, it meant a historical period. It was more usual to consider a writer or his literary work in terms of his/its origin, so Chinua Achebe was considered as an African or third-world writer, rather than a postcolonial writer.

Stephen Slemon claims that among different definitions of post-colonial such as the historical one that refers to independence of colonized countries, he likes the one that refers to "anti- or post-colonial discursive purchase" in culture, which starts when the colonial power tries to assimilate the body and mind of its others to itself. (Childs & Williams, 1997)

Loomba (1998) believes that the 'post' in postcolonialism has two implications. The first one is temporal and indicates that post colonialism is the aftermath of colonialism; the second one is a substitution for the first one and is a matter of discussion among critics. It somehow indicates that a country can be both postcolonial which is formally independent and neo-colonial which is culturally and economically dependent.

Childs & Williams (1997) declared that one meaning of post in post-colonialism can be related to those theories which are not chronological but consider this word conceptually. In this sense it relates to every text which its concept transcends or goes beyond the colonialism.

Besides 'post' the word 'colonial' in postcolonialism is a matter of discussion. We know that colonialism is not the only history of the colonized countries. In fact there must be a history which existed before colonialism, so it cannot account for everything that exists in postcolonial societies. Critics want to know about the ideologies and practices existed before colonialism. Gayatri Spivak believes that pre-colonial culture can be recovered but she does not believe in nostalgic feeling for this culture. She believes that pre-colonial culture can be separated from colonialism, but we cannot find the pure form of culture before colonialism. (Loomba, 1998, p. 17)

2.2 Postcolonialism and Literature

Postcolonial studies critically consider the relation between the colonizer and the colonized. They use the ideas of Foucault on discourse, Gramsci on hegemony, and they also make use of Marxism ideology. Besides, they consider the role of the colonial texts and literature and the way these texts represent the colonizer's superiority and the colonized's inferiority to justify colonization (Bertens, 2001). In the postcolonial literature almost all postcolonial theorists are reconsidering the traditional relation between the colonizer and its colonial subject and they are trying to deconstruct this imperialist relationship.

Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, (2001) defined the postcolonial text as something which is neither a representation of traditional values nor a totally foreign text. It is a hybrid text which means its traditional values are constructed within its power relations (p. 108). They stated that there are three poles in the postcolonial text which claim the ownership of meaning; the writer, the reader and the text. These three poles participate in the social situation of the written text (p. 183). They also recognized three important features in all postcolonial writing, the marginalizing of the postcolonial by the imperial power, the abrogation of this imperial power in the text, and the appropriation of the language of imperial power (p. 82).

Currently postcolonial criticism is following two major paths. On the one hand postcolonial texts are studied and their social effects are considered. On the other some of the literary tropes like allegory, irony and metaphor are revised and the canonical texts which are based on this new approach are reread (191).The dominant colonial powers, after losing their power, continued to dominate the cultural arena in much of the postcolonial world. They do this through their literary canon which is the touchstone for the literary works. In the world of the literary canon, postcolonial writing is something negative. It is against the canon, so readers consider it as the antithesis of the colonial works. These works intend to recover oral and printed traditions that the colonizer threatened to wipe out. Postcolonial works are critical of western canonical works like *The Tempest* or *Heart of Darkness*. (Lazarus, 2004)

While post-colonialism has its origins in the peripheries, the methods that are used for its analyzing like post-structuralism and Marxism are derived from the western knowledge. (Waugh, 2006, p. 341)

Some critics believe that although postcolonialism is about oppression in The Third World and defending periphery works, its most powerful theorists are established in the Western academies. Besides they use European methods for analyzing postcolonial situation like post-structuralism. It seems that postcolonialism has somehow a subtle relation with the power that it criticizes (357).

2.3 Postcolonialism and History

There is a subtle relationship between postcolonialism and history. The importance of history in post-colonialism relates to the emergence of history as an academic discipline. This kind of history is coterminous with the rise of modern colonialism and has a great role in controlling of the colonized (Childs & Williams, 1997, p.9).

Said (1993) believes that the writer should have historical sense. Historical sense includes not only a perception of the past, but also the presence of past in the present. Past and present inform each other and somehow in Eliot's term co-exist. The writer should feel the whole literature of their country have simultaneous existence. Said thinks that authors are not determined by ideology, class or economic history, but they are shaped by and at the same time shaping the history of their societies.

Memory is shaped through history and social conditions. The memory of an African does not tell him anything about their history. Their religion turns into Christianity, their language became English and their books teach them another history which does not belong to them. (Memmi, 1965)

2.4 Neo-colonialism

"Neo-colonialism was a term coined by Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, and the leading exponent of pan-Africanism in his *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*" (1965). Like Lenin that called the last stage of capitalism as imperialism he called the last stage of imperialism as neo-colonialism. This concept indicates that countries even after political independence are under the control of imperial powers like America. This term declares that independent economic and political identity under these neo-colonial powers is impossible. The term neo-colonial power mostly refers to new superpowers like America and it is less associated with former colonial powers. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 146)

Concerning neo-colonialism, Loomba (1998) declared that the consequence of imperial domination in the colonies is colonialism or neo-colonialism.in this process, power flows from the imperial country which is called 'metropole' to the neo-colony. Imperialism can function without formal colonies but colonialism cannot.

3. Main Discussion and Concluding Remarks

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines 'ideology' as a set of ideas and beliefs which belong to a special group and affects their behavior. People are born into ideology and in this way their identity forms. According to Althusser, ideology is perpetuated by ideological state apparatuses such as church, education and police

Gramsci formulated the concept of 'hegemony'. Hegemony is the power achieved through a combination of coercion and consent. Gramsci argued that ruling over people is not possible only by force and coercion, but by creating subjects who are willing to be dominated. Ideology is very important for creating this consent. Hegemony is achieved not only by indoctrination, but also by working on people's common sense. Transformation of the ideas is very important, so that people accept to be dominated by the colonial power. (Loomba, 1998)

Based on Gramsci's idea about hegemony, Althusser argued that in modern capitalist societies, the force is achieved by 'Repressive State Apparatuses' such as the army and the police, and the consent is implemented through 'Ideological State Apparatus' such as schools, church, media, etc. These ideological state apparatuses create people who accept the values of society and in this way strengthen the power of ruling class. This idea is very useful in revealing the true essence of the institutions which seem apparently innocent and beneficial. It is also very useful for the analysis of schools, universities, family structures, and literary texts. (Loomba, 1998)

As in all postcolonial societies the word leads to knowledge, which provokes questioning, which generates change. Learning with its necessary initiation into the mystic processes of writing, is an assumption of the power to dominate. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

Language has a direct relation with power, because it is made up of words and words construct reality. The language of the imperial power constructs reality and the colonized only receive this reality. Since the colonized do not have the word and order which are the basis of the power, they will remain under the power of colonial system. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

To be freed from the ideologies which are ruling over the colonized, they must question the truth that has been indoctrinated in their mind. Loomba (1998) believes that since dominant ideologies are never monolithic, they have not been successful in entering all individuals in their system, so people can question the essence of this structure. The production of knowledge by the colonizer is not simple. It consists of marginalization of the knowledge and belief systems of colonized people.

As one of the ideological state apparatuses is school and knowledge, the colonizer, introduced himself as the producer of knowledge. The British government decided that even moralities should be taught through English literature not Christianity, so English literature can develop colonial values and fix its centrality. (Childs & Williams, 1997)

In the nineteenth century English as an academic subject was replaced with classics. The emergence of English as an academic discipline also produced the nineteenth century colonial form of imperialism. The growth of empire and the study of English both have the same ideological basis. They

constructed values which were considered as privileged and denied the values of peripheral. The peripheral whose values was threatened to be rejected by the empire, absorbed the colonized's values. "This was a process, in Edward Said's terms, of conscious affiliation proceeding under the guise of filiation". The postcolonial nations after gaining independence tried to question the empire's values and ideologies; however the nexus of power in the empire such as language, literature and culture resisted and they are still present in the ideologies of the peripheral nations. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

Said believes that Part of the creation of colonial authority is the language and literature and their creation of the European self and non-European other (Loomba, 1998). As it has been stated before, language is one of the main tools of the imperial power. "The imperial education system installs a 'standard' version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalizes all 'variants' as impurities…". In this way, imperialism implants its power in the society and establishes the concepts like truth and reality in a way to accomplish its own benefits. Ashcroft et al, believe that an effective anti-colonial voice can disapprove this power (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001, p. 7). Although the language of the peripheries is shaped by the oppressive discourse of the imperial power, the colonized writers have used their potentials and through English language, have produced innovative literatures (p. 8). The suppression of a pre-colonial culture by the imperial power has caused linguistic alienation. So writers like Raja Roa from India or Chinua Achebe from Nigeria have tried to change the English language in their works in a way that, as Achebe says, quoting James Baldwin, make it "bear the burden of their experience." Although Roa and Achebe have not migrated to a colonial country and write from their own place, after the colonial power replaced English language with the colonial language, a linguistic gap has been created. These writers have to deal with this gap in their works (p. 10). As English language is a nexus of power in the empire, postcolonial works try to replace it with a discourse which is adapted to the colonial country. There are two processes which they use for this purpose: abrogation and appropriation (p. 37). (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin (2001) defined abrogation and appropriation in this way:

Abrogation is the refusal of the categories of the imperial culture like its aestheticism, its illusory standard of the 'correct' usage, and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning 'inscribed' in the words and appropriation is the process by which the language is taken and made to 'bear the burden' of one's own cultural experience (pp. 37-38).

These two techniques have had a conspicuous place in the postcolonial literatures and have helped to the development of independent literary works. The colonized use different aspects of the colonizer culture like language, the style of writing and modes of thought to express their identity. For example language is appropriated in a way so it can transfer the experience of the colonized. Chinua Achebe believes that this language can bear the burden of another experience. He said that with the use of vernacular terms or new grammatical forms in English language we can to some extent regain our pre-colonial culture (41). Parenthetic translations of individual words, for example, "he took him into his obi (hut)" (60) are the most obvious and most common innovation in the colonized works which are written in English language. There has been an argument about whether using a colonial language makes the writer colonized. Most of the debaters believe that the literatures written in English, either appropriating or transforming the language, demonstrate the political and cultural agency achieved by writers (203). (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

Some critics believe that the choice of English language is a conscious choice, since the writer, using their own rhythm and idioms, can defamiliarize the reader and make them familiar with their own culture (Bertens, 2001). By using the technique of appropriation such as the application of new grammatical rules or parenthetic translations, postcolonial writers create new models for the native writer in the colonized countries. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

Some writers, like Chinua Achebe, believe that the colonial language is useful, because it has the widest possible audience, but some other writers, like Ngugi, believe that the audience of the colonial language is often restricted to the elite audience and common people have not the chance to read them. Unfortunately, this debate has not been resolved. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007)

Postcolonial writers and critics always argue about whether it is possible to use the dominant language, culture, and literature in an opposing way. Chinua Achebe believes that based on the multilingual culture of Africa and hybridity of most African writers, it is possible to make English language fit their experience. He concludes that:

For me there is no other choice. I have been given this language and I intend to use it … I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings (Loomba 1998, p. 91).

Althusser believed that the educational system is an important tool in implanting the ideas of ruling class in the society. In the colonized countries, this system creates people who value the colonial culture over their own culture. In other words, in the educational system of the colonial countries, students were taught not only English but also the superiority of the English race. (Said, 1993)

The architect of English education, Thomas Babington Macaulay, discussed this issue in his famous 'Minute on Indian Education' written in 1835:

English education would train natives who were 'Indian in blood and color' to become 'English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect'. These people would constitute a class who would in fact protect British interests and help them rule a vast and potentially unruly land (Cited. in Loomba, 1998, 85).

School and teachers create for the colonized a world which is totally different from the one in which he lived before, so they face duality in their life. He has two different languages which mean two different cultures and worlds, one for the colonizer and the other for the colonized.

One of the ideological instruments which have been used cleverly by the colonizer is religion. The church (catholic and protestant) and colonialism had subtle relations with each other. The church had a great role in protecting colonialism and in making the colonized accepts the colonization. But it seemed as though these relationships had been by accident and as soon as the real essence of colonialism was uncovered, the church washed its hands of it (Memmi, 1965). Some sixteenth and seventeenth century plays and pamphlets show that Turks, Indians, and some other colonized countries were willing to convert into Christianity. The colonizers misused this matter to justify their economic exploitation. In fact, they used their religion "Christianity" to appease the colonized people (Loomba, 1998). The effect of the colonizer's language in Christianity is quite clear. Among the different translations of Bible, only those in English were considered as holy books; other translations were being used as waste paper, but there was a problem about the English Bible. The colonized asked some questions about the word of God in the English Bible: "how can the Word of God come from the flesh-eating mouths of the English? And later 'how can it be the European book, when we believe it is God's gift to us?" (Childs & Williams, 1997)

Colonial discourse studies consider colonial epistemologies deeply and connect them with the colonial institutions. Viswanathan and Johnson consider the study of English literature and its institutionalization as the politics of the colonial power in India and South Africa. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

There is an ideological assumption about literary studies which claims there is an unbridgeable gap between those who are naturally familiar with the literary culture and those others who must be taught about it. This literary tradition must emphasize inferiority; besides it wants to suppress the creativity and innovation of those writers who studied English literature. (Loomba, 1998)

Most of the English literatures outside Britain have been considered as national works which reflect each country's culture. Gradually in these works the difference between national and nationalist disappeared. Nationalism rejected Britain and US hegemony in publishing, education, and sponsorship of writing, but this nationalist criticism uses the discourse of the imperial power which it tries to repudiate (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001, p. 17). As the literature of USA developed, its characteristics became different from those of Britain, and the concept of national literary differences 'within' literary works, written in English language, was constructed. This led to the production of new literature in countries like Nigeria, Australia, and India. "It is the beginning of what Nigerian writer Wole Soyika has characterized as the 'process of self-apprehension'" (16).

The emergence of the literature of the colonized people and the development of their consciousness is not an isolated action. It is part of the development of the self-consciousness in all human beings. As Memmi (1965) said "The fruit is not an accident or miracle of a plant but a sign of its maturity" (p. 110).

Frantz Fanon believes that national cultures including national literatures are very good instruments for gaining cultural and political self-determination. Culture can be both a place of colonial control and a place for resistance. This matter in 1960s and 1970s was a very good motivation for writers like Chinua Achebe, since in their novels they used their cultural environment. Chinua Achebe in his essay 'Colonialist Criticism' defended the use of national culture in literary works. He said that the universal qualities that belong to the western works are more European than universal. (Bertens, 2001)

The post-colonial writers and historians, such as Chinua Achebe, have always been trying to regain their indigenous histories and cultures. The production of these post-colonial texts in forms and language of colonizer is somehow a complex process because of two reasons. On the one hand using colonizer's language and form and at the same time negating their ideologies is a hard task. On the other hand using colonizer's language and forms seems like devaluing the native ones. (Childs & Williams, 1997)

In the late fifties and early sixties African Anglophone writers decided to construct a unique art which its views, functions, forms, and the role of the writer in that is totally African and differs from the European models suggested by the European writers. Chinua Achebe asserted this claim in his essay "the novelist as teacher". He said that a writer cannot be freed from teaching and he himself does not like to. He teaches his reader that their past was not one long night of slavery from which Europeans delivered them. "Art is important and so is the education I have in mind". In 'Africa and her writers' he said that the social function of the writer is to serve their society and make it different from that one which was made by the Europeans. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2001)

REFERENCES

Ashby, Michael, et al, (Eds.) (2006). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* (7th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2007). *Postcolonial studies: The key concepts* (2nd ed.). London and New York: Routledge.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2001). *The empire writes back* (2nd ed.). USA and Canada: Routledge.

Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (Eds.). (1995). *The postcolonial studies reader*. London and New York: Routledge.

Bertens, H. (2001). *Literary theory: The basics.* London: Routledge.

Childs, P., & Williams, R. J. P. (1997). *An introduction to post-colonial theory.* Singapore: Pearson Education.

Lazarus, N. (Ed.). (2004). *The Cambridge companion to postcolonial literary studies.* United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Loomba, A. (1998). *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. London, USA, Canada: Routledge.

Memmi, A. (1965). *The Colonizer and the colonized.* New York: Diren Press.

Said, E. (1993). *Culture and imperialism.* Britain: Chatto and Windus Ltd.

Waugh, P. (Ed.). (2006). *Literary theory and criticism: An Oxford guide.* New York: Oxford University Press.

AN INVESTIGANTION INTO INTERMEDIATE IRANARIAN EFL LEARNERS' GRAMMAR ACCURACY THROUGH NEWS REPORT

Parisa Moghaddam Khavari Roudsari
Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran
Parisamoghaddam.kh14@gmail.com

Mitra Jafari Jafroudi
Bandar Anzali Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Anzali, Iran

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY INVESTIGATED THE EEFECTS OF NEWS REPORT (NR), AS ONE TYPE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS, ON THE LEARNING OF PASSIVE STRUCTURES BY THE INTERMEDIATE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS. IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE HOMOGENEITY OF THE PARTICIPANTS, THE STANDERIZED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST (PET) WAS ADMINISTERED AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS. IN TOTAL, 40 LEAENERS, WITH AN AGE RANG OF 17-29, PARTICIPATED IN THIS STUDY IN TWO INTACT CLASSES, WHICH WERE RANDOMLY ASSIGNIED TO NR AND CONTROL GROUPS (CG). THE TWO GROUPS RECEIVED DIFFERENT INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS. IN THE NR GROUP, THE TARGETED PASSIVE SENTENCES IN EIGHT DIFFERENT NEWS REPORTS WERE PRESENTED TO THE PARTICIPANTS AND THE CG RECEIVED EIGHT TEXTS OF THE BOOK ENGLISH RESULT. THE METHOD OF TEACHING OF THESE TEXTS IN BOTH GROUPD WAS THE SAME. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY, ONE PRE-TEST AND ONE POST-TEST OF MULTIPLE CHOICE (MC) AND ERROR CORRECTION (EC) TYPES OF GRAMMATICAL TEST WERE USED TO GATHER THE NEEDED DATA.THE ONE-WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCES (ONE-WAY ANOVA) WAS RUN TO ANALYZE THE GATHERED DATA. THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE NR GROUP OUTPERFORMED THE CONTROL GROUP AND HAD SIGNIFICANTLY BETTER PERFORMANCES AFTER THE TREATMENT THAN CONTROL GROUP IN BOTH MC AND EC TESTS.ACCORDINGLY, IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT AUTHENTIC MATERIALS, SPECIFICALLY NR IN THE EFL CLASSROOM CAN SIGNIFICANTLY HELP MOTIVATE AND ENHANCE LEARNERS' MASTERY OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR. THE STUDY HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR EFL PRACTITIONERS AND MATERIAL DEVELOPERS.

KEYWORDS: AUTHENTIC MATERIALS; NEWS REPORT; ONE-WAY ANOVA; PASSIVE VOICE; READING COMREHENSION

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a growing consensus among a good deal of current research that reading comprehension is one of the most important skills for educational and professional success. It has become the main focus of attention by both research and practical application since 1980s (Arens ,Byrnes & Swaffar 1991, Brantmeier, 2002; Omaggio Hadley, 2001; Saricoban, 2002; Singhal, 2001). As Noor (2006, p. 66) states, "Without doubt, in any academic or higher learning context, reading is perceived as the most prominent academic skill for university students" .In general terms, reading comprehension can be defined as the ability to understand information in a text and interpret it appropriately.

As Akbari (2014) claims in her article, the role of grammar in second language ,oreceived much attention by researchers (Alderson, 1984, 2000; Nassaji, 2007; Shiotsu & Weir, 2007; Urguhart & Weir, 1998). On one hand, this may be attributable to the very nature of reading as a receptive language skill for comprehending the messages of the texts. Thus, knowledge of structure was regarded to have less to do with comprehending a text than levels of other components such as vocabulary, background knowledge, and reading strategies. On the other hand, the 30-year long dominance of Communicative Language Teaching that puts a near-exclusive emphasis on macrolanguage skills and communicative functions, has somewhat downgraded the need to address the issue of the role of grammar in L2 reading (Han & D'Angelo, 2009; Urguhart & Weir, 1998).

1.1. Statement of the Problem
Despite the outstanding place of reading comprehension in English pedagogy and the belief that the only and the most direct way of accessing professional information in various fields of the study is reading comprehension Richards (1976), the students' problems concerning reading comprehension still persist. This issue is more clearly evident among EFL learners who have limited amount of exposure to English as a medium of general communication Hedge (2004). In universities of Iran, students of different fields are required to read some of their materials in English, particularly when they are supposed to write their research projects. As a result, to assist them better in tackling their reading comprehension in their classes, teachers need to diagnose the students' major problems first and then apply appropriate strategies to help them improve their reading comprehension.

When the issue turns to second language (L2) reading, the role of grammar becomes more complex. It is due to the fact that L2 reading differs from L1 reading in that L2 readers "start to read in the second language before achieving the kind of grammatical maturity and the level of oral vocabulary that L1 readers attain before they begin to read" Shiotsu (2009, p. 16). Thus, L2 learners must learn how phrases are constructed and cases are assigned to the constructed phrases in a new language Koda (2007). Moreover, one of the most complex structures that have been seen among EFL learners such as Iranian is Passive structures. Some researchers have considered passive voice as a language form which has a crucial role to convey meaning (Cubillo & Brenes, 2009) or cause complexity (Scott, 2009).As Lambton (as cited in Tabatabaei & Rostampour, 2011) assert, "In Persian, if it is possible to use the active structure, the passive one will not be used" (p. 1355). That is, passive voice is seldom used in Persian, and it is usually used only when there is no other choice. Therefore, the sentence "I was hit by him." should be translated as "He hit me." [ou mara zad] (p. 54).

Moreover, the goal of the communicative approach is to develop language competence for communication in real life. However, as noted in Guo (2012), textbooks are often written with classroom dialogue practices that are artificial, thus presenting a gap from real life language. And, unfortunately, with perhaps inadequate understanding of the method, some instructors have not recognized the value of using authentic materials.

1.2. Significance of the Study
In recent years, it is believed that one of the most challenging tasks constantly facing language teachers is how to capture the interest and to stimulate the imagination of their students so that they will be more motivated to learn. To this end, the ongoing search for and the development of meaningful teaching materials, which often can be used to supplement the textbook for a course, is a critical planning activity to be done by teachers.

Therefore, authentic materials are considered to generate greater interest among teachers, students and even publishers than to do traditionally structured materials (Gilmore, 2007). The wide variety of authentic materials ranges from literature, CDs, DVDs, news reports, movies, TV programs, even to brochures and menus. Floris (2008) points out the necessity for incorporating authentic materials in the course design, because they are more motivating, and engaging, and relevant to students' lives. Other researchers claim that authentic materials provide opportunities for language use in a more relevant and communicative way (Sánchez, Pėrex, & Gómes, 2010).In other words, instructions can

use different variety of ways to enhance the proficiency of grammar, and assist to speed up this process.

In addition, in accordance with the conventional definition of authentic texts Nunan (1989) states:"Authentic materials are usually defined as those which have been produced for purposes other than to teach language". Such an example includes printed materials like newspapers and timetables, or spoken materials like public announcements.

An authentic material, which is news report in this study, let's students know about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value. In other word, news report as one of the most accessible materials is considered to be highly beneficial in advancing the grammar knowledge. Since, students mostly follow hot news around them and have sufficient background knowledge about such breaking news, so they can make contact with the text that has some certain grammatical rules quickly, and it would be fixed in their mind more accurately.

The use of authentic materials in an EFL classroom is what many teachers involved in foreign language teaching and have discussed in recent years. There are persuasive voices insisting that English language should be presented in the classroom through authentic materials, not produced only for instructional purposes (Floris, 2008; Gilmore, 2007; Nunan, 1989; Sánchez et al., 2010). Generally, what this means is that authentic materials involve the language that naturally occurs as communication in the native speaker's contexts of use, or rather in the selected contexts where Standard English is the norm: real newspaper reports, real magazine articles, real advertisements, cooking recipes, horoscopes, etc. Most of the teachers throughout the world agree that authentic texts or materials are beneficial to the language learning process, but what is less agreed is when authentic materials should be introduced and how they should be used in an EFL classroom.

News report as a beneficial and prominent source of authentic material has an effective role in language learning and teaching, in particular, in grammar domain. The newspaper has always been, and remains an important resource in our lives and reflects people's needs and interests. The newspaper is a natural choice to help students develop and apply reading skills because the reader is already familiar with the content and also it refers to local people, places and events (Garrett, 2009). In other words, the sociocultural context is familiar because it reflects the reader's daily life and experiences and serves the reader's needs, making the newspaper a highly motivational text. In addition, it contains linguistic and nonlinguistic texts to inform the reader. It includes a variety of genres, discourse structures and visual elements. Moreover, activities encourage thinking at many different cognitive levels.

1.3. Literature review
1.3.1. Reading Comprehension
The academic importance of reading comprehension cannot be understated, therefore leading researchers to claim that, "the most important thing about reading is comprehension" (Gambrell, Block, & Pressley, 2002, p. 3).There is clear evidence that reading comprehension instruction is highly beneficial for students of all levels. When teachers explain and model a single comprehension strategy or multiple strategies, as well as provide guided and independent practice with feedback until students begin to use the strategy independently, there are ding levels of middle and high school students to improve (e.g., Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Collins, 199l; Deshler, Ellis, & Lenz, 1996; National Reading Panel, 2000; Rosenshine & Meister, 1996; Schorzman & Cheek, 2004; Stevens, 2003; Wood, Winne & Carney, 1995).Although it is generally clear that reading plays a significant role in a language, reading comprehension remains a young field that merits greater research attention. Moreover, knowledge about reading comprehension regarding learning strategies has been devoted to those involving in listening, writing and speaking.

1.3.2. Reading and Grammar
Numerous studies have been carried out to examine the reading process in second language students , however , the role of grammar as one the major factors regarding reading comprehension in EFL/ESL classes has been achieved less attention. Bernhardt (2000, as cited in Akbari, 2014) reviewed adolescent and adult second-language literacy studies and one of the conclusions that she reached was that second language reader's text comprehension could not always be predicted by the syntactic complexity of the text.

In line with this issue, Akbari (2014) investigated the role of grammar in second language reading comprehension: Iranian ESP context, and based on the findings she points out that grammatical knowledge predicts better comprehension and may be used as an indicator of success in reading. The explicit knowledge seems to help them realize the relationship between sentences (Alaviand & Kaivanpanah, 2007). Therefore, if language teachers aim at helping students read better and comprehend faster, they are advised to increase the grammatical knowledge through diverse means such as focus on form and explicit instruction. An interactive program to teach grammar and improve reading comprehension is suggested to bring about significant improvement in reading comprehension.

However, this study had a different approach to teaching grammar. In this study, grammar was used as a device to develop and facilitate reading comprehension. At the end of this study, students had a sense of self-satisfaction and more efficient and effective reading comprehension and they were intrinsically motivated to read their English academic texts since they acquired a different view towards the role of grammar through understanding its key role in reading comprehension. They did not consider learning grammar as memorizing a set of rules and patterns for doing exercises. They, in fact, experienced the importance of grammar in assisting them to understand their texts in the process of reading. Therefore, grammar was as important, if not more than, as vocabulary for them.

1.3.3. Grammar
Newby (2000) stresses language performance; the meaningfulness of grammar; a realistic view on grammatical correctness; and the teacher's role in finding appropriate methodology for the learning of grammar and language. The aims of grammar learning should be reflected in the way grammar is taught. In the citation below, Ellis broadly defines grammar teaching as any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand grammar metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it. (Ellis, 2006, p. 84, as cited in Timmis, 2012, p. 128).

The outcome of grammar teaching can be, according to this definition, both learning of formal grammar with a focus on the structures of the language, and/or learning of the ability to use grammar in practice. Throughout the history of language teaching there have been shifting views on how to teach grammar. However, the teaching of grammar can be defined broadly as any instructional technique used in order to learn grammar.

Based on the aforementioned studies, knowledge of grammatical rules and terminology is important for almost all foreign language learners, but especially for undergraduates, who are used to cognitive learning and who are aiming for a high level of accuracy in the language. Grammar is one of the most difficult aspects of a foreign language to master. Teaching grammar to EFL learners has long been considered a major concern in the whole process of language learning pedagogy. It has, in effect, been the object of numerous studies, each of which has its own contribution to the field. Many research projects have been carried out in order to probe into the validity of different methodologies as to an effective grammar teaching.

Shatz and Wilkinson (2010, p. 165) argue that second language (L2) learners "often cannot express complex thoughts because of their inability to construct complex sentences showing complicated relationships". Shatz and Wilkinson also highlight some of the common grammar problems that face

English language learners (ELLs) such as the misuse of prepositions, articles, past tense, and the third-person singular and especially passive structures. Some researchers have considered passive voice as a language form which has a crucial role to convey meaning (Cubillo & Brenes, 2009) or cause complexity (Scott, 2009). They believed that instructors must present language tasks which include a given feature of language form for students to convey meaning. Moreover, it is considered to be the most complex structure to learn by a number of EFL learners. Laufer (1976) proposes the term "semantic trouble makers" as the structure interfering with understanding and causing comprehension problems. He identified passive voice as a semantic trouble maker due to its ambiguity or the existence of a similar structure with different meaning as well as the rarity or non-existence of a parallel construction in the mother tongue. Considering Persian, different studies show that the frequency of occurrence of passive structure in English and some other European languages is more than that in Persian (Jabbari, 2003). In fact, this difference in the frequency of passive structure between the two languages, namely English and Persian, can be one of the basic differences between the two languages.

1.3.4. Authentic Materials

The term authentic materials have been defined in different ways throughout the literature. According to Widdowson (1990, as cited in Tamo ,2009), there are different definitions for the authentic materials, but they do have something in common. All the definitions highlight the fact that authentic materials mean "exposure to real language and its use in its own community. Bacon and Finnemann (1990) state that authentic materials are those texts which are made by native speakers for non-pedagogical purposes. In short, "authentic materials are materials that we can use with the students in the classroom and that have not been changed in any way for ESL students. A classic and the most useful example would be a newspaper article that's written for a native-English-speaking audience" (Sanderson, 1999).

In the mid-1970s, communicative approaches to language teaching encountered a need to develop students' skills for the real world. Teachers, therefore, must stimulate this world in the classroom. One of the ways is to incorporate the use of authentic materials. Authentic materials are considered to help to bridge the gap between the classroom knowledge and the students' capacity to participate in the real-world events. Therefore, a very prominent issue which should be paid attention by language teachers is selecting appropriate materials and tasks for language classes. Teachers should know what to do and what to use in the classrooms to make language teaching and learning more interesting, motivating, and successful.

It was assumed that authentic materials would help to motivate students by creating a real life situation and interaction in the classrooms, rather than presenting language in its stimulant communicative context (Celce- Murica, 2001, as cited in Vossoughi & Morad, 2010). Researchers like Breen (1985), Littlewood (1992), Nunan (2001) and Widdowson (1990), have pointed toward discovering the impact of such materials on language learning. They have acknowledged the necessity for and practicality of authentic materials because of the rising interest in communicative function of language in general and communicative approach in particular. Authentic materials present content and meaning to learners and initiate a contextualized situation within which language is learned.

The sources of authentic materials (whether spoken or written) are endless. The most common sources are newspapers, magazines, TV, video, radio, literature, and the internet. Although radio is easy to use, the comprehensibility of its input is the most difficult for language learners because all non-verbal information is missing, pictures, movements, colors and body language of TV and video, unlike radio, allow learners to access non-verbal information; therefore, TV and video are easier for the language learners to comprehend.

Authentic listening materials cause exposure to real language and are more related to natural needs of the language learners. Real-life listening materials bring the chance of applying a more creative approach toward teaching. Bantmeir (2008, as cited in Akbari & Rezvani, 2015) states that real life

reading comprehension texts should be used as an essential part of language curriculum. Moreover, Hadley (2001, p. 97, as cited in Akbari & Rezvani, 2015) points out:

" use of real or simulated travel documents, hotel registration forms, biographical data sheets, train and plane schedules, authentic restaurant menus, labels, signs, newspapers, and magazines will acquaint students more directly with real language than will any set of contrived classroom materials used alone."

So, it seems that reading practices by use of different authentic materials is sensible for the students. By using authentic materials students know how to use language in real world and improve their proficiency level in four skills of language learning.

Zoghi, Moradiyan & Kazemi (2014) considered the effects of authentic materials on vocabulary acquisition and development. They found out that most of the students prefer using authentic materials for vocabulary acquisition. They believed that authentic materials play an important role in teaching a second language.

More recently, Akbari and Rezvani, (2015) studied Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding the use of authentic materials at high school level in Iran according to communicative language principles, focusing on both reading and listening skills. To this end they recruited Fifty-seven female and male English teachers, who teach in high schools and took apart in teacher training course (TTC) with CLT framework, to complete a survey questionnaire for the purpose of this study. The results indicated that English teachers have a positive attitude toward presenting authentic materials in the classroom.

1.3.5. *News Reports*

Nowadays, news report is considered as one the most beneficial and prominent source of authentic material that has an effective role in language learning and teaching, in particular, in grammar domain. Drawings on the aforementioned definitions of authentic materials, news report as one those; arouse a great deal of motivation and interest among language learners. Since, these days due to having a high technology lifestyle and having so many social networks for sharing news, the breaking news go viral on line in no time ,so that language learners would have many opportunities to have a sufficient background knowledge about a wide variety of news. To this end, it motivates them to be curious about news and learn the structure through reading them.

 Therefore, it would assist the process of learning specially the complex grammatical rules like passive or conditional sentences. Thus, news has always been, and remains an important resource in our lives and reflects people's needs and interests. The newspaper is a natural choice to help students develop and apply reading skills because the reader is already familiar with the content because it refers to local people, places and events (Garrett, 2009). In addition, it includes a variety of genres, discourse structures and visual elements that can meet every taste and need and age. Moreover, activities encourage thinking at many different cognitive levels.

1.4. RESERCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

With regard to the fact that this study focused on grammar accuracy through one type of instructional materials, News report, and through two types of tests, Multiple Choice (MC) and Error Correction (EC), the following research questions were formulated:

1) Does news reports have any significant effect on Intermediate Iranian EFL learners' performance on MC grammar test?

2) Does news reports have any significant effect on Intermediate Iranian EFL learners' performance on (EC) grammar test?

Accordingly two null hypotheses

1) News reports have no significant effect on Intermediate Iranian EFL learners' performance on MC grammar test.

2) News reports have no significant effect on Intermediate Iranian EFL learners' performance on (EC) grammar test.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Participants

In the present study, a sample of 90 EFL students (male and female) in a private institute in Anzali, Iran was selected. They were at intermediate levels with ages among 17-29. The initial number of participants was then reduced to 40 after the administration of a standard proficiency test, Preliminary English Test (PET).Hence; 50students were excluded and 40 students remained as the main participants of this study.

2.2. Instruments
A general English test taken from Preliminary English Test (PET, 2010), whose aim was to extract a sample of homogenous students was used. Through this test the students selected for the study to form two homogeneous groups of 40 members. Afterwards, In order to assess the participants' knowledge and achievement before and after the treatment, a Multiple Choice (MC) and Error Correction (EC) grammar test of Passive Structure made by the researcher was applied as pre-test and post-test. The format of these tests was the same but the questions were different.
Moreover, in the current study, there was a need for sixteen reading passages that must have been of the appropriate level for intermediate learners. These passages were gathered from one source of authentic materials, some news, and also some passages of the book English Result. All the texts in these sources contained the targeted passive structure.

2.3. Procedures
This study was composed of a pilot and a main study. All together, the study lasted ten sessions during the summer of 2015.First of all, an attempt was made to ensure the students' homogeneity. Hence, PET was administered to determine the proficiency level of 90 female and male students. Then, 40 students whose scores fell within limits of the determined range of standard deviation were known as intermediate level English learners and made the main pool of subjects for this study. These 40 participants were randomly spread into two intact classes of News Report (NR), and Control Group (CG).
Then, after applying the pre-test in the pilot group, the researcher administered the identical pre-test to all groups before any treatment. Treatments of the groups started from the second through the eight sessions. During the treatment sessions, each two groups received different sorts of instruction. Then, posttest was administered in the pilot group after finishing the treatment in to the main group to calculate its reliability and validity. And finally, in the tenth session, both groups took the same post-tests.

2.4. Data analysis
The one-way analysis of variances (one-way ANOVA) was run to probe the research questions posed in this study. One-way ANOVA has two main assumptions; homogeneity of variances, and normality.

3. Conclusion

3.1. Statistical Conclusions
The following statistical analyses were undergone to determine the possible consequences of the research.

The one-way analysis of variances (one-way ANOVA) was run to probe the research questions posed in this study:
One-way ANOVA was run to compare the NR and CGs' means on the PET in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of general language proficiency prior to the main study.
Descriptive Statistics, PET Test by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	20	32.45	8.823	1.973	28.32	36.58
News report	20	31.65	8.337	1.864	27.75	35.55
Total	40	31.22	8.973	1.158	28.90	33.53

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.5 (F (2, 57) = .549, P = .581, ω^2 = .015 representing a weak effect size) it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between the means of the two groups on the PET test. Thus it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their general language proficiency prior to the main study.
One-way ANOVA was run to compare the NR and CGs' means on the pretest of MC and EC grammatical accuracy in order to prove that they enjoyed the same level of knowledge on MC and EC grammatical accuracy prior to the main study.
Descriptive Statistics, Pretest of **MC** Grammatical Accuracy by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	20	14.55	5.031	1.125	12.20	16.90
News report	20	16.65	6.218	1.390	13.74	19.56
Total	40	15.85	5.954	.769	14.31	17.39

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.8 (F (2, 57) = .721, P = .491, ω^2 = .009 representing a weak effect size) it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between the means of the two groups on the pretest of MC grammatical accuracy. Thus it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their MC grammatical accuracy knowledge prior to the main study.

Descriptive Statistics, Pretest of **EC** Grammatical Accuracy by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	20	16.00	5.921	1.324	13.23	18.77
News report	20	18.50	6.057	1.354	15.67	21.33
Total	40	16.68	6.369	.822	15.04	18.33

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.11 (F (2, 57) = 1.25, P = .292, ω^2 = .008 representing a weak effect size) it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between the means of the two groups on the pretest of EC grammatical accuracy. Thus it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their EC grammatical accuracy knowledge prior to the main study.
One-way ANOVA was run to compare the NR and CGs' means on the posttest of MC and EC grammatical accuracy in order to probe the first and second research questions.

Descriptive Statistics, Posttest of MC Grammatical Accuracy by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	20	15.35	2.477	.554	14.19	16.51

| News report | 20 | 24.30 | 4.390 | .982 | 22.25 | 26.35 |
| Total | 40 | 19.92 | 5.283 | .682 | 18.55 | 21.28 |

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.14 (F (2, 57) = 27.06, P = .000, ω^2 = .465 representing a large effect size) it can be concluded that there were significant differences between the means of the two groups on the posttest of MC grammatical accuracy. Thus the first null-hypothesis was rejected.

Descriptive Statistics, Posttest of EC Grammatical Accuracy by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	20	14.40	2.644	.591	13.16	15.64
News report	20	23.15	3.117	.697	21.69	24.61
Total	40	18.85	5.408	.698	17.45	20.25

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.18 (F (2, 57) = 22.76, P = .000, ω^2 = .420 representing a large effect size) it can be concluded that there were significant differences between the means of the two groups on the posttest of EC grammatical accuracy. Thus the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

3.2. Discussion
This study set out to investigate the effect of news reports on intermediate Iranian EFL learners' grammar accuracy. The findings revealed that teaching reading comprehension through news report had a positive impact on the acquisition of the targeted grammatical rules. That is, learners in the NR made significant gains in terms of their knowledge of grammatical forms, as suggested by the post-test results. Such findings lend further support to previous studies using authentic materials in enhancing learning of the second language (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Wilcox, Morrison & Oaks, 1999).
All in all, the results of this study, that provide enlightening guidelines to include NRs as a beneficial authentic material in EFL teaching programs, confirmed the previous findings in literature (Breen, 1985; Littlewood, 1992; Nunan, 2001; Widdowson 1990).News is a natural choice to help students develop and apply reading skills because the reader is already familiar with the content and also it refers to local people, places and events (Garrett, 2009). That is, the sociocultural context is familiar because it reflects the reader's daily life and experiences and serves the reader's needs. In other words, NRs in this study, keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value. Therefore, NRs as one of the most accessible materials is considered to be highly beneficial in advancing the grammar knowledge. Since, students mostly follow hot news around them and have sufficient background knowledge about such breaking news, so they can make contact with the text that has some certain grammatical rules quickly, and it would be fixed in their mind more accurately.

3.3. Pedagogical implications
Thus, lesson planning and curriculum development which will be inspired by the results of this study can open the door to practitioners, teachers, educators, instructional designers, course developers and, especially, material developers in terms of using authentic materials of teaching certain grammar rules within texts to increase learners' accuracy.

3.4. Limitations of the Study
Despite the fact that the findings of this study claim the effectiveness of NR and LT as two types of authentic materials on intermediate EFL learners' learning improvement, there were some limitations and delimitations in the implementation of these findings.
One of the limitations was that the research was conducted in intact classrooms where the researcher was not allowed to randomly divide the participants into groups. Also, the sample size included in this study was quite small. Furthermore, the allowed time for conducting the experiment in an institute was limited and shorter than the desired length of time.

Concerning delimitations of the study, the administered proficiency test (i.e., PET) contained only reading skills because of practical limitations. In addition, this study was limited to intermediate EFL learners in the institutes. Moreover, the study investigated the effect of only NR without considering the other sources of authentic materials. Finally, the focus of the study was on the learning of passive sentences that are considered one of the most complex English structures. Research with other linguistic structures may yield different results.

3.5. Conclusion

Therefore, the results of the study imply that the grammar accuracy of certain grammatical rules would be learnt more effectively through authentic materials. In addition, the findings of this study confirmed researchers like Breen (1985), Littlewood (1992), Nunan (2001) and Widdowson (1990) that have pointed toward discovering the impact of such materials on language learning. They have acknowledged the necessity for and practicality of authentic materials because of the rising interest in communicative function of language in general and communicative approach in particular. Authentic materials present content and meaning to learners and initiate a contextualized situation within which language is learned. In addition, authentic materials may provide the teachers with means to create such learning opportunities and also would provide the learners with many significant advantages and promotes them with high motivation and interest in language learning and lead to improving communicative competence (Guariento & Morley, 2001; Wilcox et al., 1999).

References:

Akbari, O., & Rezvani, A. (2015) Using authentic materials in the foreign language classrooms: Teachers' perspectives in EFL classes. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education. 5* (2), 105-116

Akbari, Z. (2014). The role of grammar in second language reading comprehension: Iranian ESP context. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences .98*, 122-126.

Alavi, S .M. & Kaivanpnah, S. (2007). Vocabulary assessment: Examining the role of syntactic complexity of texts and syntactic awareness. *Research Journal of Faculty of Foreign Languages*, *32*, 111-128.

Alderson, J. C. (1984). Reading in a foreign language: A reading problem or a language problem? In J. C. Alderson & A. H. Urquhart (Eds.), *Reading in a foreign language* (pp. 1-27), London: Longman.

Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading.*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bacon, S. M., & Finneman, M. D. (1990). A study of the attitudes, motives, and strategies of university foreign language students and their disposition to authentic oral and written input. *The Modern Language Journal, 74*(4), 459-473. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1990.tb05338.x

Biancarosa, G., & Snow, C. (2006). Reading Next – A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York. *Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.*

Breen, M. P. (1985). Authenticity in the language classroom. *Applied Linguistics, 6*(1), 60-70.

Brantmeier, C. (2002). Second language reading strategy research at the secondary and university levels: Variations, disparities, and generalizability. *The Reading Matrix, 2*, 1-14.

Collins, C. (1991). Reading instruction that increases thinking abilities. Journal of Reading, *34*, 510-516.

Cubillo, P. C., & Brenes, C. N. (2009). Using task-based instruction in an ESP course in the computer center at the University of Costa Rica. *ActualidadesInvestigativas en Educación, 9*(1), 1-25.

Deshler, D., Ellis, A., & Lenz, B. (1996). Teaching adolescents with learning disabilities: Strategies and methods. *Denver, CO: Love.*

Floris, F. (2008). Developing English for general academic purposes (EGAP) course in an Indonesia university. *K@ta, 10*(1), 53-62. Retrieved from http://puslit2.petra.ac.id/ejournal/index.php/ing/article/shop/16759/16740

Gambrell, L., Block, C. C., & Pressley, M. (2002). *Improving comprehension instruction.* Newark, DE: Jossey-Bass.

Garrett, S.D. (2009). Newspapers Now: Developing Comprehension and Research Skills with the Newspaper. *Newspaper Association of America Foundation.* Retrieved from http://www.readingrockets.org/article/developing-comprehension-and-research-skills-newspaper

Gilmore, A. (2007). Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teach, 40,* 97-118.

Guariento, W., & Morley, J. (2001).Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal, 55*(4), 347-353. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/55.4.347 .

Guo, S.C. (2012). Using Authentic Materials for Extensive Reading to Promote English Proficiency. *Canadian Center of Science and Education, 5*(8), 196-206.

Han, Z–H., & D'Angelo, A. (2009). Balancing between comprehension and acquisition: Proposing a dual approach. In Z. -H. Han & N. J. Anderson (eds.), *Second language reading research and instruction: Crossing the boundaries* (pp. 173-191).

Hedge, T. (2004). Teaching & learning in the language classroom. *Oxford: OUP*

Jabbari, M. J. (2003). The difference between passive in Persian and English. *Linguistics, 18*(1), 78-94.

Koda, K. (2007). Reading and language learning: Crosslinguistic constraints on second language reading development. *Language Learning, 57,* 1-44.

Laufer, B. (1976). An approach to teaching grammar for comprehension purposes. *System, 4,* 1-11.

Littlewood, W.T. (1992). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction (4th ed.).* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Nassaji, H. (2007). Schema theory and knowledge-based processes in second language reading comprehension: A need for alternative perspectives. *Language Learning*, *57*, 79-113.

National Reading Panel (2000). Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implication for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups. *Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Development.*

Newby, D. (2000). Pedagogical Grammar.In M. Byram (ed.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning.* London: Routledge.

Noor, N. M. (2006). Reading academic text: Awareness and experiences among university ESL learners. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies, 6*(2), 65-78.

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (2001). *Task-based language teaching .*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Omaggio Hadley, A. (2001). *Teaching language in context.* Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Richards, J. C. (1976). *Teaching English for Science and Technology.* Series: 2. Singapore: Singapore University Press

Rosenshine, B., Meister, C., & Chapman, S. (1996). Teaching students to generate questions: A review of the intervention studies. *Review of Educational Research*, *66*, 181-221.

Sánchez, R. C., Pėrez, A. S., &Gómes, P. C. (2010). An attempt to elaborate a construct to measure the degree of explicitness and implicitness in ELT materials. *International Journal of English Studies, 10*(1), 103-129.

Sanderson, P. (1999): *Using Newspapers in the Classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saricoban, A. (2002). Reading strategies of successful readers through the three phase approach. *The Reading Matrix, 2*(3), 1-13.

Schorzman, E. M., & Cheek, E. H. (2004). Structured strategy instruction: Investigating an intervention for improving sixth-graders' reading comprehension. *Reading Psychology*, *25*, 37-60.

Scott, K. A. (2009). Language outcomes of school-aged internationally adopted children: A systematic review of the literature. *Topics in Language Disorders, 29*(1), 65-81.

Shatz, M., & Wilkinson, L.C. (2010).*The education of English language learners: Research to practice.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Shiotsu, T. and Weir, C. J. (2007)."The relative significance of syntactic knowledge and vocabulary breadth in the prediction of reading comprehension test performance". *Language Testing*, 24, 99-128.

Shiotsu, T. (2009). *Reading ability and components of word recognition speed: The case of L1-Japanese EFL learners. In Z.-H. Han & N. J. Anderson (Eds.), Second language reading research and instruction: Crossing the boundaries* (pp. 15-39). The University of Michigan Press.

Singhal, M. (2001). Reading proficiency, reading strategies, metacognitive awareness and L2 readers. *The Reading Matrix, 1*, 1-9.

Stevens, R. J. (2003). Student team reading and writing: A cooperative learning approach to middle school literacy instruction. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, *9*(2),

Swaffar, J., Arens, K., &Byrones, H. (1991). *Reading for meaning: An integrated approach to language learning.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Tamo, D. (2009). The Use of Authentic Materials in Classrooms. *LCPJ*, *2*(1)

Tabatabaei, O., & Rostampour, A. (2001). Analysis of equivalent structures in Persian for the translation of English passive sentences based on translations of 'animal farms'. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 1*(1), 1354-1360. doi:10.4304/tpls.1.10.1354-1360.

Timmis, I. (2012). *Introduction: Teaching Grammar*. In Eisenmann, M. & Summer, T. (Eds.) *Basic Issues in EFL Teaching and Learning* (p. 119-129*)*. Heidelberg: Winter.

Urquhart, S and Weir, C. J. (1998). *Reading in a second language: process, product and practice*. London: Longman.

Vossoughi, H., & Morad, A. (2010). A Comparative Study of Authentic Listening Materials and their Simplified Versions on the Listening Comprehension and Motivation of Iranian EFL Learners. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics ,3*(2), 208-222.

Widdowson, H. G. (1990). *Aspects of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilcox, B., Morrison, T., & Oaks, D. (1999). Computer corpora and authentic texts: Toward more effective language teaching. *Reading Research and Instruction, 38(4)*, 415-423.

Wood, E., Winne, P., & Carney, P. (1995). Evaluating the effects of training high school students to use summarization when training includes analogically similar information. Journal of Reading Behavior. *English Language Teaching*, 27, 605-626.

Zoghi, M., &, Moradiyan, F., &, Kazemi, A. (2014) .The Effects Of Authentic Materials On Vocabulary Development. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, *5*(4), 155 -160.

A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TEACHING LITERARY CRITICISM TO THE IRANIAN MA STUDENTS OF TRANSLATION STUDIES

Samad Mirza Suzani, PhD in TEFL
Department of English, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran
smirzasuzani@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
IN THIS STUDY IT WAS AIMED TO DO A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TEACHING LITERARY CRITICISM TO THE IRANIAN MA STUDENTS OF TRANSLATION STUDIES, AND PROBE THE POTENTIAL WAYS TO ENVISAGE IMPROVEMENT IN THE CURRENT CONDITION OF TEACHING IT IN IRANIAN UNIVERSITIES. TO THIS END, 120 MA STUDENTS OF TRANSLATION STUDIES WERE PURPOSEFULLY SELECTED FROM FARS, ISFAHAN, TEHRAN, KERMAN, AND HORMOZGAN PROVINCES, FOLLOWING A COMPULSORY LITERARY CRITICISM COURSE. FIRST, SUBJECTS WERE ENCOURAGED TO FILL IN "RECORD-OF-WORK" FORMS, INCLUDING A SPACE FOR REFLECTION ON LEARNING ACTIVITIES, TO BE ULTIMATELY SUBMITTED IN A PORTFOLIO. IN DOING SO, THEY WERE ALLOWED TO WRITE ABOUT THEIR LITERARY CRITICAL WORKS, REVIEWING PREVIOUS CRITICAL COMMENTS BEFORE MAKING NEW ONES. NEXT, FIFTY PARTICIPANTS WERE SELECTED TO PARTAKE IN SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS, AND THE DATA WERE THEN COMBINED TOGETHER, SORTED AND CONTENT ANALYZED. THE RESULTS MAINTAINED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING ACTIVITIES IN KEEPING THE TOTALITY OF LANGUAGE AND INVOLVING STUDENTS BOTH COGNITIVELY AND EMOTIONALLY. IT ALSO REVEALED MAJOR SHORTCOMINGS WITH THE CURRENTS STATUS OF TEACHING LITERARY CRITICISM TO THE IRANIAN MA STUDENTS OF TS CONSIDERING SOCIOPRAGMATIC AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY CAN PROVIDE TEACHERS WITH POTENTIAL WAYS TO IMPROVE TEACHING LITERARY CRITICISM IN UNIVERSITIES AND PRESENT THEM A CHANCE TO PROVIDE LEARNERS WITH IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK TOWARDS CRITICAL LEARNING IN DOING LITERARY CRITICISM.

KEYWORDS: CRITICAL THINKING, IRANIAN UNIVERSITIES, MA STUDENTS, TEACHING LITERARY CRITICISM, TRANSLATION STUDIES (TS)

1. Introduction
For the time being, the current outcomes of teaching translation at MA level in English departments at Iranian universities have hardly been the subject of serious debate among teachers and researchers. While some trainers tacitly believe that such courses as literary criticism are taught simply because they have been part of the English TS curriculum since the inception of the MA level at Iranian universities, others claim that such courses should aim to train students to critically pursue them as subsidiary part of their professional career in translation. Accordingly, in the current system of Iranian university studies, the course of literary criticism constitutes an important component in the English MA program the aim of which is to introduce students to literary theories and approaches and train them to critically interpret and analyze various literary genres from English to Persian and vice versa. However, it seems that the merits and objectives of this course have either been misunderstood or difficult to achieve.

2. Review of related literature

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, little research has been conducted on the issue of critical studies in the literary courses offered to the Iranian MA students of TS. The main incentive for this study originated from the widely-frequent observation that such students, most often prove to be weak in critical thinking and metacognitive skills, and they typically do not display much enthusiasm for engaging in critical reading but prefer their teachers to "reveal" to them the "secrets" of a text.

2.1. Theoretical and empirical backgrounds

As a whole, the literature on critical studies has roots in two primary academic disciplines: philosophy and psychology (Lewis & Smith, 1993). Dewey (1993), defined critical reflection as "Active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, which includes a conscious effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality" (p.9). Also, Hanley (1995) maintained critical thinking derives from cognitive and metacognitive processes; while the former operate with data, which are isolated, then encoded, integrated, organized, transformed, stored and retrieved, the latter are used in monitoring and controlling mental processes and the various states of knowledge. Besides, King (1995), argued that metacognitive skills take as their object the cognitive skills, wherein they involve the conscious, planned, informed, deliberate control of (a) *how* to think and (b) *what* to think in order to maximize progress and minimize error (p.16).

A number of empirical studies have investigated the evolution of critical skills. Nunan, for instance, (1994) investigated what happened when a group of 30 undergraduate EAP students were encouraged to self-monitor and self-evaluate using guided learning journals, and observed that opportunities to reflect led to greater sensitivity to the learning process over time. Also, O'Hare and McGuinness (2009) found that the critical thinking scores of junior students in Ireland were significantly higher than the corresponding scores of freshmen. They also speculated that attending university exerts an independent effect on the development of critical thinking. Likewise, Gellin (2003) maintained that college students who engaged in activities such as interacting with peers and participating in college clubs increased their measured critical thinking skills by 0.14 standard deviations as compared to students who did not. Alternatively, Kuhn (1999) postulated a developmental progression of critical thinking skills and synthesized a wealth of empirical research on cognitive development. Her definition of critical thinking drew from the literature on metacognition, as related to critical thinking, which distinguished three forms of metacognition, i.e., metacognitive understanding, meta-strategic knowing, and epistemological understanding.

Halpern (1998) argued that humans are programmed to look for patterns, particularly in the form of cause-and-effect relationships, and concluded that many adults fail to think critically in many situations. Kennedy et al., (1991) and Van Gelder (2005) concluded that many adults lack basic reasoning skills because of deficient educational experiences. Also, Paul (1992) argued that typical school instruction does not encourage higher-order thinking skills like critical thinking. This type of lower-order learning is simply learning by rote or association, with the end result of memorizing material without understanding the logic of it. However, despite evidence suggesting that the average person struggles to think critically, many researchers are optimistic about the capacity of humans to become critical thinkers with appropriate instruction (Kennedy et al., 1991; Lewis and Smith, 1993).

3. Method

The current qualitative study, carrying a fuzzy and dynamic nature, attempted to take advantage of the qualities of grounded theory proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1998).

3.1. Participants

The participants of the present research design were 120 MA students of Translation Studies, who were following a compulsory literary criticism course. They were selected via purposeful sampling

from different universities of the country from Fars, Isfahan, Tehran, Kerman, and Hormozgan provinces.

3.2. Instruments
An assessed out-of-class analysis project was directed, as part of which students were encouraged to fill in "record-of-work" forms, with a space for critical thinking on critical activities, to be submitted in a portfolio at the end of the project. It allowed the researcher to collect data in an accessible form. Also, semi-structured interviews were conducted to make up for the limitations of the portfolios.

3.3. Data collection procedure
An assessed out-of-class analysis project was conducted, as part of which participants were encouraged to fill in "record-of-work" forms, which included a space for critical thinking on learning activities, to be submitted in a portfolio at the end of the project (Appendix 1). Accordingly, the subjects were allowed to write their critical analyses in their own time and to review previous works before making new ones. It also allowed the researcher to collect data in an easily accessible form at the end. To gain more data that might be missing in the "record-of-work" forms, semi-structured interviews were conducted with fifty participants, considering that semi-structured interviews could be used to make up for the limitations of the portfolios (Brown and Dowling, 1999). The main aim of the interviews was to critically investigate the mindset of the participants on the current state of literary criticism course and to investigate major shortcomings with teaching this course to the in Iranian MA students of TS considering socio-pragmatic and pedagogical factors, and probe the potential ways to improve the current condition of teaching it (Appendix 2). Thus, the participants' ideas on the current status as well as the potential ways to envisage improvement in literary criticism course were collected. The final data consisted of a combination of writing tasks from students who did one or more critical writing(s), plus comments on their own analyses, and a collection of participants' semi-structured interviews to be categorized, sorted and then content analyzed.

3.4. Data analysis procedure
In this study, the students' analyses were approached as direct evidence of their ability to critically think upon their learning experiences and qualitative data were used as a source of direct evidence. The learners' reports of critical thinking on written texts were used as a source of direct evidence of their ability to reflect on their learning strategies. The data from learners' analyses were then combined with data gathered through interviews with the participants from different educational settings.

In analyzing the data, an approach was employed based on a theory called "grounded theory", originally initiated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and later extended by Strauss and Corbin (1998). This method, as Given (2008) argues, consists of a set of systematic, but flexible, guidelines for conducting inductive qualitative inquiry aimed toward theory construction. In this highly qualitative method, the focus is squarely on the analytic phases of research, although both data collection and analysis shape each other and are conducted in tandem. Moreover, the analytic strategies are inherently comparative and interactive; as "this method guides researchers to make systematic comparisons and to engage the data and emerging theory actively throughout the research process" (Given, 2008, p.384).

Based on the features of the grounded theory, in this study it was primarily aimed to generate theory via the systematic review and classification of data collected, and then it was attempted to elaborate on data categorization via their relationships in the process of interpretation.

4. Findings and discussion
4.1. Participants' "record-of-work" forms and critical strategies
Data collected via students' "record-of-work" forms revealed partial yet thought-provoking points, proportionate to the individuals' background knowledge as well as their varying literary critical abilities.

4.1.1. Metacognitive strategies

As for metacognitive strategies, students maintained that they had conducted little writing on literary criticism in their education before, and that they had problems writing in particular literary genres: "Writing in literature in my education has been always weird, time-consuming and laborious for me." "We were not actually required to think and write much critically beyond the writing exercises in our books at high school or pre-university classrooms."
An interesting point was that they found writing narratives or descriptions often less demanding than writing argumentative texts: "Planning an argumentative essay takes me a lot of time and energy thinking of different things. You know you need to think and take sides."

4.1.2. Memory strategies
Data concerning memory strategies showed that few Iranian graduates are familiar with mnemonic devices to improve their critical writing skills. Besides, they do not contextualize items in their writing: "I come across many new structures, but I almost always forget to use them while I do critical writing.
"We really do not have enough time to review new words or structures we come across, especially literary terms and techniques as well as structures which are different from Persian are kind of hard."

4.1.3. Compensation strategies
The findings revealed that only a limited number of students were inclined towards coining new terms when they did not remember the intended forms. This was in contrast with the behavior of the majority of the participants, who did not risk coining their intended meaning when their linguistic knowledge fell short: "I try to use a simpler writing style if I do not remember a particular form, but most of the time I'm not so sure if they are the right words."
"I feel at loss thinking and writing about literary things and topics. I'm not interested in the topics abstract to me. Thus, I almost always avoid writing about them."
Presently, most of the Iranian learners fall into the same category as the latter group, as writing on literary topics seems to hinder the developmental writing performance of them.
Another compensatory strategy pointed out was neat writing, employed as a quality in critical writing:
"…My teacher and peers enjoy my neat writing, and tell me they like that."
"I believe one of the good things which get me some extra marks is my neat and tidy paragraph writing. Some of my friends think it is not worth the trouble, but I don't think so."
Also some cognitive strategies related to sporadic translation and outlining. Less experienced learners tended to use more translation, especially when planning or outlining before writing: "Preparing the outline in Persian to write from helps to write with less chaos."
"I write ideas in Persian on a piece of paper and try to include those points as I write in English."
Adversely, other learners preferred to produce an outline or plan in English and to develop their ideas from that outline rather than starting from their mother tongue: "I design a rough outline in English first and build up on that. This is great especially while taking a writing exam that requires critical thinking."
"Thinking in English helps my writing flow in English. I draw a quick English outline on top of my paper."

4.1.4. Affective strategies
After a few weeks, it was witnessed that most learners had a stronger tendency for enhancing their critical abilities, and their confidence in writing critical tasks increased: "Before this, I really felt fear toward writing critical literary essays, even one sentence in English. Now I feel more at ease with it."
"Now I encourage myself to use more literary texts in English genres, and this is fantastic. I really like that."

4.1.5. Social strategies

As for social strategies, it was almost ever emphasized that the feedback participants got from their teachers and peers through the project was the most valuable to them: "Some of my friends' writing abilities is good, so I mostly ask them to correct my errors in critical literary writing."

Another point about the teacher's feedback was that they had a hard time to figure out the teacher's intended written feedback given in the form of ticks, crosses, etc.: "The teacher just ticks off the end of my paper. But, actually I don't get much out of it. I myself know there are still some wrong points there."

"The 'crosses' and 'question' marks make me confused. I go to great pains to get what they mean."

As the teacher's feedback needs to increase students' motivation towards certain aspects of the writing task, it should be informational rather than simple and potentially confusing. Besides, it has a mediatory function only if it generates a feeling of competence, confidence, individuality, and control. Finally, the role of cultural understanding as an instrumental tool for critical writing development was emphasized: "Cultural understanding of a foreign language can help think and write more native-like."

4.2. Participants' semi-structured interviews

In Table 1, the results of the inquiry on the pedagogical and sociopragmatic aspects of literary criticism course in Iran have been presented.

Table 1. Results of the inquiry on the pedagogical and socio-pragmatic status of literary criticism in Iran (SA: Strongly agree; A: Agree; NI: No idea; D: Disagree; SD: Strongly disagree; P: Percent)

No.		SD (P)	D (P)	NI (P)	A (P)	SA (P)
1	Iranian EFL students' ignorance of literary criticism	0	14	20	56	10
2	inadequate inclusion of literary criticism in language syllabi	0	4	52	36	8
3	semantic opaqueness as a main problem	0	6	16	60	18
4	large extent of literary criticism's semantic opaqueness	0	8	28	48	22
5	existence of reason behind literary criticism's opaqueness	6	28	28	20	18
6	Learners' ability to surmise on why literary criticism is used	2	18	16	56	8
7	no language fluency without literary criticism course	2	6	20	50	22
8	lack of notice to literary criticism, creating 'academic lacuna'	2	4	24	60	10
9	literary criticism dearth in the current courses and text books	0	12	14	60	14
10	the need to include aspects of criticality to textbooks	4	16	12	30	38
11	learners' ability to appreciate texts, not knowing about criticism	0	18	14	56	12
12	criticism's exclusion as a threat to the lofty pedagogical standards	0	14	18	52	16
13	literary criticism as an inseparable part of language teaching	0	8	6	76	10
14	learners need to learner literary criticism in their local language	0	24	0	52	24
15	literary criticism as a necessity of a proficient language learner	0	24	18	48	10
16	literary criticism making language learning process easier	0	14	20	56	10
17	the need to include more aspects of criticism in language courses	0	8	10	60	22
18	literary criticism as to appreciate social and pragmatic values	0	8	32	50	10
19	little knowledge of criticism creating communication mismatch	0	2	12	52	34
20	learners' need to be familiar with the change each word can cause	2	16	28	50	4
21	Letting them conscious of linguistic, historical and cultural nuances	2	44	22	28	4
22	Letting them know what happens in language, minds, and culture	6	4	40	46	4
23	literary criticism promoting socio-pragmatic behavior of learners	2	16	34	38	10
24	need to a critical look at literary criticism besides more exposition	0	10	28	48	14
25	positions towards including literary criticism course in the syllabus	10	6	20	56	8
26	Effectiveness of literary criticism course in the syllabus	0	12	8	58	2

27	EFL students being unenlightened about objectives of criticism	0	10	16	64	10
28	literary criticism encircling a range of emotions, reactions, attitudes	0	6	12	80	2
29	the need to critical thinking to reflect on local and English criticism	2	24	32	40	2
30	literary criticism's helping learners to be better world citizens	2	4	18	62	14

Analysis of the responses revealed some evocative points, as follows:

(1) One of the greatest problems with English literary criticism course was reported to be inadequate inclusion of it or too little attention paid to it in the syllabus: "English literary criticism course is present in some syllabi, yet most of the learners are ignorant of it, as there is little emphasis on it in teaching."

(2) Some participants groaned that the course is replete with a large degree of semantic opaqueness, which could be misleading: "The problem with literary criticism is that it is misleading. The course has got obscure meaning, and those who wield it, want others to believe something that is not true."

Another complaint was concerned with distinguishing literary criticism: "Because in the first vision, we cannot distinguish what literary criticism is, in order to find its boundary we face some difficulties."

(3) Another grumble was concerned with the lack of notice to literary criticism course, creating an 'academic lacuna': "If we consider the [current] courses and textbooks, we will see the nonexistence of English literary criticism. We have little part that literary criticism course is on them."

(4) Considering the role of literary criticism in improving language skills, there appeared to be a remarkable consensus that no language fluency was imaginable without a logical degree of literary criticism; likewise, having no knowledge of literary criticism, the learners will be unable to appreciate texts; and also excluding it from language classroom will be a threat to the lofty pedagogical standards.

(5) Some participants claimed that during college studies, they could stumble on little exposition to the literary criticism. Thus, they craved for further inclusion of aspects of literary criticism into the language syllabi. One participant proposed "To increase the level of learning and to ease the process of critical learning it is good to include more aspects of English literary criticism into the language courses in Iran."

(6) There were mostly positive reactions to the postulation that literary criticism is considered as one of the necessities of a proficient language learner: "Doing literary criticism successfully is a part of language and you can't separate it from language learning process."

"It can be supplementary and enrich the fluency and help the academics."

Further results of the enquiry on the sociopragmatic aspects of literary criticism course were as follows:

(1) Most participants confirmed that little knowledge of literary criticism creates misunderstandings in communication: "Surely knowing little about literary criticism, not only creates various misunderstanding in communication, but it can be threatening and sometimes makes problem in communication."

(2) Many participants strongly held the idea that literary criticism leads learners to appreciate social and pragmatic values; so learners need to become familiar with the change(s) it can bring about, and their familiarity with this course can make them conscious of the linguistic, historical and cultural overtones.

(3) Many participants asserted that by tracing literary criticism learners could get what's going on in the language, language user's minds, and culture: "As cultures have something in common, learners can become aware of similarities by extending their knowledge about source and target cultures."

"As issues in literary criticism inspire from cultures, religions, values, and aesthetic features of a society, by knowing it learners can feel writer's aims more tangible."

(4) A number of students groaned that most EFL students are unenlightened about the objectives of literary criticism: "I think that most of EFL students are unaware of the objectives of literary criticism while they are producing discourse or when they are exposed to it."

"Without familiarity with literary criticism learners cannot understand literature and so they will be confused. But if they learn critically, they have no problem with it."

There were, however, some comments a bit different: "Knowing about aspects of literary criticism is hard. Students should know about their culture to get the objectives of it, so the ways they use it need a lot of time."

With reference to the critical thinking for EFL learners to reflect on both local and English literary criticism, it was maintained "By critical thinking skills learners learn how to do literary criticism deeply and do not memorize them superficially. Also, they learn to know the use of literary techniques and devices in the texts more professionally."

(5) A large number of stirring comments were offered concerning literary criticism being alluring in a range of emotions, reactions, and attitudes, and also as an aid to learners' becoming better world citizens: "literary language, as in literary criticism can carry lots of emotions, reactions, attitudes and opinions within them, so that using it makes us more familiar with exact feelings of the speaker."

"As real emotions, reactions, and attitudes are conveyed, the receivers get the same effect as producers, and they use outcomes of literary criticism in their actual language use."

"Knowing about English literary criticism helps learners in society, because literary criticism is a neat and refined form of language that can be effectively used in communication."

(6) It was witnessed that the questions concerning the inclusion of the course in the syllabus as well as the effectiveness of it in the syllabus proved to be among the most sophisticated issues that engrossed quite a lot of pros and cons. Some responses were ingenuously beside the point while others could signify the shallow knowledge of the participants. The reason for superficiality of the responses could be partly attributed to the fuzzy nature and partly to the interviewees' lack of awareness of this course in literature: "Because doing textual analysis in literary criticism is most often along with different degrees of ambiguity, it fails to be appealing for many learners, especially the novice ones."

"If the course could be offered with scheduled clarification and relevancy it can help to better understanding of criticism objectives."

"As English literary criticism is an inseparable part literature, by ignoring it we cannot be faithful to learning critically and comprehensively, and also we don't pay attention to other linguistic nuances."

Alternatively, others seemed to be more conservative, conformist, taking no sides in their responses: "I think it depends on the audience, and their knowledge of understanding the literary criticism."

Then again, some responses appeared to be too general, hazy, or even shallow wherein the participants could not present a plain piece of their mind: "Learners can use literary criticism to achieve the excellence in language learning. It may improve their critical skills and abilities."

"Knowing a brief history of literature, literary approaches and elements is subsidiary to literary criticism."

Regarding the effectiveness of literary criticism course in the syllabus some responses seemed to be more pertinent and defensible, which indicated the interviewees' perceptiveness of the course: "It is better to use further literary courses such as literary criticism in the syllabus, because it may lead to increased awareness in learners and make them better analytic thinkers."

"A main objective of literature is to make a good and idealistic society. So the learners should stop keeping away from literary courses such as literary criticism."

"We should enhance use of literary criticism to observe the main objectives defined in the curriculum. Also, despite complexities, it might be in line with many learners' interests, wants, and needs."

On the other hand, some interviewees appeared to be too conservative and run of the mill in their remarks: "Although it can be claimed that we can use and understand language without applying literary criticism, it can help us to be more refined and well-educated in speech and behavior."

"Since some phrases or expressions in literary language may have different meanings and show special connotations, it is better to enhance our critical abilities through literary criticism."

Also, a number of responses seemed too general, indistinct, and obscure in which the participants did not provide a lucid idea or credible reason as to whether the use of literary criticism: "In the everyday

language communication, the effects of literary criticism may be observed rarely directly. Learners should use it in a higher order hierarchy of language learning, and they shouldn't ignore it."

5. Conclusion

By qualitative and descriptive data in this study, it was indicated that it would be of interest and value to research into literary criticism from pedagogical and socio-pragmatic perspectives.

5.1. Responses to the research questions

Concerning the current situation of teaching literary criticism course, it was indicated that despite the momentous prominence, slight attention has been paid to it at different college levels; and at present the course suffers from sort of dearth in the current English courses and textbooks. It was also indicated that few studies have been conducted on teaching literary criticism in the Iranian educational establishments. Thus, it seems that lack of notice to the core of literary criticism has created an 'academic lacuna' and hence it is needed to include aspects of criticality to textbooks so that students take a critical look at literary criticism besides being exposed to it in their language courses. Likewise, with reference to the socio-pragmatic facet, it was maintained that a potential threat to the Iranian EFL learners can be their being unenlightened about the cores and objectives of literary criticism when they are exposed to it, or when they are recognizing or producing literary discourses. Our culture fosters students who seek the "ultimate" in literary studies and so cannot make sense of divergent critical approaches. Teaching literary theory to such students is both a strange and a frustrating experience which is reproduced term after term. Consequently, to increase effectiveness of criticism in the syllabus, learners' attitudes towards including this course should be altered, and hence learners' need to develop their familiarity with the change(s) each literary term/expression can bring about in different contexts.

The current situation of teaching literary criticism for teachers is both unusual and discouraging, as Iranian students typically do not even read the short story or poem which is to be subjected to critical scrutiny in the class. Instead, they prefer to remain as silent observers who occasionally nod to indicate their passive agreement with the teacher but never dare to challenge him or present a different view or argument. Disagreement or getting involved in a discussion seems to be an anathema to the majority of students, and so literary criticism classes are often exhausting for the teachers and boring for the students. Besides, there is a wide consensus that the training falls short of its expectations. Teaching this course is often a nuisance and disappointing undertaking mainly because our audience cannot think of the critical reading of texts as an act to be performed through conflicting discourses, as what they seek is the assurance of a "last word" in literary theory and a "complete" strategy for decoding every aspect of texts.

Still again, the study revealed a striking contrast in terms of students' participation in our educational system. Most Iranian EFL students in literary criticism course classroom found critical thinking in writing literary essays rather thorny and intricate, especially in the initial steps. They were often unsure what they should write and fumbled for unknown terms or piece of information. Some exceptional cases of deeper thinking were due to the learners' experiences that challenged their perception of literary learning. Thus, it seems teachers should aim to provide students with challenging experiences that provoke deeper reflection. Also, MA students of Translation Studies in our higher education institutions need to understand the profound nature of critical thinking and its relationship to deep-learning, and teachers should provide learners with opportunities to discuss the processes of learning that arise from their experiences and critical thinking. Devices such as critical writing and reflection sessions can be artifacts of research that allow the teachers to observe the outcomes of critical thinking.

Concerning the major shortcomings of literary criticism course, the results revealed that the course has not been paid due attention as it deserves. Anyone involved in the teaching of literary criticism at Iranian universities is aware of the serious difficulties with which they inevitably have to cope. The very fact that normally very few faculty members volunteer to teach it and among students it has gained notoriety as a very "demanding" course is indicative of some of these difficulties. The problems teachers encounter in teaching this course may stem from the dominant undemocratic

attitudes which are incompatible with the nature of literary criticism. Also, due to the interdependence of culture and personal behavior, critical theory and practice cannot be possibly taught unless the teachers as well as their students believe in pluralism and the co-existence of opposing voices in real life and in inter-personal interactions.

Despite literary criticism skill being assumed as one of the necessities of proficient language learners, it was shown that EFL students were often unenlightened about mechanism of doing literary criticism, which they attributed it to the inadequate inclusion of literary criticism in their language courses. In this vein, literary criticism exclusion from the syllabus could be considered as a threat to the lofty pedagogical standards, and so more aspects of this course should be included in the syllabus.

Another significant problem was concerned with learners' lack of knowledge about literary criticism as well as semantic opaqueness. Due to the fuzziness in semantic sense, to many EFL learners, employing literary criticism could be tactfully or deliberately illusory. In addition, in the everyday language communication, the effects of literary criticism may be observed rarely directly. Thus, learners should be informed about the reason(s) for doing literary criticism to be able to use it in a higher order hierarchy of language learning, and not to ignore it in the curriculum whatsoever. Alternatively, it has to be remembered that not all students are consistent in their approach to literature learning and criticism, and there are a range of factors such as maturity, learning experiences, academic qualifications, workplace experience and commitment which may influence learners' engagement. Domineering and submissive mindsets are equally unable to grasp or tolerate the pluralistic nature of literary theories. Those who conceive of thinking and reasoning as acts that can be performed by proxies will inevitably have a poor performance in a field where contemplation and argumentation are considered to be essential requirements. Literary criticism requires that we believe in democracy and that different and contradictory discourses could be involved in the critical reading of a text. Success in teaching literary criticism is inextricably bound up with cultural and political pluralism. This tendency explains why in literary criticism classes, despite teachers' repeated pleadings and rewarding students with bonus marks for participation, the majority of our audience show no interest in making comments and tend to remain silent. This situation also clarifies why students usually prefer their teachers to make an interpretation of the text under consideration and thus make the job easy for all of them.

Regarding teaching literary criticism course and boosting critical thinking among the Iranian MA students, it was found that though chiefly ignored up to the recent periods, literary criticism is gradually arousing EFL learners' interest, so that exciting and promising progress could gradually be made in their critical studies from various points of view.

In a broader sense, we may say that doing literary criticism, as one of the necessities of proficient language learners, can be regarded as special case that asks for special attention on behalf of both teachers and learners. Multiplicity of ideas and participation in group discussions cannot be expected from learners who relinquish the act of thinking to the professor and consider his viewpoints to be final and just reproducible. In fact, literary criticism is used to avoid crudeness and indecency for the sake of efficient discourse. That is, literary criticism is a refined, exulted form of language, and doing analysis is an integral part of it. Graciousness is, for instance, a very important function that literary criticism serves in social life and despite the fact that we can use and understand language without applying literary criticism (by using other linguistic features or choosing preliminary vocabularies), doing literary criticism can help us to be more refined and well-educated in speech and behavior. Also, knowing a good knowledge of literary approaches and elements are subsidiary for doing it successfully.

Another notable point is the significant goal of literary criticism in communication, as it helps learners to get what's going on in language user's minds, and culture. Learners' familiarity with this course could also make them conscious of the linguistic, historical and cultural overtones. In this vein, it helps learners to be better world citizens, as it makes them do critical thinking on both local and universal aspects. Also, literary criticism could promote socio-pragmatic behavior of learners as it is appealing in encircling a range of emotions, reactions, and opinions and it can lead them to appreciate social and pragmatic values. Moreover, it can make language learning process easier. For this reason,

having little knowledge of literary criticism can create misunderstandings in communication and language fluency without a sufficient command of it is almost impossible. Furthermore, through critical thinking activities within the program, it was aimed to enhance the quality of learning via increased levels of peer and tutor support and providing varied contexts for learning. In fact, developing student capability to reflect on practice within their work-based degree programs could be a fundamental requirement before focusing their thoughts on the contributions of other practical and theoretical perspectives.

In this study, it was illustrated that becoming critical thinkers could enable our students to accept differing points of view with a higher level of criticality. If students in our higher education institutions have their self-reflective literary skills developed, our teachers will have a greater chance of engaging them in deeper learning. In addition, they could become confident practitioners in their field of work and employment. Moreover, we can use literary language to help people form a positive communicative atmosphere to establish pleasant-sounding relationships. Thus, resorting to critical thinking in social life is a social need we have to give in to in educational programming.

5.2. Pedagogical implications

Literary criticism has such a close relation with language that it is almost impossible to study one without considering aspects of the other one. Due to its concern with cultural qualities, the findings of the study can be applied for the enrichment of the previous theories of language learning such as Language Universals, and Acculturation. The findings can also give insights into the pedagogical and socio-pragmatic factors which determine the strategies applied in translation. In the same vein, the following pedagogical statements can be made:

(1) Teachers should let the learners know about the cultural differences as well as the contrast between literary and ordinary language, as this ability can give rise to booming literary criticism in language.

(2) Learners should be encouraged to enhance their ability in doing literary criticism in authentic texts, as it makes them better language learners to use language more fruitfully.

(3) The students ought to identify different genres in English literary criticism based on the scope of source, scope of sense, and sphere of application.

(4) Learners ought to develop the essential power for critical thinking, thoughtfulness, and profundity via integrating stages of educational levels into a pattern for critical thinking and self-assessment.

Based on the above considerations, the following training implications are presented:

- Focus on the learner and training built from personal needs and theories;
- Focus on training processes like critical reflection and not just on training outcomes;
- Enquire about pedagogical practices to describe, inform and reconstruct personal actions;
- Integrate theory and practice by valuing the role of experience-derived knowledge;
- Promote introspective reflection.

To put it in a nutshell, EFL instructors in our educational system should be committed to afford students greater opportunity for critical thinking, introspection, sharing and communication. Promoting critical thinking about one's own process of writing is appropriate, accountable and effective in the EFL context, and so teaching thinking skills is an indispensable part and parcel of teaching critical skills.

5.3. Limitations of the study

To interpret and generalize the results, the following limitations need to be taken into consideration:

1. With a higher number of items, more precise conclusions and more reliable results might be drawn.

2. More comprehensive picture of the current situation can be shown via a larger number of participants.

3. A number of non-Iranian participants could be purposefully and contrastively studied, as it can be an effective step towards boosting reliability in the study and achieving more generalizable results.

5.4. Recommendations for further research

More detailed endeavors are expected to be done on the related issues such as employing other literary courses, impact of literary genres on critical abilities, and strategies for doing criticism in particular genres. Thus, the study could raise some more challenging questions such as the following:
(1) What is the role of literary criticism in enhancing 'reflective education' as an important indication of cognitive competency?
(2) How does an awareness of literary language affect students' language and linguistic proficiencies?
(3) How could pedagogical programming be affected by an awareness of literary language and in applied linguistic studies?
In postgraduate courses the students' aims include specialization in one or more subjects, filling the gaps, updating their knowledge, redirecting their careers, and gaining entry into a better profession. So all universities should pay careful attention to these and try to provide curricula in this regard.

Acknowledgements

References

Brown, A. and Dowling, P. (1999) *Doing Research/Reading Research: A Mode of Interrogation for Education*. London: The Falmer Press.

Dewey, J. (1993). *How We Think*. Chicago: Rogney.

Gellin, A. (2003). The effect of undergraduate student involvement on critical thinking: A meta-analysis of the literature 1991–2000. *Journal of College Student Development, 44*(6), 746–762.

Given, M. L. (2008). *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. California: SAGE Publications.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.M. (1967). *The Discovery of General Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.* New York: Aldine.

Halpern, D. F. (1998). Teaching critical thinking for transfer across domains: Dispositions, skills, structure training, and metacognitive monitoring. *American Psychologist, 53*(4), 449–455.

Hanley, G. L. (1995). Teaching critical thinking: Focusing on metacognitive skills and problem solving. *Teaching of Psychology, 22* (1), pp. 68-71.

Kennedy, M., Fisher, M. B., & Ennis, R. H. (1991). Critical thinking: Literature review and needed research. In L. Idol & B.F. Jones (Eds.), *Educational values and cognitive instruction: Implications for reform (pp. 11-40)*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates.

King, A. (1995). Designing the instructional process to enhance critical thinking across the curriculum. *Teaching of Psychology,* Vol. 22 (1): pp. 13-16.

Kuhn, D. (1999). A developmental model of critical thinking. *Educational Researcher, 28*(2), 16–26.

Lewis, A., & Smith, D. (1993). Defining higher order thinking. *Theory into Practice, 32*(3), 131–137.

Nunan, D. (1994). "Self-assessment and reflections as tools for learning". Paper presented at the Assessment Colloquism, International Language in Education Conference, University of Hong Kong.

O'Hare, L. O., & McGuinness, C. (2009). Measuring critical thinking, intelligence, and academic performance in psychology undergraduates. *The Irish Journal of Psychology, 30*(3–4), 123–131.

Paul, R. W. (1992). Critical thinking: What, why, and how? *New Directions for Community Colleges, 1992*(77), 3–24.

Strauss, A. L. & Corbin, J. M. (1998). *Techniques and Procedures for developing Grounded theory.* London: Sage Publications.

Van Gelder, T. (2005). Teaching critical thinking: Some lessons from cognitive science. *College Teaching, 53*(1), 41–48.

Appendices

Appendix 1: A "record-of-work" form used at the literary criticism course at graduate level

Date	Period covered

…………………………......………..	…………………….....................……………
What I have done (Describe analytic/critical activities and write down the titles of any materials you have used)	
What I have learned (Summarize what you think you have learned in a few words)	
Reflections/Critical Thinking (Comment on how useful and enjoyable your critical activities were. Any problems?)	
Future plans (Note down next critical activities and when you will do them. Also note any changes to your goals or plans)	

Appendix 2: Interview questions on the pedagogical and socio-pragmatic aspects of literary criticism course in Iran

1. Do you think that the majority of Iranian EFL students are presently ignorant of literary criticism?

2. Do you guess English literary criticism is *adequately* addressed in English language courses in the Iranian colleges or not?

3. Do you think a main problem with literary criticism is its semantic opaqueness?

4. To what extent may literary criticism and its genres remain semantically opaque for language learners?

5. For what reason(s) could literary criticism remain semantically opaque for language learners?

6. Can Iranian EFL learners surmise to a reasonable degree, why literary criticism is used, and what it connotes?

7. In your opinion, can fluency in English be achieved without a reasonable command of literary criticism in language?

8. Do you believe that lack of notice to the objectives of literary criticism in language use and usage has created an 'academic lacuna' in the Iranian EFL context?

9. Do you believe that presently a large part of English literary criticism is unintentionally absent from current English courses and text books?

10. Is it obligatory to include aspects of English literary criticism to textbooks due to their compatibility with learners' social values?

11. Can language learners use and appreciate English texts perfectly with knowing <u>little</u> about English literary criticism?

12. Do you think excluding English literary criticism from language courses and textbooks is a threat to the lofty pedagogical standards?

13. Do you consider teaching about English literary criticism as an inseparable part of English language teaching?

14. Do language learners need to learn about English literary criticism while learning to respect literary criticism in their local language as well?

15. Do you think the ability to understand and respect English literary criticism (i.e., developing intercultural competence) is one of the necessities of a proficient language learner?

16. Do you think knowing about English literary criticism makes English language learning process easier?

17. In general, is there an integral need to include more aspects of English literary criticism in language courses in Iran?

18. Will knowing about English literary criticism in language courses lead learners to appreciate their social and pragmatic values?

19. Do you believe that knowing little about English literary criticism might create various misunderstandings in communication?

20. Is it important to make EFL learners familiarized with the enormous change(s) that each individual word or expression in literary context can bring about?

21. Can familiarity with literary criticism make learners conscious of different aspects of the linguistic background, and the historical and cultural overtones in texts?

22. Is it possible that learners by tracing literary criticism could see what is going on in the language, language user's minds, and their culture?

23. Can knowing about English literary criticism promote socio-pragmatic behavior of learners in English contexts?

24. Do you think that students need to learn how to take a critical (analytical) look at English literary criticism besides being exposed to more of English literary criticism in language courses?

25. In your opinion, what are learners' positions about the significance of English literary criticism course?

26. What do you think about the effectiveness of English literary criticism course in the syllabus?

27. Do you believe most EFL students seem to be unenlightened about the implications of shades of meanings of literary terms while they are producing discourse or during the time they are exposed to them?

28. Do you believe the study of literary criticism is appealing in that it encompasses a whole range of emotions, reactions, attitudes and opinions on the part of the participants?

29. Do you believe language learners should be taught critical thinking skills to reflect on both local and English literary criticism texts?

30. Do you believe knowing about English literary criticism helps learners to be better World citizens?
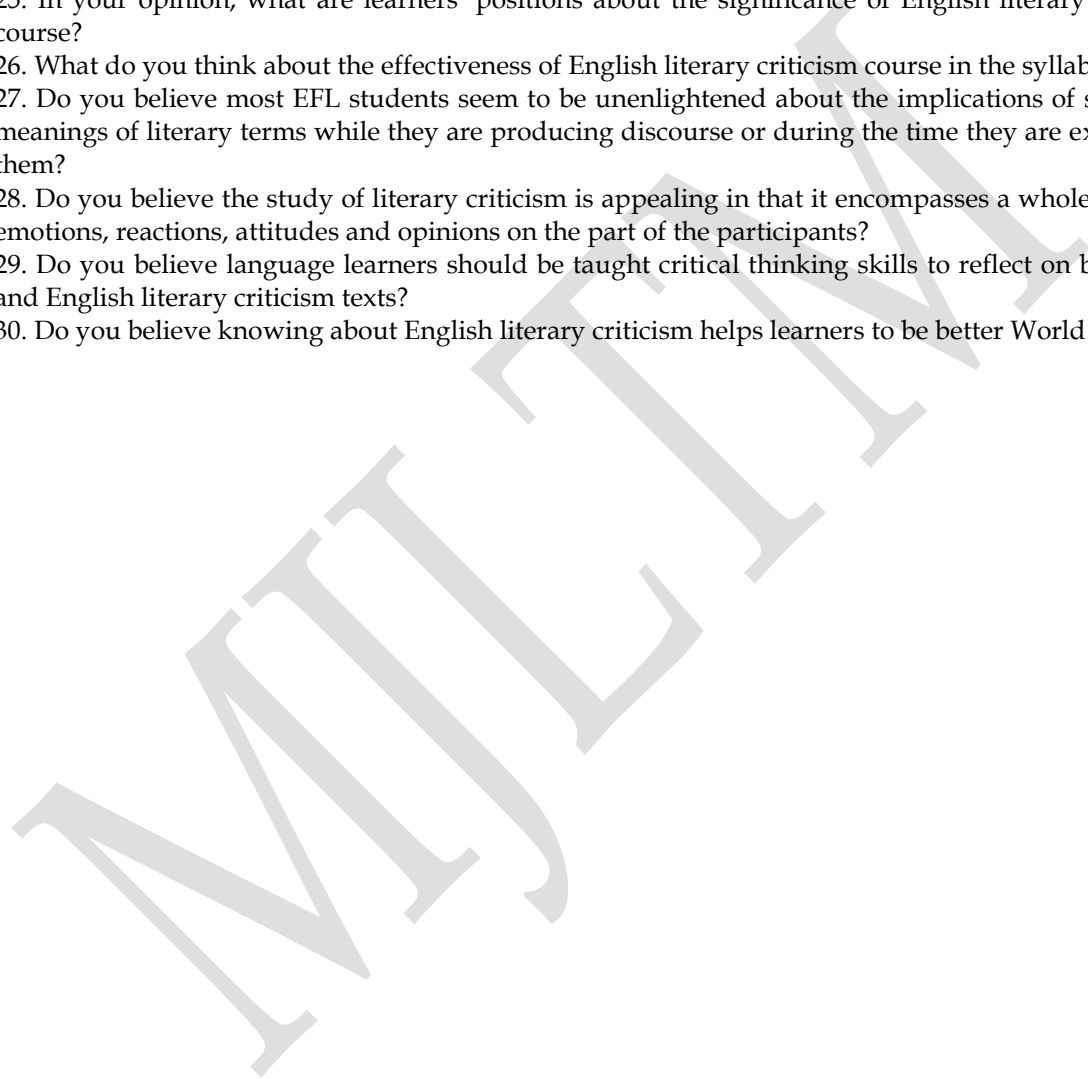
ON THE IMPACT OF TASK-BASED AND TASK-SUPPORTED LANGUAGE TEACHING ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

[1]Sedigheh Fouladlou
faribafoladlu@gmail.com

[2]*Davood Taghipour Bazargani
bazargani@ iaurasht.ac.ir

[3]Hamed Babaie
babaie@iaurasht.ac.ir
Department of English Language, Faculty of Humanities, Rasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran
✴ Corresponding author
E-mail: bazargani@ iaurasht.ac.ir

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY WAS DESIGNED TO COMPARE THE EFFECTS OF TASK-SUPPORTED AND TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING ON READING COMPREHENSION OF IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS. TO THIS END, 90 FEMALE AND MALE PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS AT ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY, LAHIJAN BRANCH, WERE SELECTED FROM 120 PARTICIPANTS BASED ON THEIR PERFORMANCE ON QUICK PLACEMENT TEST. THE PURPOSE OF QPT WAS TO HOMOGENIZE THE PARTICIPANTS BASED ON THEIR PROFICIENCY LEVEL. THE PARTICIPANTS WERE DIVIDED INTO THREE GROUPS I.E. TWO EXPERIMENTAL AND ONE CONTROL GROUP. EACH GROUP CONSISTED OF 30 PARTICIPANTS. A PRETEST WAS ADMINISTERED TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS, AND THEN THE TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS RECEIVED TASK-SUPPORTED AND TASK-BASED TEACHING FOR 10 SESSIONS, WHILE THE CONTROL GROUP RECEIVED ITS NORMAL CLASSROOM TEACHING. AT LAST, A POSTTEST WAS ADMINISTERED TO THREE GROUPS. THE FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY REVEALED THAT EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS OUTPERFORMED THE CONTROL GROUP IN READING COMPREHENSION. MOREOVER, THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE TASK-SUPPORTED GROUP HAD A BETTER PERFORMANCE IN THE POSTTEST THAN THOSE OF THE TASK-BASED GROUP. THEREFORE, THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY CONFIRMED THAT TASK-SUPPORTED LANGUAGE TEACHING CAN SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY.

1. Introduction
In many second or foreign language teaching situations, reading receives a special focus. It is the most important skill. It is highly valued by EFL students as well as teachers. Richards and Renandya (2002) claimed that reading receives special focus in foreign language teaching. There are two reasons for considering reading as the most important skill in language learning: First, reading comprehension is one of the most important goals in most foreign language settings. Second, reading texts helps learners to accomplish various pedagogical purposes.

One of the main aims of language teaching and language learning programs in secondary and tertiary levels of education is reading (Birjandi & Noroozi, 2008). Reading as a form of language input has been considered as one of the most important skills in the area of language learning and teaching (Negari & Rouhi, 2012). Chastian (1988, p. 218) claimed that "all reading activities serve to facilitate communication fluency in each of the other language skills".

Task-based teaching is not just about getting learners to do one task and then another task and another one. If that was the case, intermediate and advanced students would become resourceful and gain fluency at the expense of accuracy, and beginners would probably fail to build the basic structures that are essential during the whole process of acquisition and construction of a new language.

The use of tasks in second language acquisition (SLA) has been closely linked to developments in the study of second language acquisition. In this regards, Ellis (2003) says: In the early years of SLA (the late sixties and seventies), many scholars and researchers were primarily dealt with describing how learners acquired an L2, documenting the order and sequence in which the grammar of language was acquired, and the types of oral interactions in which child and adult language learners participated. Over the years, second language acquisition has become more theory-oriented with researchers seeking to test specific hypotheses based on theories of L2 acquisition. Tasks paly a vital role in both the early descriptive research and the later more theoretically based research. Also, tasks have become a focus of research in their own right.

Like researchers, language teachers, material writers, and course designers have not been slow to recognize the value of tasks. Many various methodologists and scholars have simply incorporated tasks into traditional language-based approaches to teaching. Others, more radically, have treated tasks as units of teaching in their own right and have designed whole courses around them. These two ways of using tasks can be referred to respectively as task supported language teaching and as task-based language teaching. In both cases, tasks have been employed to make language teaching more communicative. Tasks, therefore, are an important feature of communicative language teaching (CLT).

Task based teaching refers to a teaching approach based only on meaning –focused tasks. Whereas, in the case of tasks as support "tasks are seen not as a means by which learners acquire new knowledge or restructure their inter-language but simply as a means by which learners can activate their existing knowledge of the L2 by developing fluency" (Ellis, 2003, p. 30). Therefore, in task-supported language teaching, tasks are supplementary.

Task-based language teaching is essentially a way to arrange a communicative language teaching (CLT). According to Larseen-Freeman and Anderson (2012), one of the main objectives of a teacher who uses TBLT is to make facilitation learning through stimulating and storytelling the students in a variety of tasks which have a velar outcome.

2. Purpose of the Study

In general, this study aimed to compare the effect of task-based and task-supported language teaching on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension. More specifically, the researcher wanted to make a comparison between the effects of two approaches in task-based language teaching namely task-based and task-supported on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension. In so doing, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: Does task- based language teaching have any statistically significant effect on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension?

RQ2: Does task- supported language teaching have any statistically significant effect on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension?

RQ3: Is there any statistically significant difference in reading comprehension ability of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners who experience three different approaches to language teaching i.e. task-based, task-supported, and traditional?

In order to answer the research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

H₀1: Task- based language teaching does not have any statistically significant effect on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension.

H₀2: Task- supported language teaching does not have any statistically significant effect on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension.

H₀3: There is not any statistically significant difference among the effect of task-based, task-supported and traditional language teaching on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension.

3. Method
3.1. Design of the Study
The participants of this study were selected non-randomly, so the present study followed a quasi-experimental design. The participants of the two experimental groups received a10-session treatment through which the participants in each group encountered and experienced task-based language teaching and task-supported language teaching respectively. Meanwhile, the participants in control group received a 10-session placebo in which participants experienced traditional language teaching. To compare their reading comprehension ability, the participants of all groups sat for a pretest and posttest before and after treatment respectively. The schematic representation of the design is as follows:
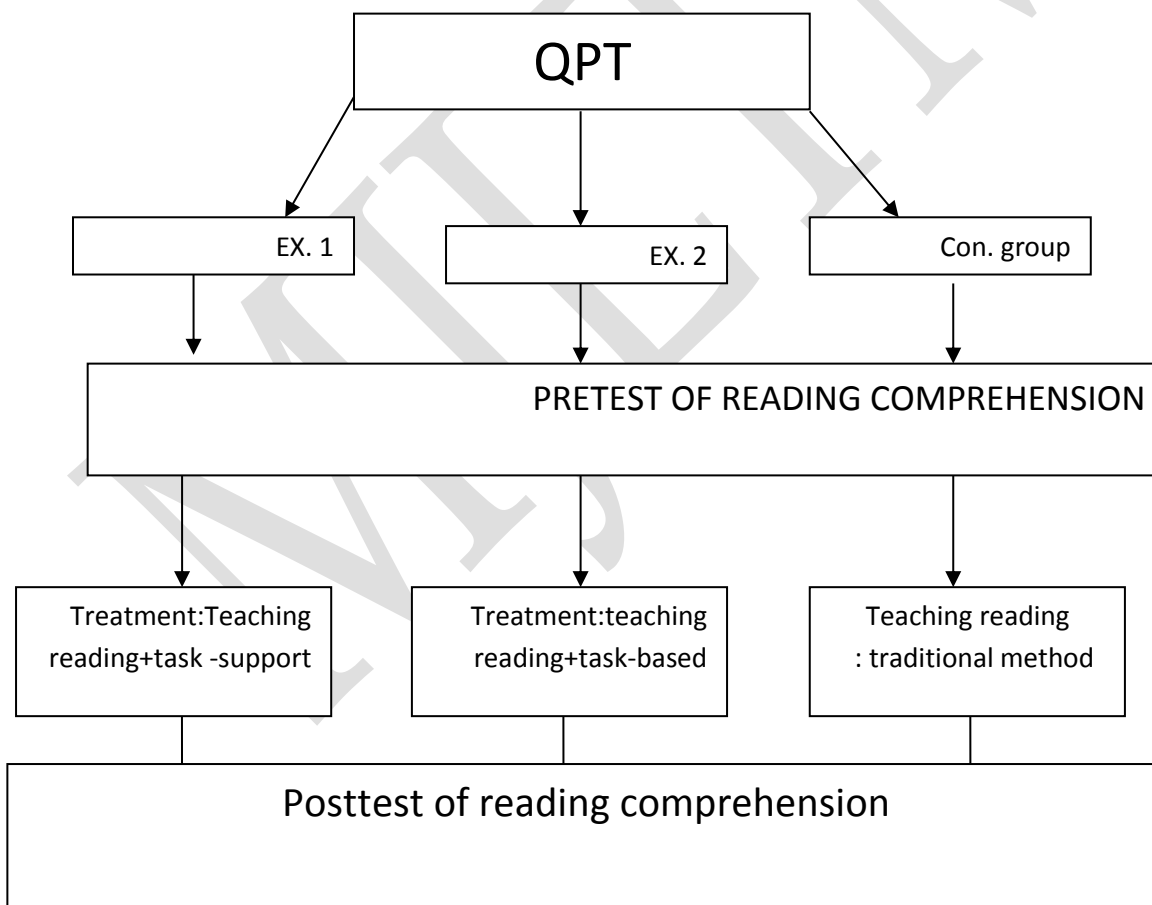
3.2. Participants
To fulfill the objectives of this study, 90 male and female lower-intermediate EFL learners at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, majoring in English Translation and passing their 'Reading 3' course, participated in this study. Their age range was between 20 and 29 years old. These participants were non-randomly selected and homogenized through a piloted QPT among 120 learners in 3 intact classes of the university. The participants whose scores fell within the range 30 to 39 were selected as the main sample for the present study. The rest of students were present in classes, but their scores were excluded from the data analysis phase. Two intact classes were randomly assigned as experimental groups (EX. A & EX. B), and the other one as control group. The experimental groups including 30 participants each received a 10-session treatment through which they encountered and experienced task-based language teaching and task-supported language teaching respectively and the control group which also included 30 participants received a 10-session placebo in which the participants experienced traditional language teaching.

3.3. Materials and Instruments
3.3.1. Oxford Quick Placement Test (QPT)
QPTs shed light on the learners' language level. They provide the instructors with a reliable and efficient means of placing the learners at the start of a course. This means that usually before taking part in one of the English courses, EFL learners take QPT which helps the teachers to identify their proficiency level. At the early stage of the study, learners were called to take QPT. The overall number of 120 learners sat for this test. Then, form all the 120 learners who participated, 90 who got a score between 30 and 39 were recognized as being at lower-intermediate level and were selected as the participants of this study. The QPT, used to homogenize the participating learners in terms of their proficiency, was a test of 60 items including vocabulary, grammar and reading items. The questions of the test were taken from 'Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate'.

3.3.2 Pretest
The purpose of this test administered before the treatment was to find the possible initial differences between the reading comprehension ability of the experimental and control groups. The reading test used in this study as a pretest was the reading section of a sample of the Preliminary English Test (PET) adopted from "Objective PET" by Hashemi and Thomas (2010), Cambridge University Press. The reading section consisted 5 parts (35 questions). Part one began with questions 1 to 5 (multiple choice), part two from questions 6 to 10 (matching descriptions), part three from questions 11 to 20 (true/false), part four from questions 21 to 25 (multiple choice), and part five from question 26 to 35 (multiple choice).

3.3.3. Posttest
This test which was administered after the treatment sessions was equal in all respects to pretest except for the arrangement of the items. This rearrangement was done to control for the probable testing effect.

3.4.4. Data Collection Procedures and Data Analysis
This study was conducted in October and November 2015. Three intact classes including 42, 40, and 38 students at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, were randomly selected as the experimental and control groups. To make sure of their homogeneity, all the participants, majoring in English translation and passing their 'Reading 3' course, sat for QPT. Among those participants who passed the exam the ones whose scores fell within the range 30-39 were selected for the study. Therefore, 90 participants (30 in each intact class) remained and the scores of other students were excluded from the data analysis in the remaining phases of this study (i.e. pretest and posttest). A pretest piloted before with a reliability index of 0.77 was then administered. The purpose of this test administered before the treatment was to find the possible initial differences between the reading comprehension ability of the experimental and control groups. The reading test used in this study as a pretest was the

reading section of a sample of the Preliminary English Test (PET) adopted from "Objective PET" by Hashemi and Thomas (2010), Cambridge University Press. One way ANOVA (analysis of variance) was run to find any possible initial differences between the performance of participants in the experimental groups and control group in the pretest. After making sure of the homogeneity of the groups with respect to their reading comprehension, the experimental groups received a 10-session treatment through which the participants in these groups experienced task-based and task-supported language teaching respectively. Meanwhile, the participants in control group received a 10-session placebo in which participants encountered traditional teaching methods. At the end of these 10 sessions, a post-test, piloted before with a reliability index of .79, was administered which was equal in all respects to pretest except for the arrangement of the items. This rearrangement was done to control for the probable testing effect. Another ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the experimental groups and control group in the post-test with the alpha level set at 0.5. Three paired-samples t-tests were also run to compare the means of these groups from pretest to posttest.

4. Results

The reliability of the reading tests used as pre and posttest in this study was estimated through a pilot study. The estimated values of Cronbach's Alpha for these tests were ($\alpha_{Pretest}$= .77, and $\alpha_{posttest}$=.79) respectively which were all higher than the least possible amount required (i.e., .70). The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1.
Reliability statistics for the reading comprehension tests

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	N of sample
Reading comprehension (pretest)	.77	35	15 EFL students
Reading comprehension (posttest)	.79	35	15 EFL students

Table 4.2 reveals the sample size, the mean, the standard deviation, and the standard error for all the three groups at the beginning of the study.
Table 4.2.
Group statistics for the pre-test scores of the three groups

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
control group	30	15.56	1.40	.25	15.04	16.09	12.00	19.00
task-supported lg. teaching	30	15.40	1.13	.20	14.97	15.82	13.00	18.00
task- based lg. teaching	30	15.13	1.38	.25	14.61	15.64	13.00	18.00
Total	90	15.36	1.31	.13	15.09	15.64	12.00	19.00

To find any possible statistical difference between the mean scores of the three groups in pretest, a one-way ANOVA was run.
Table 4.3.
One-Way ANOVA for the pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.867	2	1.433	.831	.439
Within Groups	150.033	87	1.725		
Total	152.900	89			

As shown in Table 4.3., there was no meaningful difference between the mean scores of the three groups in pre-test of reading comprehension (p≥ .05). This means that, the groups were almost at the same level of proficiency with respect to their reading comprehension ability at the beginning of the study before introducing the specific treatment to the experimental groups.

Table 4.4.
Test of homogeneity of variances for the post test scores

post-test scores			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.140	2	87	.870

Based on the results of the test of homogeneity of variance (table 5.4), the variances of the three groups were equal for the post-test of reading comprehension (P $_{pre-test}$ (.140) ≥.870).

Table 4.5.
Descriptive statistics for the posttest scores

post-test scores					95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
control group	30	15.83	1.46	.26	15.28	16.38	13.00	20.00
task-supported lg. teaching	30	19.33	1.72	.31	18.68	19.97	18.00	25.00
task- based lg. teaching	30	18.46	1.40	.25	17.94	18.99	17.00	23.00
Total	90	17.87	2.13	.22	17.43	18.32	13.00	25.00

The results of the post-test disclosed that the mean of the task- supported language teaching group (X^- =19.30), mean of the task- based language teaching group (X^- =18.46), and the mean of the control group (X^- =15.83) differed significantly. The significance value of the *F* test in the ANOVA table was less than (.05).

Table 4.6.
ANOVA for the results of the reading comprehension test (post-test)

post-test scores					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	199.356	2	99.678	42.036	.000
Within Groups	206.300	87	2.371		
Total	405.656	89			

Thus, the hypotheses that average assessment scores of the reading comprehension test (post-test) were equal across the three groups were rejected (F 2, 87= 42.036, Sig. = .000≤.05).

Table 4.7.
Multiple comparisons for the results of the posttest

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: post-test scores						
Scheffe						
(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper

					Bound	Bound
control group	task-supported lg. teaching	-3.50*	.397	.000	-4.4902	-2.5098
	task- based lg. teaching	-2.63*	.397	.000	-3.6236	-1.6431
task-supported lg. teaching	control group	3.50*	.397	.000	2.5098	4.4902
	task- based lg. teaching	.86	.39	.099	-.1236	1.8569
task- based lg. teaching	control group	2.63*	.39	.000	1.6431	3.6236
	task-supported lg. teaching	-.86	.39	.099	-1.8569	.1236

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As it is displayed in Table 4.7, the highest mean difference was reported between "task- supported language teaching group" and the "control group" with mean difference of (3.50). On the other hand, the lowest mean difference was shown for the "task-based language teaching group" and "task-supported language teaching group" (mean difference = .86).

Table 4.8.
Statistics for the pre and post test scores of the reading comprehension test

		pre-test scores groups			post-test scores groups		
		control group	task-supported lg. teaching	task- based lg. teaching	control group	task-supported lg. teaching	task- based lg. teaching
N	**Valid**	**30**	**30**	**30**	**30**	**30**	**30**
	Missing	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Mean		15.5667	15.4000	15.1333	15.8333	19.3333	18.4667
Median		16.0000	15.5000	15.0000	16.0000	19.0000	18.0000
Mode		16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	18.00	18.00
Std. Deviation		1.40647	1.13259	1.38298	1.46413	1.72873	1.40770
Variance		1.978	1.283	1.913	2.144	2.989	1.982
Skewness		-.106	.037	.080	.450	2.018	1.305
Std. Error of Skewness		.427	.427	.427	.427	.427	.427
Kurtosis		1.167	-.161	-.844	1.371	4.260	2.319
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.833	.833	.833	.833	.833	.833
Range		7.00	5.00	5.00	7.00	7.00	6.00
Minimum		12.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	18.00	17.00
Maximum		19.00	18.00	18.00	20.00	25.00	23.00
Sum		467.00	462.00	454.00	475.00	580.00	554.00

The mean scores of the "task-supported language teaching group" made better from ($\bar{X}$ = 15.40) in pre- test to ($\bar{X}$ = 19.33) in post- test. For the "task-based language teaching group" it increased from ($\bar{X}$ = 15.13) in pre- test to ($\bar{X}$ = 18.46) in posttest, and finally, the mean of the "control group" changed from ($\bar{X}$ = 15.56) in pre- test to ($\bar{X}$ = 15.83) in post- test on the reading comprehension test.

Paired-Samples T-tests then were run to see if these changes within groups were statistically significant. The results are available in the following table:

Table 4.9.
Paired samples t-tests for the pre and posttests of reading comprehension

groups		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	95% Interval Difference	Confidence of the			
					Lower	Upper			
control group	pre-test scores - post-test scores	-.26	.86	.15	-.59	.05	-1.6	29	.103
task-supported lg. teaching	pre-test scores - post-test scores	-3.93	1.92	.35	-4.65	-3.21	-11.1	29	.000
task-based lg. teaching	pre-test scores - post-test scores	-3.33	1.70	.31	-3.97	-2.69	-10.6	29	.000

Established upon the results of Paired-samples t-test, this gain was significant from a statistical standpoint simply for the experimental groups (P ≤ .05).

5. Discussion

The main point that this study explored was to examine the effect of task-supported and task-based language teaching on reading comprehension of pre-intermediate learners studying at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch. The research questions of this study asked whether task-supported and task-based language teaching would have any statistically significant effects upon Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension ability. Based on these research questions, null hypotheses were also proposed assuming that utilizing task-supported and task-based language teaching would have no significant effect on EFL learners' reading comprehension ability. As it was mentioned, there were no significant differences in reading comprehension ability of the groups in the pre-test, while there were statistically significant differences among them in the reading comprehension post-test. Therefore, the differences may be attributed to the treatments utilized in this study i.e. experiencing task-supported and task-based language teaching by the two experimental groups of this study. The obtained mean score by each of the three groups on the reading comprehension post-test indicated that the experimental groups obtained a higher mean than the control group. Moreover, between the two experimental groups, task-supported group's mean was higher than task-based group's one. In other words, the experimental groups who received the task-supported and task-based language teaching outperformed the control group on the reading comprehension post-test. Therefore, the null hypothesis of this study was rejected.

Breen (1987) suggests that language tasks be viewed as a range of work plans, from simple to complex, with the overall purpose of facilitating language learning. He sees all materials for language teaching as compendia of tasks. Rashtchi and Keyvanfar (2007) also believe that TBLT can provide learners with natural sources of meaningful materials which in turn create ideal situations for real-life communicative activities. Willis (1996) also maintains that in a TBLL framework, the language needed is not preselected and given to learners to practice it; rather it is drawn from learners with the help of the facilitator, to meet the demands of the activities and task.

Nunan (1996) believes that unlike grammar exercises that are focused directly on the structure and comprehension questions that may become boring and senseless, TBL provides students with both a framework of structures, forms and/or words to be used and a good reason/purpose for doing the

activities. Although such activities are done in order to improve the learners reading skill, they are expected to help improve the other skills as well. Of course, these ideas are just theoretical assumptions that wait to be confirmed.

The findings in this study are in line with that of other researchers like Cowell (2012) who examined the effects of pre-teaching vocabulary on reading comprehension ability and their results showed that the learners who received pre-teaching before reading the text achieved higher reading comprehension scores on the post-test.

Moreover, this study is congruent with the one done by Free (2004) who investigated the impact of using words and pictures together to improve reading comprehension. She stated that presenting vocabularies with pictures reduces the reading time and help the students to acquire the information.

6. Conclusion

This study attempted to investigate the effects of task-based and task-supported language teaching on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners. The findings of the study revealed that task-based and task-supported as two approaches within the framework of TBLT are significantly effective in better comprehension and understanding of the reading texts. Task-based approach can have positive effects on acquisition of different skills and components of language. The participants of the experimental groups outperformed those of the control group. This meant that task-supported and task-based teaching are effective ways to make the reading task more enjoyable and achievable for learners. The findings obtained in this study lead to some implications which are beneficial to language teachers, who still believe in their own traditional techniques in teaching reading to shift their attitudes and follow some more modern and practical techniques.

References

Birjandi, P. & Noroozi, I. (2008). The effect of cognitive strategies training on reading comprehension of male and female Iranian students. *Foreign Language Teaching Journal, 22*(87), 41-48.

Breen, M. (1987). Learner contribution to the task design. In C. N. Candlin and D. Murphy (eds.) *Language Learning Tasks* (pp.23-46). London: Prentice-Hall International.

Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice* (3rd ed.). Chicago: HBJ.

Cowell, L. S. (2012). Pre-teaching vocabulary to improve comprehension of a narrative text. Retrieved from:

https://etd.auburn.edu/bitstream/handle/10415/3423/Cowell%20Final.pdf?sequence=2

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Free, W. P. (2004). Pictures and words together: Using illustration analysis and reader generated drawing to improve reading comprehension. Unpublished Ph.D thesis. ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

Hashemi, L., & Thomas, B. (2010). *Objective test*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Larseen-Freeman, D. & Anderson, M. (2013). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Negari, G. M., & Rouhi, M. (2012). EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge and its role in their reading comprehension performance. *English language teaching, 1(2)* 39-48.

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rashtchi, M. & Keyvanfar, A. (2007). *ELT*: *Quick'n'easy* (3rd ed.). Tehran: Rahnama.

Richards, J. C. & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Willis, J. (1996). *Framework for task-based teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING: A POSSIBLE APPROACH TO INCREASE LANGUAGE TEACHERS' TEST-MAKING ABILITY

Elmira Mohamadi
Gheshm Payame Noor University
Gheshm, Iran
Elmira.mohammadi24@gmail.com

Zohre Basir
Tabriz Payame Noor University
Tabriz, Iran
Doona_zb@yahoo.com

Farkhondeh Amirian
Gheshm Payame Noor University
Gheshm, Iran
amirian.farkhondeh@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
THIS QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY INVESTIGATED THE POSSIBILITY THAT PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING COULD BE A POSSIBLE APPROACH TO ENHANCE IRANIAN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE-TEACHING M.A. STUDENTS' ABILITY TO DESIGN RESEARCHER-MADE TEST ITEMS FOR THEIR THESIS. IN ORDER TO TEST THE HYPOTHESIS 36 M.A. STUDENTS ABILITY TO MAKE RESEARCHER-MADE MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST ITEMS WAS ASSESSED AND COMPARED BEFORE AND AFTER THE STUDY. IN ADDITION, THE PARTICIPANTS THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE ON TESTING ISSUES SUCH AS TEST RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY, ITEM FACILITY (IF) AND ITEM DISCRIMINATION (ID), AND TEST ACCEPTABILITY WAS GAUGED THROUGH A PRETEST INTERVIEW AND A POSTTEST INTERVIEW. THE STUDY FINDINGS PROVED THAT TUTORED PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING CAN GREATLY INCREASE M.A. STUDENTS' ABILITY TO DESIGN RESEARCHER-MADE MULTIPLE-CHOICE TEST ITEMS. ALSO, PBL AFFECTS STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ISSUES SUCH AS TEST RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY, ITEM FACILITY (IF) AND ITEM DISCRIMINATION (ID), AND TEST ACCEPTABILITY.

KEY WORDS: PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING (PBL), ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT), COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY, TEST ACCEPTABILITY, MULTIPLE CHOICE ITEMS

1. Introduction

The importance of testing is known to everyone. Great decisions about students' academic life are made based on their test results. Only because of a trivial deficiency in a test score, a student may not be able to enter a particular course or university, get a position in the society, lose enthusiasm for

pursuing studies and eventually the course of one's life might be severely affected. That is why Farhady, Jafarpur, and Birjandi (2013) state that:

Some educational decisions will affect a large number of people (for example, the entrance exam to the universities); others, only a single person… there are many decisions that educators must make, and many more that they must assist individual pupils, parents and the general public to make… when a decision is made, whether the decision is great or small, it should be based on as much as accurate information as possible.(p.2)

Thus, it is very important for teachers to made accurate tests which can function as a true measure on students' knowledge.

In the field of language teaching research, in particular, tests play a very significant role. Although a great deal of attention is paid to study design, treatment conditions, theoretical base of the study, and the material chosen for the study, all these issues without proper assessment are meaningless. Considering English language teaching (ELT) students at M.A. level, the issue of testing gets somehow complicated, since ELT students at M.A. level are usually novice researchers and have no prior experience in designing tests. On the other hand, since they ought to design their own novel studies for their thesis, in many cases there are no ready tests for their particular research treatment and they are obliged to create a totally new test. Take for example, a student who aims at teaching a list of particular collocations to the participants. Since there is no test assessing those specific collocations used at the study, she has to make her own researcher-made test. In addition, in many cases, especially in contexts like Iranian universities, where there are numerous students studying a course at the same time, the professors may not have enough time to assist all students. That is why many students find making tests for their research a daunting task.

Given the situation in Iran, ELT students pass a testing course at B.A. and M.A. levels, yet they still find making tests a difficult task. In these courses, the students read a book on testing and usually create multiple-choice test items as their final assignment along with an achievement test which assesses students' theoretical knowledge on testing. Usually, the only feedback they receive on the quality of their assignment is their final score.

Thus, it is very important to enhance M.A. students' knowledge on making tests. If student' test-making ability is increased, not only will the results of their studies become more valid, but also writing their thesis will be an easier task to accomplish. Furthermore, since all the students who study English language teaching are supposed to be assigned as language teachers in future, they ought to familiarize themselves with parameters involved in accurate testing.

A discussion by a group of 32 M.A. students from Payame Noor University in Iran on internet (telegram) initiated the idea for the current study. The students were all Iranian ELT students who were about to write their M.A. thesis or were in the process of doing their thesis and they believed that designing their researcher-made tests had hindered their research process. Many of them believed that it takes them a long time to create a test which can have justified statistical interpretation and that their test items are frequently rejected by the professors even before they pilot the tests; due to lack of face validity. Hence, the researcher decided to adopt a tutor-less problem-based approach to see if this particular approach can increase students' knowledge on how to make tests.

The reason this approach was chosen by the researcher is that it is a learner-based approach and relies very little on the teacher. It can give the students the opportunity to practice even without the presence of the teacher (tutor-less problem-based learning) or with the presence of the teacher whom is called tutor in the approach (tutored problem-based learning).

Finally, although problem-based learning is not quite a new approach to education, it seems that language teaching and humanities have not made enough use of it yet (Larsson, 2001, p.1). increasing novice researchers' test-making ability may not be directly related to the field of language teaching and assessment, but indirectly, it affects the quality of the tests administered by future teachers in the field, and can seriously affect language students attitude about tests of language, either encourage or discourage them to study languages, and to accurately measure their language ability.

1.2 Research Questions

The researcher seeks answers to the following questions:

1. Does tutored problem-based learning increase ELT M.A. students' ability to design multiple-choice test items?

2. Does tutored problem-based learning increase ELT M.A. students' knowledge on test reliability and validity, item facility (IF) and item discrimination (ID), and test acceptability?

2. Review of the Literature

Problem-based learning as opposed to lecture-based teaching was first created at the medical school at McMaster University in Canada (Robert & Kwan 1997, p. 149) .It stood against the exhausting lecture-based courses at the university, and relied on students' cognition as the main source of solving problem. Woods et al. (1996) defines PBL as:

One of the most innovative developments in education in the past 30 years. In PBL, the problem drives the learning. Instead of lecturing, we give the students a problem to solve. For that problem, small groups of students identify what they know already and what they need to know, set learning goals and make learning contracts with the group members (1-4). Each student learns the knowledge independently and then returns to the group to teach others that knowledge. The group uses that knowledge to solve the problem. The group reflects and elaborates on that knowledge. (P.60)

 The belief in PBL is that the overall aim of education is to prepare students to solve real-life problems. Such problems might be ill-structured and not even in form of problems at times, since daily problems we face are even not in form of problems sometimes. In a diagram Hmelo-silver(2004,p.237) shows that it require students to identify and define problems first and then to analyze it. Only in this way the students can identify what the knowledge deficiency in that particular area is and; hence, they can apply new knowledge to overcome the problem.

Starting from a problem is not the only reason PBL has proved to be successful. In fact if the learners were to debate over a problem only, the activity would be a simple buzz group. PBL owes its success to its unique features and defined methodology. As one of the most important pillars of PBL, the presence of cognitive principles plays a crucial role in success or failure of a PBL project. According to Norman G.R. and Schmidt H. G. (1992) any PBL lesson should accord with cognitive psychology by guiding the learners to define the situation, state the goals, generate ideas, prepare a plan and take action.

The promising premises of problem-based learning and its strong psychological background in cognitive psychology have led this approach to become popular in other disciplines such as chemistry and mathematics. Its success soon became widespread and many educational systems at different parts of the world adopted this approach as their teaching- learning approach. Parallel to application of PBL investigations have been carried out to see whether PBL has been successful or not. For example, a study was carried out by Servant and Dewar (2015) to investigate PBL tutorship in medical and engineering programs in Malaysia claiming Malaysia to be the first county in Asia to take PBL and PBL to have worked quite successfully there.

In general, there are two branches of PBL: tutored problem-based learning and tutor-less problem-based learning. Woods et al.(1996) defines these approaches in the following way:

Small group, self-directed problem-based learning is often arranged so that a faculty tutor is a member of each group. Courses with limited faculty resources use learning groups that are tutor-less. For such situations, the students are trained and empowered to manage such "processing skills" as problem solving, change management, group process, critical thinking and self-directed, interdependent learning skills. (p.231)

2.1 PBL and Humanities

Probably, it was not until 2001 when the application of PBL in language teaching was brought up by Larsson. Larsson (2001) discussed cons and pros of using PBL in Language education by especially point out the fact that PBL accords with Blooms constructivist approach by aiming at enhancing learners' comprehension, questioning and critical thinking abilities, all of which are essential for language learning. He also mentions that language is a tool when learning not a subject of it. This fact

reveals a difficulty with regard to PBL and language learning. Since for formulating a problem the learners need raw facts which come through language. Now if language is to be formulated as a problem, the learners may lack raw facts to generate ideas and find solutions. Also, situating PBL into EFL or ESL settings is a very important issue. Abdullah and Hayati M. (1998, p.2) argue that "PBL can situate language learning by posing problems like those found in real life which are relevant to the learners' situations." That is why, formulating problems in EFL and ESL setting are difficult. In fact, it requires a lot of artistry on the side of the instructor to guide the learners to obvious real situations. in turn, it indicates that the tutor has a very important role in scaffolding the learners in PBL settings. Hence, the researches carried out so far have mainly focused on tutored problem-based language learning. In this study, as well, the researcher examines the effect of tutored PBL on learners' writing.

2.2 Problem-Based Assessment

The notion of problem has also been used to assess students' abilities in performing real-life tasks. This is referred to as problem-based assessment. Macdonald and Savin-Baden (2004) list some of the forms of assessment that have been used successfully with enquiry and Problem-based Learning and which also move away from the need to have outcome-based examinations. To summarize, these include:

Group Presentations
Individual Presentations
Tripartite assessment
Case-Based individual essays
Case-Based Care Plans
Portfolios
Triple Jump
Self-Assessment
Peer Assessment
Viva Voce Examinations
Reflective (online) journals
Reports
Patchwork Texts
Examinations
Electronic Assessment

For sure, not all of these testing methods need to be adopted b a particular educational systems. Each system can see which type can best suit its students and the purpose of the course. For example, The University of Limburg at Maastricht has adopted PBL as its major teaching and learning approach. It has developed a university wide pattern of assessment with Progress Tests, once or twice a year across the whole of the curriculum and usually in multiple choice question format and Block Tests, after each of the four nine week blocks of the curriculum. Block tests combine a mixture of structured response questions to cases, multiple choice questions and free format essay questions. The same Progress Test was used with students in all educational years.

3.METHOD
3.1 Participants

In order to carry out the study, the researcher created a forum on internet using telegram software. 40 M.A. students participated in the study by attending 15 online sessions in which 112 test items was discussed. The participants were from 3 different branches of Payame Noor University studying in Tabriz, Tehran, and Gheshm cities. The table below shows the participants' demographic data:

Table1.
Participants' Demographic Data

Gender	n	Age Range	Educational Level	First Language
Male	7	24-38	M.A.	Persian

Female	33	25-48	M.A.	Persian

The participants were chosen non-randomly. In fact, the researcher asked all interested M.A. students studying at Payame Noor University to participate in the study. also, 4 participants left the study for miscellaneous reasons and their pretest results were dismissed from the statistics.

3.2 Design

The study is a quasi-experimental one due to non-random selection of the participants and the absence of a control group. The researcher, however, tested the effect of Problem-base learning by comparing the pretest and posttest results.

The participants were interviewed before the actual course of the study. The researcher aimed at assessing the participants' theoretical knowledge on testing issues. The participants were asked the following questions in the interview:

1. What is meant by reliability of test scores?
2. What is meant by validity? Name the types of validity you know?
3. What is meant by item facility(IF) and item discrimination(ID)?
4. What is meant by acceptability of a test?

In the next phase of the pretest the participants were asked to make a twenty-item multiple choice test for advanced students from the books Cambridge advanced grammar in use units 1 to 5 (10 items) and Cambridge advanced vocabulary in use units 1 to 5(10 items).

Next, the participants were given an explanation on what they are supposed to do during the online sessions. During online sessions, the forum admin (the researcher) posted different vocabulary, grammar, collocation, etc. questions. The participants were asked to first, think about the items individually, try to find the problem with the item if there was any, to correct the item, and later, to discuss it with other members of the forum. The participants in the forum were asked to make a final decision and choose the most proper form for the item. The process used in the study was a problem-based one. Meaning that the researcher expected the participants to consider the test items in the study as a problem, and try to use whatever means they have at hand in order to understand whether the test item is an acceptable one. The professor's help was excluded from the list of student's means. Although, one of the professors was also observing the whole sessions, he was asked not to aid the participants and only debrief the participants if necessary after they use their own cognition to solve the problem. In fact, in tutored-problem-based learning, as mentioned before, the role of the course teacher is more of a facilitator than a lecturer.

The problems related to the items chosen in this study were mostly related to the following issues:

Vague, hard, very short, or very long question stems

Vague, hard, very short or long, unequal-in-size alternatives

Weak and uninteresting distracters

Face, content, and construct validity

Level of test difficulty

Items with more than one possible answer

The issues were chosen after discussing the most common problems students had in making test items by the course professor and also by using the guidelines for making tests in the book 'testing language skills: from theory to practice' written by Farhady et. al. (1994).

After the course of treatment, the students were asked to make a twenty-item test using Cambridge intermediate grammar in use book (10 items) and Cambridge intermediate vocabulary in use book(10 items).

The researcher then interviewed the participants for the second time. Same questions were asked from the participants as the first interview. The answers to the interview questions and the tests made by the participants at the pretest and posttest stages were rated by two professors to find out the extent to which the treatment had been effective. In addition, same professors were asked to rate the quality of the multiple-choice made by the participants at pretest and posttest stages.

4. **DATA ANALYSIS**

The table below shows the number of answers accepted by the raters for the interview questions.
Table2. Accepted Interview Answers

Questions	Pretest	Posttest
What is meant by reliability of test scores?	5/36	32/36
What is meant by validity? Name the types of validity you know?	4/36	31/36
What is meant by item facility (IF) and item discrimination(ID)?	3/36	34/36
What is meant by acceptability of a test?	6/36	34/36

Needless to say Crombach alpha was used to gauge the inter-rater reliability of the raters decisions. The Crombach alpha for the 5 interview items ranged between 0.79 to 1.

The discussions carried out about the test items could increase the overall knowledge of M.A. students about making tests. Although only 5 participants were familiar with the concept of reliability at the pretest before the study, 32 participants could state what reliability of the test results meant at the posttest stage. The concept of validity was also well understood by the participants. As 31 participants could state what validity of test scores means and what its different types; namely, face validity, content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity were.

The participants at the beginning of the study were very much strange with issues of item facility and item reliability, but by the end of the study 34 out of 36 participants could state these concept and even some understood the relation between the concepts. The participants' knowledge about test acceptability was also increased to a great extent.

The effect of the problem-based discussion was also seen in the mean score of the participants' number of accepted multiple-choice test items. The participants, both at the pretest and posttest level made twenty test items. The mean score for accepted test items made by the participants at the pretest level was 7, whereas at the posttest level, this was raised to 16.

5. **CONCLUSION DISCUSSION**

First of all, it should be noted that online education and its effect was not a purpose of this study. The only reason the session were carried out online was that, otherwise the researcher did not have access to enough participants for the study.

Barrows (1996) states six characteristics of problem-based learning as:

1. Learning needs to be student-centered.
2. Learning has to occur in small student groups under the guidance of a tutor.
3. Characteristic refers to the tutor as a facilitator or guide.
4. Authentic problems are primarily encountered in the learning sequence, before any preparation or study has occurred.
5. The problems encountered are used as a tool to achieve the required knowledge and the problem-solving skills necessary to eventually solve the problem.
6. New information needs to be acquired through self-directed learning

All the aforementioned characteristics were considered in the design of this problem-based study along with a very important characteristic mentioned by Dochy et. al(2003) which states that problem-based learning requires problem-based assessment which can assess students' competency. It is claimed that the posttest given to the students in this study can be regarded as a real-life issue for researchers.

Participants in this study showed their ability to design researcher-made tests and similar to a medical doctor being able to diagnose the patients sickness and being able to find a cure for it, the ability to diagnose problems with ill-structured test and design accurate test items can be a proof of the participants' competency.

Probably, a good point for discussing the findings of the current study is cognitive psychology. Not knowing the processes involved in solving problems in human mind might lead one's thought astray into thinking that PBL cannot be a beneficial approach. After all. All teaching and learning approaches have their proponents and there are still scholars in favor of direct education. Discussing the findings of similar studies with other scholars, especially in the realm of language teaching has acquainted the researchers in this filed with one common problem: how does it happen?

Psychologist Cherry (2015) on her website about problem-based learning explains that problem-solving abilities are always with people whether they decide to buy a DVD, solve a math problem, or decide on their future career. The thing is that for each of these given situations there are mental processes that people go through to discover, analyze and solve problems. This involves all of the steps in the problem-solving process, including the discovery of the problem, the decision to tackle the issue, understanding the problem, researching the available options and taking actions to achieve goals.

She further explains that before a problem occurs it is important to understand the nature of the problem, since the mental process in solving a problem depends on the problem type.

These mental processes include:
- Perceptually recognizing a problem
- Representing the problem in <u>memory</u>
- Considering relevant information that applies to the current problem
- Identify different aspects of the problem
- Labeling and describing the problem

On the other hand there are different mental strategies for solving problems such as algorithems, heuristics, trial and error, and sudden insight.

While algorithms always result in the right answer by following a step-by-step procedure, heuristic may not work in all situations. In fact, heuristic, unlike algorithms, is a mental rule-of-thumb strategy that may or may not work in certain situations. It works by simplifying complicated situations and by reducing the number of possible solutions to a manageable set. An example of algorithm strategy is solving math problems and an example of heuristic strategy is making decisions about the type of shirt one wants to buy.

Trial and error approach involves trying a number of different solutions and ruling out those that do not work. This approach can be a good option if one has a very limited number of options available. Insight, on the other hand, can occur because one realizes that the problem is actually similar to something that has been experienced in the past. Usually the underlying mental processes that lead to insight happen outside of awareness.

It is very hard to claim that the results in this study are the outcome of one mental process or problem-solving strategy alone. A very probable strategy used by the participants in this study might be insight, as ELT students are frequently in contact with language tests. This familiarity can be a good source for detecting the problem in the multiple-choice test items. Algorithm seems to have no role as a strategy in this study, since they produce correct answers by following a step-by-step procedure. In this study, it is very difficult to define a step by step procedure to finding the problem and solving it which should always result in the right answer, heuristic, on the other hand, is a more justified strategy; breaking down a complex problem to a simple one. Very automatically and with no prior education, the participants had made taxonomy of possible problems in their mind by stating that, for example, if the problem is not with the test stem it is with the alternatives. Or for example, if the problem is with the stem, it can be due to the length, comprehensibility, level of difficulty etc. Thus, the participants in this study, like other humans, have problem-solving abilities and it is very likely that by using theses abilities, as explained above, they can find the problems with the test items and solve them.

It can be concluded that tutored problem-based learning is a suitable approach to increase M.A. students' knowledge on designing researcher-made tests. Not only do the students trained through this approach make more acceptable multiple-choice test items, but also their knowledge about issues such as test reliability and validity, item facility (IF) and item discrimination (ID), and test acceptability increases.

REFERENCES

Abdullah, & Hayati M. (1998). Problem-based learning in language education: a constructivist model. *Eric publications*. p.2. files.**eric**.ed.gov/fulltext/ED423550.pdf

Barrows, H. S. (1996). Problem-based learning in medicine and beyond: a brief overview. In L. Wilkerson, & W. H. Gijselaers (Eds.), *New directions for teaching and learning, Nr.68* (pp. 3–11). SanFrancisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Cherry, k. (n.d.). Problem-Solving Strategies and Obstacles. Retrieved June 12, 2015, from http://psychology.about.com/od/cognitivepsychology/a/problem-solving.htm

Cindy E., & Hmelo-Silver (2004). Problem-based learning: what and how do students learn? *Educational Psychology Review*,16,3.p.237 http://www.seattleimplementation.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Hmelo-Silver-problem-based-learning-2004.pdf

Dochy, F., Segers, M., Piet Van den Bossche , David Gijbels (2003). Effects of problem-based learning: a meta analysis. *The Netherlands* Learning and Instruction 13,533–568.http://library.bjmu.edu.cn/pbl/document/Learning%20and%20Instruction_2003_13(5)_533.pdf

Farhady H., Ja'farpur, A., & Birjandi, P.(2013). *Testing language skills: from theory to practice*. Iran:SAMT publications. first impression 1994, 19th impression 2013.

Larsson, J. (2001). Problem-based learning: A possible approach to language education? Polonia Institute Jagiellonian University www.nada.kth.se/~jla/docs/PBL.pdf

Macdonald, R.F. and Savin-Baden, M. (2004). A Briefing on Assessment in Problem-based
Learning. *LTSN Generic Centre Assessment Series*. www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp?process=full_record&section=generic&id=349

Norman, G. R. & Schmidt H. G.(1992).The psychological basis of problem-based learning: a review of the evidence. Sep;67(9),557-65.http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1520409

Robert M.k.W, & Kwan C. (1997). The use of problem-based learning in medical education. *Journal of Medical education* ,1(2),p. 149. fhs.mcmaster.ca/mdprog/.../Use_of_PBL_Article.pdf

Servant, V. F. , & Dewar, E. F. (2015). Investigating Problem-Based Learning Tutorship in Medical and Engineering Programs in Malaysia. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning, 9*(2).Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1541-5015.1442

Woods D. R., Hall F. L., Eyles C. H. ,& Hrymak A. N. (1996). Tutored versus tutorless groups in problem-based learning. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, p.60.http://www.researchgate.net/publication/228450997_Tutored_versus_tutorless_groups_in_problem-based_learning

AN EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN FARHANGIAN UNIVERSITY OF BOJNOURD

Mehdi B. Mehrani2
English Department, University of Neyshabur
mehrani@neyshabur.ac.ir

Mahboube Mohammad Tatari
mahbube.tatari@yahoo.com
English Department, Islamic Azad University, Neyshabur Branch

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT STUDY INVESTIGATED THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A PRE-SERVICE LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM IN FARHANGIAN UNIVERSITY OF BOJNOURD. THE STUDY RELIED ON MULTIPLE SOURCES OF DATA INCLUDING A SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS. IN THE PROCESS OF EVALUATION, PARTICULAR ATTENTION WAS PAID TO PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS, CURRICULUM CONTENTS, EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND TEACHING PROCEDURES OF THE PROGRAM. RESULTS SHOWED THAT TEACHING METHODOLOGY COURSES ARE OFTEN REPLETE WITH THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS, BUT PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS DEMANDED MORE PRACTICAL COURSES AND FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE TEACHING REAL CLASSES. THEY EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERNS REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND EMPHASIZED THAT ENGLISH CONVERSATION COURSES MUST BE CONSIDERED MORE SERIOUSLY. THE FINDINGS SUGGEST THAT MORE COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES ARE REQUIRED SO THAT THE STUDENTS CAN SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES, REFLECT ON THEIR CURRENT ABILITIES AND GET INSTRUCTIONAL FEEDBACKS FROM EACH OTHER AS WELL AS FROM THEIR MENTORS. IN ADDITION, PARTICULAR INSTRUCTIONAL MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED IN ORDER TO HELP PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNICATION SKILLS. FINALLY, ATTEMPTS SHOULD BE MADE IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A MORE SYSTEMATIC METHOD OF ASSESSMENT.

KEY WORDS: EFFECTIVE TEACHER, FARHANGIAN UNIVERSITY, PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS, TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM.

1. Introduction

Studies have documented that the quality of teacher education programs is a strong predictor of teacher success and student achievement (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 1999; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain 2005). In fact, pre-service teacher education programs (PTEP) are "the first entry point to the teacher professional career" (Musset, 2010, p. 16) where prospective teachers acquire the necessary academic and professional qualifications that they would use and build on in their future career. One way to guarantee the effectiveness of PTEPs is to

2 Corresponding author

continuously evaluate such programs (Daloglu, 1996). On this basis, Brown (1989) points out that continuous evaluation of PTEPs helps to prepare and revise all the elements of a program and revise our educational goals and objectives.

The present study intends to evaluate the PTEP that is currently offered to prospective language teachers in Farhangian University of Bojnourd. The study investigates how effectively the program can prepare prospective English teachers for their future profession. In doing so, the study examines the curriculum, course contents, educational resources and teaching procedures of the program. Therefore, the following research question was addressed in this study.

How effectively does the pre-service teacher education program in Farhangian University of Bojnourd prepare prospective English teachers for future profession?

Such an investigation is both important and necessary because it can help the administration to appropriately make decisions regarding various aspects of the program. It can also provide policy makers with a realistic understanding of the current strengths and weaknesses of PTEPs in a typical branch of Farhangian University in Iran.

2. Review of the literature

Evaluation of teacher education programs is a primary concern in teacher education, because it directly contributes to the quality of educational profession and superiority in teaching (Newton & Braithwaite, 1987; Shahid, 2007). Basically, in evaluating educational programs researchers intend to specify the positive or negative aspects of the program, threats and opportunities, weaknesses and strengths of the curriculum (Mirkamali, 1994). However, an examination of the literature shows that in mainstream education various models have been proposed for evaluating teacher education programs. One such model is Context, Inputs, Processes, and Products (CIPP) model, developed by Stufflebeam (2003). CIPP is a management-oriented evaluation model designed to provide definitive and valid information for decision makers (Wang, 2010). It gives some information about who will use the evaluation results, how they will use them, and to what aspects of the system they will be applied (Fitzpatrick, Sanders & Worthen, 2004). In this model there are four types of evaluation: Context evaluation, Input evaluation, Process evaluation and Product evaluation (Gredler, 1996). Context evaluation involves studying the environment of the program. In this phase, the needs of the program members and the objectives of the program are identified. The results will provide a basis to adjust or establish goals and distinguish necessary changes (Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985). Then, input evaluation determines how to use resources to meet the program objectives. In other words, the purpose of input evaluation is to consider the available options in terms of needs, objectives and conditions (Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985). In the phase of process evaluation one focuses on the implementation of a program and attempts to provide feedback about how to modify the program (Stufflebeam, 1980). Through the last phase, product evaluation, the evaluator determines the extent to which particular needs are met and how successfully the program fulfills the objectives (Tunc, 2010).

Another important model proposed for evaluating programs is called outcome-based evaluation model (OBE). This model emphasizes on the benefits gained by clients from using the program and considers whether the client's needs are met by the activities of the organization (Schalock, 2001). OBE is often conducted through both formative and summative approaches (Chambers1994; Scriven,1999). In formative evaluation is done during the development and improvement of a program and intends to ensure that the objectives of the instruction are being achieved (Weston, McAlpine & Bordonaro, 1995). However, summative evaluation is conducted at the end of the program so as to determine how effective the program was (Worthen & Sanders, 1998).

Another program evaluation model has been proposed by Kirkpatrick. This model which has been widely used in educational contexts professes that training program effectiveness can be evaluated through four levels: reaction (the way training participants react to the training), learning (the extent to which participants change attitudes, increase knowledge/skills), behavior (the extent to which behavior changes), and results (the final results of training) (Wang, 2010). The simplicity and comprehensiveness of this model has made it a popular instrument in educational program evaluations (Allinger & Janack, 1989).

Relying on the above theoretical models, researchers have conducted various empirical studies to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher education programs in different contexts. For instance, in a recent study Ustunluoglu, Zazaoglu, Keskin, Saraykoylu and Akdogan (2012) attempted to provide a descriptive account of a language teacher education program in the Turkish context. Their analysis revealed that although instructors and faculty members believed that the program met the needs of the individuals, students expressed that they experience difficulties of various types, including instructional and learning problems. In another evaluative study, Feuer, Floden, Chudowsky and Ahn (2013) sought teachers' opinions about the effectiveness of a PTEP and reported that although teachers could get many valuable things through teaching in real classes, the teacher preparation program was very important in helping them to gain competency. Similar findings were also reported by Abbott, Dunn and Aberdeen (2012) who attempted to create a collaborative context for pre-service and in-service teachers to share their knowledge and competence of teaching. The results indicated professional development of both groups of teachers.

Through an experimental study, Spalding (2002) investigated the effect of an interdisciplinary teaching project on the learning of pre-service secondary teachers. The results indicated that pre-service teachers could be successful in creating and carrying out interdisciplinary curriculum and they were very satisfied and positive about their experiences. Similarly, Yilmaz and Çavaş (2008) examined the effect of the teaching practice on pre-service elementary science teachers' teaching efficacy and classroom management. As a result of the experiment, it was found that most of the participants owned high self-efficacy beliefs on their profession. Moreover, teaching experience positively influenced teachers' classroom management.

The examination of the literature also reveals scant research studies that have specifically focused on language teacher education programs. For example, in a survey study Coskun and Daloglu (2010) evaluated the efficiency of a language teacher preparation program from the perspective of the participating teachers. Their findings pointed to the teachers' consensus that the program was not effective enough to develop their linguistic competence. The results also revealed that the teaching methodology offered in the program required some serious modifications. In a similar study, Cosgun-Ogeyik (2009) investigated the quality of English language teacher education program in Turkish universities. The study confirmed that the program was successful in terms of meeting most of the educational objectives, but the findings showed a lack of culture-specific courses that could potentially improve teachers' knowledge of the English language and culture. Other studies in the Turkish context, by Erozan (2005) and Salli-Copur (2008) have yielded more or less similar findings. In particular, the participants in these studies mostly believed that pre-service language teacher training programs must consider language knowledge and spoken use of English more seriously. The importance of classroom management, assessment and instruction were also emphasized by most participants.

These findings, inter alia, shows that PTEPs may have various strengths and weaknesses, and when effectively evaluated, we can determine the extent to which they have been successful in terms of achieving their goals. The decisions to be made about what is possible and desirable in relation to the quality of programs that are offered to prospective language teachers need to be informed by multi-dimensional and empirical investigations that are conducted from their perspectives. Such studies can elucidate prospective teachers' views about the program they attend. Therefore, the present study was conducted to explore the effectiveness of the English teacher education program in Farhangian University of Bojnourd, with the aim of providing a descriptive account of the quality of the program.

3. Methodology
3.1. The research context and participants
This study was conducted in the English Department of a highly competitive teacher preparatory school, known as Farhangian University of Bojnourd, Iran. Each year around 60 students are admitted to study in this preparatory state university through successfully passing a comprehensive entrance examination. Upon passing various courses through a four-year long teacher education program, they are often employed by the Ministry of Education as full-time English teachers. The present study focused on a language teacher professional development program initiated in 2013 at

the request of the head of the university and took the form of a pre-service professional teacher education program.

A total of 40 prospective teachers of English, enrolled in the PTEP, participated in the study. They were all native speakers of Persian with an average age of 21. All of the participants indicated that they were full-time students, regularly attending the courses offered as part of the program. However, they did not have any experiences of teaching in a real class, because the majority of them were accepted in the university immediately after their high school graduation. In addition, although a few of the participants mentioned that they had attended various one-shot seminars, workshops and conferences presented in and outside their university, none of them had official certificates such as CELTA for teaching English.

3.2. Data collection

The study relied on multiple sources of data including a survey questionnaire, individual interviews, classroom observation and document analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Survey questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire was designed in this study in order to explore teachers' attitudes toward the program. The questionnaire included five sections, focusing, in turn, on program description and admission requirements, curriculum contents, resources, evaluation method and the participants' additional comments. These sections were identified based on a review of the relevant literature and a careful examination of various educational concerns highlighted in previous studies. Then, several open-ended questions were designed for each section to cover all the related concerns. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a copy of the questionnaire was sent to seven experts, (four university professors, one PhD candidate of TEFL and two EFL teachers). They were then asked to review and revise the questionnaire. Their comments were taken into account, and in order to detect any ambiguity in the items, the resulting version was administered to a group of 15 prospective teachers. Having ensured the precision and clarity of the items, the final version, which consisted of 22 items, was administered to the participants, as described above.

Individual interviews

Participants completing the survey questionnaire were asked if they would like to participate in a subsequent phase of the study where their responses to the questionnaire items would be explored in more detail. A total of 12 teachers volunteered. Then the researchers met the volunteers in their university to conduct the follow-up interviews. During the face-to-face interviews, which lasted on average 30 minutes, they were asked to expand on their questionnaire responses. All the questions were raised and discussed in the order that they appeared in the questionnaire. There was also room for more flexible interactions through which the participants were able to express any issues relevant to their views and experiences about their teacher education program. The interview data were then used to augment the analysis of the questionnaire responses.

Observation

A further body of data was collected through observing various classes in the program (ten sessions). The main purpose of this round of data collection was to consider the teaching process, the orientation of classroom discussions (practical versus theoretical orientation), the language of instruction and the extent of utilization of educational equipment. Thus, in observing the classes, particular attention was paid to educational facilities, classroom interactions, physical equipment, teaching methods and strategies, classroom procedure and so on. Collectively, then, the participants' responses to the questionnaire items, the follow-up individual interviews and the collected observation data allowed the researchers to examine the effectiveness of the program in detail.

3.3. Data analysis

The process of data analysis was carried out employing the content analysis method. Initially, various bodies of data were carefully sorted and coded based on five main themes: program description and admission requirements, curriculum contents, available resources and equipment, and evaluation method. Next, the frequency of each of these categories was tallied in order to identify the prominent themes. After that, a cross-data analysis procedure was followed. Attempts were made to avoid any pre-determined theoretical assumptions. To ensure the reliability of the analysis the two authors

analyzed the data independently and then had a discussion to assure "intercoder agreement" (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p. 428).

4. Results

For simplicity, the main findings of the study are summarized and reported in five main categories. Attempts are made to provide relevant quotes from the participants' views to convey key themes and what they typically thought about the program.

4.1. Program description and admission requirements

The analysis of the data revealed four themes regarding the description of the program and the admission procedure. First, a few shortcomings were revealed with respect to the entrance examination. Some teachers pointed out that the admission procedure is not designed to evaluate their professional skills and qualities about their future profession and their ability to teach and speak English appropriately; rather it intends to screen their religious and political beliefs. They mostly believed that there should be a due focus on language proficiency of the candidates and their classroom management abilities. In particular, they argued that the admission interview should be conducted by professional teacher educators and it must be in English. One of the interviewees asserted that

> *Throughout the admission interview, I started to teach tag questions, as an instance, to show my teaching style…But they immediately interrupted me and did not let me teach….I think they did not know anything about English and tag questions.*

From their point of view, the admission requirements were not able to single out the qualified candidates for teaching English. Some of the teachers specifically admitted that their English proficiency was not good enough, but they were accepted because, in the entrance exam, they could answer the questions related to subjects other than English, such as Persian literature, theology, etc.

> *I was very happy when I joined the program two years ago, but after a few days I noticed that most of my classmates were not able to speak English… I thought how are they expected to teach English?*

In addition some were scathingly concerned with the fact that the courses offered in the program may not provide instrumental motives for the teachers to improve their English. This in turn may fail to guarantee their success as English teachers.

Classroom schedule was also another theme that emerged from the analysis. The questionnaire responses showed that "inappropriate timing" was considered by many of the prospective teachers as one of the causes of "boring, useless and poor classes" in the program. They wrote that some of their general English courses are presented early in the morning, at 7:30, but at 9:00 they have to participate in other training courses. These assertions were also supported by the interviews and observations. The participants suggested that since most of the courses are compulsory and they are offered only once throughout the program, a more realistic scheduling can optimize the program and make the classes more interactive and productive. For many teachers, however, the length of the program was sufficient and could effectively allow them to improve their professional development for future career.

4.2. Program contents

When prompted with questions about the contents of the program, most of the participants argued against the inclusion of a few "irrelevant compulsory courses" in their program. In particular they emphasized that some courses such as *Islamic thoughts*, *Persian literature*, *Physical training*, *Developmental psychology, and Thematic interpretation of Quran* do not contribute to their professional development and should be offered as optional courses. In addition, some of the prospective teachers believed that more general English courses like *English conversation* could be offered in the first semesters. By the same token, they discussed that theoretical courses such as *English phonetics and phonology, Language teaching theories*, should be postponed, and presented later in the program. Some of the prospective teachers also suggested that they should take at least one general English course every semester, so as to develop their English proficiency throughout the program. There were also some complaints about the time allocated to some of the specific courses. For example, one of the teachers asserted that

> *There would be no harm in increasing the time of some of the classes like Reading comprehension, Conversation, Grammar. The more time you spend in these classes, the better…because you need to have a solid command of English to be able to teach [English] well.*

A further theme which emerged from the analysis was related to the nature of the courses. The teachers in this study made recurrent references to some of the courses such as *Language teaching theories, Research methodology, Teaching second language skills*, etc. that are "replete with theoretical discussions" and "lack any practical applications". They complained not only about the instructors' theoretical teaching styles, but also about the contents of the educational materials that "only provide theoretical substance for teaching methodology". The following assertions made by two of the participants show the importance of practical skills of teaching from their perspective.

> *Since the beginning of the program, over 90% of the program contained theoretical contents…*
> *there should be more focus and emphasis on practice in the program.*
> *We have requested more practical courses so as to practically practice teaching because most of*
> *what we need is to experience teaching and be able to manage the classes suitably.*

These assertions show that many teachers want practical advice on how to best handle the process of teaching in their classrooms. This poses a challenge against the theoretical courses that often fail to provide practitioners with practical implications. However, this problem was more pronounced in the remarks of some of the interviewees who criticized their instructors for not being able to handle practical courses.

> *Some of the teachers were not qualified and knowledgeable enough to be able to teach and present the books usefully and appropriately… They might be able to discuss [teaching methods] theoretically, but not to show practically.*
> *We have to buy two or three books for the same course and study some parts of each, simultaneously… We just have to pass the course and it does not challenge us deeply to learn the contents of the books.*

4.3. Available resources and equipment

The overall response to our inquiries concerning the resources and facilities was that many of the participants were not content with the available technological facilities in the teacher education center. Some teachers mentioned that they do have access to some educational facilities such as data projectors and a language laboratory in the university but many explained that these facilities are not accessible most of the time, and that they are allowed to use them only for a limited period of time throughout the term. They pointed out that during the last semester the language laboratory started to work very late and they had to pass their *English conversation* courses without any audio-visual facilities. Some teachers believed that using technology could certainly reinforce the program delivery and improve the quality of the program. Additionally, some suggested that the authorities buy new books, provide the prospective teachers with access to research databases and enable them to use the available equipment. Also, some of the participants complained about the quality of the internet connection and the limited number of computers in the language laboratory.

> *It is not possible for me [as a teacher] to learn how to implement new methods of teaching in my classrooms. There are not enough facilities available here... The educational materials that are used in different schools fit various methods of teaching… we can employ different methods of teaching in their centers. Facilities are also available at institutes… But here we do not even see how they work in practice, not only for teaching but also for learning.*

It seems that a lack of technological facilities such as TV, CD players, and computers is considered an important deficiency of the program from the perspective of the teachers. However, the mere availability of such equipment does not guarantee the use of them in the process of education. Rather, there should be a drive to the application of modern technology in developing teachers' professional development.

4.4. Evaluation system

This part considered the evaluation strategies that are employed by the instructors and educators in Farhangian University of Bojnord in order to evaluate the students' achievements and effectiveness of various courses in fulfilling the educational objectives. The study also focused on identifying the impact of the program, assessing its current state and suggesting how it could be improved.

A large number of the participants believed that final examinations for specialized courses were carried out through traditional pen and paper testing sessions, and were basically based on students' memorization of the theoretical contents. From their point of view, such examinations often fail to distinguish the qualified students from unqualified ones.

> *The employed evaluation methods in the program are outdated today, just like the ones used in high schools.*
> *You just have to read and memorize, sit for the exam, and then it is over.*

Regarding the evaluation methods employed in general English courses, the participants suggested that attempts should be made to maximize students' speaking time for both practicing and assessing. They also pointed out that panel discussions, workshops, educational trips, pair works and other group activities, "that we currently lack in the university" both can motivate the students to develop their communication abilities and provide educators with better opportunities to evaluate the qualification of the students.

Admitting that too many students in each class makes the assessment process very time-consuming and difficult for many course instructors, some of the participants suggested that modern forms of evaluation, such as "computerized and online evaluation methods" be employed. Others stated that "more attention should be paid to classroom activities and active participation classes". One of the interviewees discussed that taking standardized exams such as TOFEL and IELTS could be an important criterion for evaluating students' English proficiency level.

Regarding the graduation requirements, our findings showed that the prospective teachers in the study mainly hold an ambivalent view of the graduation requirements, valuing its potential for setting high standards, while at the same time, disapproving it for being overwhelmingly demanding and theoretical.

4.5. Additional comments

In assessing prospective teachers' opinions about the PTEP, the participants also had the opportunity to raise other issues and the make comments on any other aspect of the program. In all, 28 additional points were raised but 13 of these were unique, not supported by any other respondents. The remaining 15 comments covered 3 topics that were mostly related to living conditions and students' well-being.

1. The long distance from the city and lack of any regular public transportation system
2. Lack of equipped boarding-house buffet, and recreational facilities
3. Inappropriate living conditions of the dormitory

There were some other comments with a lower frequency (i.e. 1). Many of these comments were indeed specific individual problems. Therefore, these statements are not discussed here.

5. Discussion

The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of PTEP in Farhangian University of Bojnourd from the perspective of the prospective teachers who are currently studying in that university. Such an examination is critical to the understanding that is required for improving the quality of teacher education programs offered to prospective language teachers, because it helps us examine the educational discourse of Farhangian Universtity from the point of view of those who have largely been excluded from it (Mehrani, 2016). In the present study, teachers' responses were treated as a platform for considering the implications of the study for a better understanding of the quality of teacher education programs. Therefore, the discussions that follow reflect teachers' views and interpretations about such programs.

In the present study, the obtained results suggest moderate quality of various courses and the educational activities that are offered to develop professional competence of prospective teachers. Granted the absence of comparative data in other branches of Farhangian University in the Iranian context, we are hesitant to interpret how our findings relate to the effectiveness of PTEPs in the Iranian ELT community more generally. However, in line with the findings of the studies conducted in other contexts, many individuals expressed that they experience various difficulties including instructional and management problems.

This investigation showed that teaching methodology courses offered in our teacher education programs are often replete with theoretical discussions about teaching (Mehrani, 2015). At

the same time, some of the students demand more practical courses and further opportunities to practice teaching real classes. Thus, room must be left for more practice-oriented classes so as to provide prospective teachers with immense exposure to real language classes and various management issues that they are likely to encounter in their future carrier.

Students also suggested that more collaborative activities are required so that they could share their experiences, reflect on their current abilities and get instructional feedbacks from each other as well as from their mentors. In addition, they expressed their concerns regarding the importance of oral communication skills and emphasized that English conversation courses must be considered more seriously.

In sum, the study revealed that there is need to improve the candidates' both language and teaching competencies and there should be more focus on the practice components. In particular, our evaluation indicated that modifications of various types are required for the program. In particular instructional modifications are required in terms of conversation courses in order to help prospective teachers improve their speaking ability. In addition, attempts should be made in order to develop a more systematic method of course evaluation. Since the courses are offered in a full-time teacher education program, the process of course scheduling can also be made more systematic so as to distribute the courses throughout the week. Such an attempt will improve the students' achievements and the course outcomes, because they will have further opportunities to prepare for various lessons, and participate in the classes more attentively.

References

Abbott, M. L., Dunn, W., & Aberdeen, T. (2012). A boundary-spanning ESL teacher education project: Connecting campus learning to in-service teacher needs. *Canadian Journal of Action Research, 13*(2), 3-16.

Allinger, G. M., & Janak, E. A. (1989). Kirkpatrick's levels of training criteria: Thirty years later. *Personal Psychology, 42*, 331-342.

Brown, J. D. (1989). *Language program evaluation: A synthesis of existing possibilities.* In R. K. Johnson (Ed.). The second language curriculum (pp. 222-241). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chambers, R. (1994). Participatory rural appraisal (PRA): Analysis and experience. *World Development, 22*(9), 1253–1268.

Cosgun-Ogeyik, M. (2009). Evaluationof English language teaching education curriculum by student teachers. *Insan Ve Toplum, 9*(1).

Coskun, A., & Daloglu, A. (2010). Evaluating an English by teacher education program through Peacock's Model. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 35*(6), 24-42.

Daloglu, A. (1996). *A case study on evaluating the "certificate for overseas teachers of English" course curriculum at Bilkent University.* Unpublished doctoral dissetation: Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). *Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence*. Washington: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy University of Washington.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Youngs, P. (2002). Defining "highly qualified teachers": What does "scientifically-based research" actually tells us? *Education Researcher*, 31(9), 13-25.

Erozan, F. (2005). *Evaluating the language improvement courses in the undergraduate ELT curriculum at Eastern Mediterranean university: A case study*. Unpublished doctoral dissetation. Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

Feuer, M. J., Floden, R. E., Chudowsky, N., & Ahn, J. (2013). Evaluation of teacher preparation programs: Purposes, methods and policy options. *The National Academy of Education*.

Fitzpatrick, J. L., Sanders, J. R., & Worthen, B. R. (2004). *Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidlines (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Pearson.

Gredler, M. E. (1996). *Program evaluation.* NJ: Prentice Hall.

Mehrani, M. B. (2015). English teachers' research engagement: Level of engagement and motivations. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 3*(1), 83-97.

Mehrani, M. B. (2016). Iranian EFL teachers' conceptions of research: An explanatory mixed methods approach. *Research in Applied Linguistics, 7* (1), 95-117.

Mirkamali, M. (1994). Management in mainstream education Quarterly article of "philosophy of evaluation in management" No 4. *Third year serial No 12*.

Musset, P. (2010). Initial Teacher Education and Continuing Training Policies in a Comparative Perspective: Current Practices in OECD Countries and a Literature Review on Potential Effects. *OECD Education Working Papers*, 48, OECD Publishing.

Newton, E. H., & Braithwaite, W. E. (1987). Priorities and program effectiveness in teacher education: A study of the perceptions of teachers in training and their tutors. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 3*(3), 193-204.

Nunan, D. & Bailey, K. (2009). *Exploring second language classroom research: A comprehensive guide*. New York: Heinle Cengage Learning.

Rivkin, S., Hanushek, E.A., & Kain, J.F. (2005). Teachers, schools, and academic achievement. *Econometrica*, *73*(2), 417–458.

Salli-Copur, O. S. (2008). *Teacher effectiveness in initial years of service: A case study on the graduates of METU language education program*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.

Schalock, R. L. (2001). *Outcome-based evaluation (2nd ed.)*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

Scriven, M. (1999). The nature of evaluation: Part I. Relation to psychology. *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation, 6*(11). Retrieved April 8, 2016 from http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=6&n=11

Shahid, M. S. (2007, April). *The professional relevance primary school teachers: A neglected area of teacher education* . Paper presented in National Conference on the Changing Role of Teacher Education in the Era of Globalization, Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Spalding, E. (2002). Of organelles and octagons: What do preservice secondary teachers learn from interdisciplinary teaching? *Teaching and Teacher Education, 18*, 699-714.

Stufflebeam, D. L. (1980). An interview with Daniel L. Stufflebeam. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 2*(4), 90-92.

Stufflebeam, D. L. (2003). *The CIPP model for evaluation*.: Paper presented in the Annual Conference of the Oregon Program Evaluators Network (OPEN). Portland, Oregon

Stufflebeam, D. L., & Shinkfield, A. J. (1985). *Systematic evaluation.* Boston: Kluwe-Nijhoff.

Tunc, F. (2010). Evaluation of an English language teaching program at a public university using CIPP model. *Approval of the Graduate School of Sciences*.

Ustunluoglu, E., Zazaoglu, K., Keskin, M., Saraykoylu, B., & Akdogan, G. (2012). Developing a CEF based curriculum: A case study. *International Journal of Instruction, 5*(1), 117-128.

Wang, V. C. X. (2010). *Assessing and evaluating adult learning in career and technical education.* California: Zhejiang University Press.

Weston, C., McAlpine, L., & Bordonaro, T. (1995). A model for understanding formative evaluation in instructional design. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 43*(3), 29-46.

Worthen, R., & Sanders, R. (1998). *Educational evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines.* New York: Longman.

Yılmaz, H., & Çavaş, P. H. (2008). The effect of the teaching practice on pre-service elementary teachers' science teaching efficacy and classroom management beliefs. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science & Technology Education, 4*(1), 45-54.

THE EFFECT OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Seyed Mohammad Reza Amirian
Hakim Sabzevari University, smr.amirian@gmail.com

Rokhsareh Ghorbani Moghadam, ghorbanimoghadam_r@yahoo.com
Hakim Sabzevari University

ABSTRACT

WHILE MANY RESEARCHERS HAVE EXAMINED AND DISCUSSED THE EFFECT OF PORTFOLIO ON DIFFERENT SKILLS WITH DIFFERENT PURPOSES, APPARENTLY FEW HAVE INVESTIGATED ITS IMPACT ON LISTENING. THIS EXPERIMENTAL STUDY WAS AN EFFORT TO EXAMINE THE EFFECT OF PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS 'LISTENING AND ITS IMPACT ON THEIR MOTIVATION. TO CONDUCT THE STUDY, 58 PREINTERMEDIATE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS FROM A MAJOR LANGUAGE INSTITUTE IN SABZEVAR, IRAN, PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY. HAVING DETERMINED PARTICIPANTS' HOMOGENEITY VIA A PLACEMENT TEST THEY WERE DIVIDED INTO EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS WITH EQUAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS OF 27 IN EACH GROUP. ONLY THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP RECEIVED THE TREATMENT. EACH GROUP WAS GIVEN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST LISTENING AND A MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE. COLLECTED DATA WERE ANALYZED EMPLOYING T-TEST. THE RESULTS SUGGESTED THAT USING PORTFOLIO HAD A SIGNIFICANT PEDAGOGICAL IMPACT ON LISTENING AND MOTIVATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS. THE PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY WERE DISCUSSED LATER BRIEFLY.

KEYWORDS: PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT, MOTIVATION, LISTENING, EFL INSTRUCTION.

Introduction

Since assessment plays a key role in language learning, enabling students to check their needs and their progress, it is essential to assess the students' performance via using a variety of assessment techniques. Recently with the emergence of process-oriented approach to language teaching and testing, there has been a growing interest in the application of process-oriented assessment procedure which is different from traditional procedures. New forms to language assessment such as portfolio, conferences, diaries self- or peer assessment, have been incorporated into classroom-based assessment practices especially portfolio assessment (hereafter PA). The aim of classroom portfolio is to enhance teaching and learning in a learning centered framework. It is also an excellent pedagogical tool incorporateing both assessment and teaching (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Nejad Ansari, 2010). The alternative assessments such as portfolio assessment acts as link between teachers, learners, and parents which consequently might cultivates a more humanistic and constructivist atmosphere in language learning and teaching, (Brown, 2004). Yang (2003) defines portfolio as "a compilation of student's work, which demonstrates how much effort they have put into their work, their progress and achievement in their learning, and their reflection on the materials chosen for the portfolio". It can encase a range of materials like essays, reports, audio or video, homework, self and peer assessment (Brown, 2004). In recent years, portfolios have been utilized as an assessment instrument

and as part of activities to improve students' foreign language skills. A carefully structured portfolio assessment could serve as a better tool to identify ESL students' strengths and weakness. As Nunes (2004) reports portfolios can encourage EFL students to take ownership over their own learning and to engage in active reflection on the learning process, thus creating an environment favorable for the development of learner autonomy.

Albeit earlier studies have shown that portfolio writing is helpful in enhancing students' writing, reading ,and their motivation, the impact of portfolio on listening seems to be under explored. In the case of listening comprehension, portfolio assessment might become a very important resource in order to promote real interaction between the students and the process they are developing. Via implementation of this technique, both teachers and students could achieve a much deeper recognition of the weaknesses and strengths they have in the complex process of listening. In traditional classrooms, which are prevalent in Iran, apparently the teachers as the evaluators employ traditional methods of assessment such as multiple choice test, writing compositions ,and reading tests, the evaluation is not so clear-cut (Tamjidi & Birjandi, 2010). It seems that little attempt has been done to apply new methods of assessment like portfolio. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to shed light in this area. The present study aims at investigating the impact of portfolio assessment on Iranian EFL learners' listening performance. It seems that the possible role of PA in promoting L2 learners ' motivation and listening has remained underexplored in Iranian EFL educational settings. This study might have pedagogical significance as it will contribute to and extend previous work on the portfolio. The results obtained will potentially inform instructors in teaching and employing portfolio for listening. The current paper could add a negligible piece of knowledge to the studies.

Review of the Related Literature

A growing interest in alternative assessments such as portfolios, conferencing, peer assessment ,and self-assessment stem from the fact that unlike traditional assessment which only focuses on product, alternative assessments emphasize both product and process. That's why when portfolios introduced, it gained popularity among educators. Many educators have come to recognize that alternative assessments including portfolios are a significant means of capturing a dynamic picture of students' academic and linguistic development. Portfolio, according to O'Malley and Pierce (1996), captures self-diagnosis, self-improvement, and meta-cognitive processes of thinking. A portfolio assessment strategy is the purposeful compilation of student work reflecting achievements relevant to instructional goals (Gomez, 2000; Coombe & Barlow, 2004, cited in Izadi & Hakhverdian, 2014).

If used effectively, portfolio can offer valuable information that enriches instruction and assessment processes and makes them work together. By using of portfolio assessment, daily teaching practices could be linked to assessment so that assessment becomes a teaching strategy to improve learning. By means of portfolio assessment strategy, the teachers would be able to think about both teaching and learning processes (Izadi & Hakhverdian, 2014).

Portfolios as reflective and evaluative device document students' academic progress or achievement and personal growth and social development. To Calfee and Perfumo (1993), portfolios as an assessment device is important to demonstrate the learners' competence, rather than only choosing the correct answers and especially portfolio assessment provides more information about the learners, rather than just doing mechanical grading. In other words, because of its tangibility and authenticity , portfolio offers greater wash back which is beneficial to both teachers and learners. Another advantage of PA is that it allows the students to produce various types of more authentic works and enables them to be more creative. In addition, portfolio assessment gives the learners more freedom and helps them develop and improve higher order thinking skills and meta-cognitive strategies. Put alternatively , portfolio assessment provides an opportunity for learners not only to monitor their own progress, records of attainment, their learning strategies and take responsibility for their own goals but it is also used by teachers as a means of inspection, supervision ,and monitoring trainees' growth of knowledge, attitudes ,and skills process. To Woodward-Kron, R. & Thomson, E. (2000), "Portfolio puts both teachers and students in a learning conversation whose characteristics and veracity is still somehow unknown". Furthermore, portfolio aids students to integrate the development of proficiency skills, content knowledge, and grammatical competence(Taghi Hasani&

Rouhollahi Moghadam, 2012). With the help of portfolio students will be able to build up their experiences in language learning and this experience can motivate students to be more involved in the classroom because they feel that they have control in their own learning rather than just having the teachers tell them what they have to learn. Brown (2004) summarizes potential benefits of portfolios as follows:

- Foster intrinsic motivation, responsibility, and ownership,
- Promote student-teacher interaction with teacher as facilitator,
- Individualize learning and celebrate the uniqueness of each student,
- Provide tangible evidence of a student's work,
- Facilitate critical thinking self-assessment, and revision process,
- Offer opportunities for collaborative work with peers, and
- Permit assessment of multiple dimensions of language learning (p.257).

Although Portfolio serves significant pedagogical purpose, it suffers from certain drawbacks. Portfolio can be very time-demanding for both teachers and students. It might be daunting task for new teachers as well as for those who have never created a portfolio of their own portfolio. It also suffers from low practicality.

Ample research has acknowledged the significance of portfolio of either paper-based or of electronic counterparts, in second language learning (Song& August, 2002, Sharifi & Hassaskhah, 2011; Pezeshki, 2010). Their findings depicted plausible impact on the assessment of students' classroom performance either in writing or speaking. Pezeshki (2010), for instance, conducted a comparative study of e-portfolio, portfolio ,and conventional writing classes with two experimental and one control groups. The results revealed there is no significant difference among these methods considering their effect on Iranian students writing. Also, in another study, Sharifi, and Hassaskhah (2011) investigated the effect of portfolio assessment on writing employing a time series design. In this study they implemented in the first half of the semester a traditional–based teaching and in the second half a portfolio-based teaching. There were 5 pre tests and five post tests. They came to this conclusion that there is a close relationship between teaching and testing ;and portfolio has a positive effect on students writing ability. Similarly in another study, the impact of e-portfolios on oral performance of EFL college students was examined by Danny Huang and Alan Hung (2010). To conduct their study, two groups were selected experimental and control group. The experimental group constructed individual speaking e-portfolios where they uploaded recordings of their opinions on assigned topics on a bi-weekly basis, paid regular visits to their peers' e-portfolios, and dispatched feedback on their peers' work. By contrast, the control group simply recorded their opinions onto compact disks. Students' oral performance collected through pre- and post-study recordings were analyzed in terms of total words, lexical richness, and syntactic complexity employing ANCOVAs. The results unfolded that the e-portfolio group outperformed the control group in terms of total words and lexical richness but not in terms of syntactic complexity.

Motivation

In the success of learning, motivation plays a key role. Motivation, according to Dörnyei (2000), provides first the stimulus to embark upon learning, and then the driving force to keep on the long and often tedious learning process. Research in the field of L2 motivation commenced with the work of Gardner and his associates Lambert (1972). According to Gardner's (1985) socioeducational model of second language acquisition, groups of attitudes—integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation—support the learners' level of L2 motivation. Motivation is defined as a combination of L2 learners' desire to learn the L2, motivational intensity, and the attitudes toward L2 learning. These three clusters (integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and motivation) are named integrative motive. For more than three decades, the dominant motivation model in the L2 field was Gardner's theory. Later, Dörnyei (1994) introduced model socio-educational model of motivation particularly designed for a foreign language (Schmitt, 2002). For Dörnyei, motivation is a dynamic process which undergoes three phases:

The initial phase motivation needs to be generated. The motivational dimension of this phase is called choice motivation leading to selection or persuasion of task.

In the second phase motivation should be protected and maintained. This motivational dimension is referred to as executive motivation relevant to learning classroom setting.

The third phase is motivational retrospection which focuses on with learners' retrospective evaluation of how things went. The way students process their past experiences in this retrospective phase will determine the kind of activities they will be motivated to pursue in the future (Schmitt, 2002).

These three phases are associated with largely different motives. That is, people are influenced by a set of factors while they are still contemplating an action that is different from the motives that influence them once they have embarked on the activity. To Williams and Burden (1997), each individual L2 learner's motivation is influenced by both external factors related to the sociocultural and contextual background of the learner and internal factors related to the individual learner. Internal factors encapsulate the learners' attitudes towards the activity, its intrinsic interest, and the perceived relevance and value of the activity. Learners' sense of agency and feelings of mastery and control over the learning activity and their interest in it have also an impact on motivation. To boost motivation, as Noels (2001) argues three psychological needs have to be met: (1) a sense of competency achieved through seeking out and overcoming challenges; (2) autonomy; (3) relatedness—being connected to and esteemed by others belonging to a larger social whole (p. 54).

It should be noted different motivational systems available in the current literature do not necessarily exclude each other but can be valid at the same time if they affect different stages of the motivational process.

During the 1990s, Motivational studies turned their focus to cognitive and humanistic aspects of motivation. One of the most outstanding educational psychology theories of this period is self-determination theory (SDT) proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985). Human beings, according to SDT, possess three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the sense of unpressured willingness to perform an action, by competence it means the need for showing one's capacities, and relatedness is the need that a person feels he or she belongs with and is connected with significant others. It is proposed that the degree of satisfaction of these needs leads to different types of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Noels, Pelletier, Clement, and Vallerand (2000) having applied SDT to L2 research, posited different types of extrinsic motivation: external, interjected, and identified regulation intrinsic and extrinsic motives. Unlike Intrinsic motivation which refers to the desire to do extrinsic motivation comes from external factors, that is, learning for instrumental goals (such as earning reward or avoiding punishment). Intrinsic motivation consists of three parts:1) knowledge refers to motivation to do an activity for exploring new ideas, 2) accomplishment is the sensation of achieving a goal or a task,3) stimulation relates the fun and excitement involved in doing a task. External regulation viz, the least self-determined type of motivation, has to do with activities that are external to the learner, such as tangible benefits. Introjected regulation which is more internal is the second type of motivation. It refers to doing an activity due to some kind of internal pressure, such as avoiding guilt or ego enhancement. Identified regulation is the most self-regulated type of extrinsic motivation; this stage is the stage where students carry out an action due to personally related reasons and a desire to attain a valued goal. According to Noels et al. (2000), once students find neither an intrinsic nor extrinsic reason to do something, they are demotivated; therefore, they will leave the activity as soon as possible. As earlier quoted from Dörnyei (2001, 2003) motivation is not fixed and teachers need to work actively to improve students' and engagement by providing opportunities for them to engage in a more meaningful activity with the language. One way to do so is through engaging learners in designing portfolio tasks which have meaning and interest to them and offer opportunities for social interaction and self-evaluation. This is what current study decided to accomplish.

Research Questions
The present study tries to find answer to the following questions:

1. Does portfolio assessment have any impact on listening comprehension of preintermediate EFL Iranian Learners?
2. Does portfolio have any effect on motivation of perintermediate EFL Iranian Learners?
Based on the research questions the following null hypotheses were generated:
H01: Portfolio assessment has no impact on EFL learners' listening comprehension.
H02: Portfolio assessment has no effect on EFL learners' motivation.

2. **Instrument**
The following instruments were employed in the present study:
A Michigan test was utilized to check the homogeneity of the students in terms of English proficiency. This multiple-choice test consists of vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension sections. Two listening comprehension tests as pretest and post test were given to the students of both groups to find out their listening comprehension at the beginning and at the end of the treatment. The listening comprehension test consisted of 17 items selected from *top notch review section*. Regarding the scoring procedure, a correct answer was counted as "one point," and each incorrect/no response was counted as "zero." Therefore, the total score was 20 on the listening comprehension test. In addition, an adapted motivation questionnaire designed by Birjandi and Tamjid (2010) was used to assess the students' motivation toward using portfolio assessment on listening comprehension. The adapted questionnaire is based on five-point Likert scale ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement designed to measure particularly the university students' motivation in Iran. This questionnaire has been devised based on the Deci and Ryan's (1985) Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) as well as Guilloteaux and Dornyei's (2008) 20-item Student Motivational State Questionnaire; the former consists of six subscale scores, measuring participants' interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, effort, value/usefulness, felt pressure and tension, and perceived choice while performing a given activity; the latter consists of three aspects : a) attitudes toward the course, b) linguistic self- confidence, and c) L2- classroom anxiety. It should be mentioned that questionnaire items focus on intrinsic motivation mainly. Because the questionnaire has been designed for writing courses, to adapt it for listening courses it was modified to fit the purposes of this paper. Some of its items were restated to be comprehendible for the participants. The questionnaire items were converted to a retrospective form through the change of the tenses when used after the treatment. Plus wordings of some items were modified. It should be mentioned that this questionnaire was designed to target the students' situation – specific motivational disposition related to their listening course. The included questions were mainly attitudinal; they do not measure more general attitudinal or motivational factors, such as integrativeness. For the purpose of this study, the content validity was reevaluated by two university professors. Moreover, the questionnaire was piloted with a sample of 30 EFL learners taught by the researcher in an English class at Maraj institute, Iran. The results were calculated and the reliability of the questionnaire turned out to be 0.74 which is acceptable.
The final version of the motivation with 39 items used for this study measures the following 4 subscales:
1. Interest in foreign languages,
2. value/importance
3. perceived competence
4. effort

Participants
58 EFL language learners at preintermediate level all female from a private institute in Sabzevar were selected for this purpose. This institute offers courses of English, French ,and German as foreign languages, and any person who is interested in learning them can enroll in these courses. Each

program is divided into different levels (Basic I, Basic II, beginners, preintermediate I, lower Intermediate II, upper intermediate III ,Advanced and Discussion course and TOEFL,EILTS preparation) and each of them consists of 20 to 22 sessions. The number of each class is different depending on the numbers of applicants enrolled in each semester. Participants' native language was Persian. All the participants were studying English as a foreign language at preintermediate level at a private English language institute in Sabzevar. It should be mentioned that all students were already taken the placement test administered by the institute and were recognized as preintermediate, however to be assured of their homogeneity, in listening comprehension, two listening tests were administered as pretest and posttest to the students at the beginning and at the end of the study after the treatment. Then they were divided into the one control and one experimental group. The control group received the traditional instruction while the experimental group received the portfolio assessment. Ages of the participants ranged from 15 to 20. The classes were held three times a week, Saturday, Monday, and Wednesday. The researcher herself was the teacher of the two classes.

Research Design
The design of the study was quasi-experimental. There was a control group and an experimental group. Each group was given a pretest and posttest but the participants were not randomly selected and assigned to the groups for practical constraints. The independent variable was the implementation of portfolio assessment. The dependent variable was listening comprehension which was measured through a listening test. The t-test was used to see whether there existed any difference among listening performance of students before, and after the treatment.

Procedure
All the participants in both the experimental and control groups received instruction based on *top notch* by Joan Saslow and Allen Ascher (2011) (units 9-16)as their course book, *top notch Workbook*, and the pertinent audio materials. In the first session, after the pretest, the participants were explained what portfolio is, and the way they were expected to write a portfolio and participate in class activities. Other types of alternative assessment such as self-assessment and its significance in the process of collecting portfolio was elaborated to the learners. They were required to listen to the listening section of each unit and complete self-assessment checklist at the end of each session. Each listening section consists of activities in the format of multiple-choice, matching, and true-false. Before listening to the material and performing the activities, the students already knew what the material was going to be about; students were required to transcript each listening activity individually at home and bring it to classroom the next session. Due to time constraint in class ,they had to listen to the listening section and teacher explained those parts that were challenging. Furthermore, the unknown vocabulary was sometimes clarified in order that the students could better understand the material provided. CD was played two times so that they had the opportunity to revise their answers. Additionally, they did a process of self-correction and observed their right or wrong answers in the activities. The participants were free to complete self-assessment checklist in their native language or English at home when listening. They reported that they had spent usually around 10 minutes completing checklist, and some of them found it difficult because they may not have been accustomed to do these kinds of tasks. Yet, all of them had followed the instructions and the steps given satisfactorily. The participants were requested to keep the formats of the activities in a folder and handed in a copy of them in the last session. Such portfolio formats, indicate both the date and the name of each participant written so as to systematize the information in such a way that the data analysis procedure was easier to carry out. This portfolio formats contained some statements to be answered very objectively and basically. This self–assessment sheet helped both teachers and learners to monitor the listening comprehension and strategy use, evaluate their listening performance, reflections about the various listening challenges learners faced, the different approached they experimented with. Learner's self-assessment checklist was designed based on review of literature on listening skill and researcher's experience. Two colleagues were asked to evaluate its appropriateness. On this checklist the learners graded their own portfolio pieces based on the assessment criteria assigned. They were also asked to tick the strategies used during completing listening section. The

teacher checked their works to see if they had clearly understood how to use the checklist. She also through conferences and comments gave feedback on their strengths and weaknesses in listening and provided them with necessary feedback about their problems and helped them overcome their weaknesses in their comprehension ability. At the end of treatment, motivation questionnaire was given. Moreover, in an informal interview the teacher asked the participants' impressions on the procedure under study. It should be mentioned that the control and the experimental groups were identical for everything except for the treatment; portfolio-based instruction was only carried out for experimental group.

Results and Discussion

As the first step, the results obtained from pre-test were analyzed by means of SPSS 22 software. Table 1 depicts the descriptive statistics of the participants' performance in different groups on pre-test. As Table 1 shows, the two groups were similar concerning their performance on pre-test and the two groups have approximately similar mean and standard deviations. As data in Table 2 indicate, the t-observed (t= 1.063) is greater than the *t*-critical with degree of freedom of 52. Therefore, it can be claimed that there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups with regard to their listening comprehension. In other words, the two groups (CG and EG) were homogeneous before the treatment.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics On The Listening Comprehension Pre-Test For Both Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
E	27	12.00	1.641	.316
C	27	11.56	1.423	.274

E: Experimental, C: Control, N:Number

Table 2 .Independent Samples Test On the Listening Comprehension Pre-Tests for both groups

				Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper		
E – C Equal Variances Assumed	.011	.917	1.063	52	.293	.444	.418	-.394	1.283		
Equal Variances Not Assumed			1.063	50.982	.293	.444	.418	-.395	1.284		

Note. T = Computed value of t test; Df = Degree of freedom; Sig = Level of significance. P< .05.

Descriptive Statistics for the participants' performance on the posttest
The next step was to analyze the results obtained from post-test at the end of treatment period. The descriptive statistics of the participants' performance in different groups on post-test are illustrated in Table 2. As can be seen, the mean scores for the Experimental and Control groups are 16.04and 14.37, respectively, indicating that the Experimental group outperformed the Control group on the Posttest. In other words, the Experimental group had a better performance on the posttest than the Control group. Yet, independent sample *t-test*, was run to find out whether the difference between the achievements of the experimental and control groups was significant. As data in Table 3 display the t-observed value for the comparison of the subjects' mean scores on the post-test is 5.231, which is much higher than the critical value, at 0.05 level of significance and 52 degrees of freedom. Accordingly, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the Control and Experimental groups on posttest. Therefore, it could be concluded that, PA had a significant effect on the participants ' listening comprehension

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on the Listening Comprehension post-Tests for Both Groups

	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std. Error Mean
E	27	16.04	1.126	.217
C	27	14.37	1.214	.234

E: Experimental, C; Control, N;Number

Table 3. Independent Samples Test for the participants' performance on the posttests

	Levene's Test for Equality of ariances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
E –C Equal Variances Assumed	.595	.444	5.231	52	.000	1.667	.319	1.027	2.306
Equal variances not assumed			5.231	51.71	.000	1.667	.319	1.027	2.306

Note. T = Computed value of t test; Df = Degree of freedom; Sig = Level of significance. P< .05.

To assess the students' motivation, a questionnaire was distributed among students in the experimental group prior and after the treatment; the collected questionnaires were analyzed employing *Pair sample t-test*, the results in table 4 reveal a change in motivation of experimental group before and after the treatment. As the results indicate, significant value in this test is 0.000 which is lower than p-value 0.05. As is obvious there are significant difference between the motivation scores' mean in the post-test, and the motivation scores' mean in the pre-test in the experimental group, and the mean in the post-test is higher than pre-test -6.713. Therefore, it can be claimed that the portfolio had an impact on the motivation of the experimental group; the motivation score shows an increase in the experimental group. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 4: Paired Samples Test of pre and post motivation questionnaire for the experimental group

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	-20.500	21.38341	4.07663	-27.85810	-10.14190	-5.016	29	.000

Conclusion

Portfolio assessment (PA), according to the findings of the present study, was found to have a significant impact on EFL learners' listening achievement as well as their motivation. The participants in the experimental group outperformed listening comprehension test when they received portfolio-based instruction. Furthermore, the result of the self-report motivation questionnaire indicated that portfolio raised their motivation. Portfolio did not only enhance the students' overall listening achievement but also did boost their motivation toward learning English as a foreign language; it also served as link between the students' and teacher and cultivated cooperation among them. The positive effects of portfolios on learners' listening might be due to the fact that they offers learners opportunities to become actively involved in their own assessment and learning; develop a sense of responsibility towards their work. Involving students in the assessment and evaluation process is an essential part of the balanced assessment. With learners becoming partners in the learning process, they gain a better sense of themselves as readers, writers, and assessors. With students reflecting on what they learn and on how they learn, they develop the tools to become more effective learners. As students become more and more engaged in their learning, their motivation increases. To be motivated to learn, students need ample opportunity and support of their learning efforts.

The findings are in line with other studies (Husseini & Ghabanchi, 2014). According to Hosseini and Ghabanchi (2014), PA improves collaboration, learners' agency ,and autonomy that may contribute to enhancing motivation and language learning. Moreover, portfolio-based instruction improves their transferable skills such as reflection, critical thinking, cooperation ,and assessment. Portfolio empowers learners to develop self-awareness of their learning process by reflecting on and assessing their own learning. In addition, learners by evaluating their learning processes, they can develop awareness of their weaknesses and strengths in language learning, accordingly boost their reflective thinking.

Though the paramount importance of portfolio has been acknowledged throughout the literature, apparently there is not consistency in the results of research. There are certain factors affecting implementing alternative assessment in language learning and teaching. For example, culture is vital in implementing efficiently such approach inside the classroom. Since portfolio is based on western context, it cannot produce the same effect in eastern-context as it has generated in western-context. Like other innovations, portfolio-based instruction needs to be tailored to the cultural and linguistic context in which they are used. Therefore, syllabus designers and teachers should take into account while developing and employing portfolio for teaching activities. Pedagogically speaking, the educators can improve their students' listening proficiency by applying portfolio as well as boost their motivation. Since PA is a valuable way to measure learning as well as learning process Teachers can incorporate it to enhance L2 students' reflective awareness of listening and promote their self-growth as human beings and learners. The students in this study learned to detect and reflect more on their listening weakness and strengths while listening.

It is recommended that instructors incorporate PA in order to develop L2 students' listening confidence and enhance their motivation ,and finally reduce their listening anxiety. This study is

limited in some aspects. First, the sample size was small, thus the results cannot be generalized to all EFL students in Iran. Second, the time for instruction was short. The current study only focused on listening skills and motivation and has ignored gender, major, age factors; the further research is needed to examine the impact of above factors.

REFERENCES

Birjandi, P., & Tamjid, N. H. (2010). The role of self-assessment in promoting Iranian EFL learners'motivation. *English language teaching*, 3(3), 211-220.

Brown, D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practice.* White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

Campos, J. (2010). Choosing a good scale to evaluate students'writin*g.* Retrieved March 10, 2015 from

Danny Huang, H.& Alan Hung, Sh. (2010). Effects of electronic portfolios on EFL oral performance. *Asian EFL Journal Quarterly* 12, 2.

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The roles of attitudes and motivation.* London, England: Edward Arnold.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York, NY: Plenum.

Dörnyei, Z. (1990). Conceptualizing motivation in foreign language learning. *Language Learning,* 40, 45–78.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *Modern Language Journal,* 78, 273–284.

Dörnyei, Z. (2000). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). The psychology of the language learner. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research, and applications. Language Learning, 53, 3–32.

Gomez, E. (2000). *Assessment portfolios: Including English language learners in large-scaleassessments*. Retrieved April 22, 2015, from http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/0010 assessment.html

Ghoorchaei, B., Tavakoli, M., & Nejad Ansari, D. (2010). The impact of portfolios assessment on Iranian EFL students' essay writing: A process- oriented approach. *Journal of Language Studies,* 10, 35-51.

Hosseini1, H. & Ghabanchi Z.(2014). The effect of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' reading comprehension and motivation. *English Language Teaching*; 7, 5.

Izadi,E.,& Hakhverdian,A (2014). The effect of portfolio assessment versus peer assessment on writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. 6(3), 76-95.

Noels, K. (2001). New orientations in language learning motivation. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), Motivation andsecond language acquisition (pp. 43–68). Honolulu: Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, Universityof Hawaii at Manoa.

Noels, K. A., Pelletier, L. G., Cl_ement, R., & Vallerand, R. J. (2000). Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and self-determination theory. *Language Learning*, 50, 57–85.

Nunes, A. (2004). Portfolios in the EFL classroom: Disclosing an informed practice.*ELT Journal, 58*(4), 327-335.

O'Malley, M. J., & Valdes Pierce, L. (1996). *Authentic assessment for English language learners: Practicalapproaches for teachers.* New York: Addison Wesley Publishing Co.

Pezeshki, M. (2010). Comparative study of e-portfolio, portfolio and conventional writing classes. Unpublished M.A. thesis. Allame Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.

Saslow, J.& Ascher,A (2011). *Top Notch* 2,2ed. Pearson Education, Inc.

Sharifi, A., & Hassaskhah, J. (2011). The role of portfolios assessment and reflection on process writing. Retrieved April 3 from http:// http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/PDF/March-2015.pd

Song, B. & August, B. (2002). Using portfolios to assess the writing of ESL students: A powerful alternative? *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 11(1), 49-72.

Taghi Hasani,M &Rouhollahi Moghadam,C.(2012).The Effect of Self- Assessment on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Skills. *Iranian EFL Journal*, 8(5), 363-370.

Valencia, S.W., & Calfee, R. (1991). The development and use of literacy portfolios for students,classes, and teachers. *Applied Measurement in Education,* 4(4), 333-345.

Williams, M., & Burden, R. L. (1997). Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach. Cambridge:Cambridge University Press.

Woodward-Kron, R. & Thomson, E. (2000). A text based guide to academic writing. *CDRom. Dept. Of Modern Languges, University of Wollongong.*

Yang, N. (2003). Integrating portfolios into learning strategy-based instruction for EFL colledge students.*International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 41(4), 293-317.

EFL TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TOTAL ENGLISH UPPER INTERMEDIATE: AN ANALYTICAL EVALUATION

Maryam Ghezlou (corresponding author)
Department of English, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan (Isfahan) Branch, Isfahan, Iran
E-mail: mamghezlou@yahoo.com
Postal address: No 302, Mahdieh Alley, Khorram Street, Arak, Markazi, Iran

Laleh Moghtadi
Department of Foreign Language, Nourabad Mamasani branch, Islamic Azad University, Nourabad Mamasani, Iran

Mansour Koosha
Department of English, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan (Isfahan) Branch, Isfahan, Iran
Postal address: Isfahan, Iran
E-mail: mansourkoosha@yahoo.com

ABSTRAC: THE PRESENT STUDY INTENDS TO EVALUATE TOTAL ENGLISH UPPER INTERMEDIATE (TEUI), AS AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT) MATERIAL IN THE EFL CURRICULUM SETTING. FOR THIS PURPOSE, TWO CHECKLISTS DEVELOPED BY LITZ (2005), NAMELY "STUDENT TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM" AND "TEACHER TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM" WERE PRESENTED TO 101 EFL LEARNERS AS WELL AS 26 EFL TEACHERS AT IRANMEHR INSTITUTE IN GARMSAR AND KISH INSTITUTE IN TEHRAN RESPECTIVELY. THE DATA WAS THEN ANALYZED AND THE FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE OCCURANCES OF VARIOUS EVALUATIVE ITEMS OF BOTH CHECKLISTS WERE CALCULATED. RESULTS DEMONSTRATED THAT BOTH EFL LEARNERS AND TEACHERS, DESPITE DIAGNOSING SOME MINOR DEFICIENCIES REGARDING THE TEXTBOOK, EVALUATED THE TEUI POSITIVELY WITH RESPECT TO PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS, LAYOUT AND DESIGN, ACTIVITIES, SKILLS, LANGUAGE TYPE, SUBJECT AND CONTENT, AND GENERAL CONSENSUS. ALL IN ALL, BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY IT CAN BE CLAIMED THAT TOTAL ENGLISH UPPER INTERMEDIATE CAN STAND UP REASONABLY WELL TO A SYSTEMATIC IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS. SOME IMPLICATIONS, AS A FINAL POINT, ARE RECOMMANDED TO THE TEACHERS AND MATERIAL DEVELOPERS IN THE EFL CONTEXTS.

KEY WORDS: TEXTBOOK, EVALUATION, CHECKLIST, ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL), ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT)

1.Introduction

As the commonest form of teaching materials, textbooks or course books, in Ur's (1996) words, play a fundamental role in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Richards (2001) contends that instructional materials are the 'basis' of a great portion of the received language input by the language learners. It was not until 1980s that the pedagogical researchers' interest grew on the issue of ELT materials, their development, and their evaluation (Rashidi and Zare Asl, 2011).

1.1.Why Textbooks?

Throughout the history of second/foreign language acquisition, a plethora of research lines has been conducted on the merits or demerits of using ELT materials, particularly textbooks in the field (Sheldon, 1988; Cunning Worth, 1995; Caringer, 2000; Craves, 2000; Tomilson, 2001; Mc Grath, 2002). Numerous researchers have substantiated the considerable advantages of the textbook to both learners and teachers (Sheldon, 1988; Cunning Worth, 1995; Ur, 1996; Litz, 2005). The value of learners and their individual needs has been also echoed by recent theories of language pedagogy such as communicative language teaching (Savignon,1991), task-based language teaching (Skehan, 1998), and sociocultural theory of learning (Ellis, 2003). Therefore, a general characteristic of a textbook, distinguishing it from materials of teaching methodologies, is its ability in satisfying learners' needs and interests. Sheldon (1988, cf. Litz, 2005) for instance introduces textbooks as not only the visible heart of ELT programs but also a great help to both the students and teachers. Besides, Cunning Worth (1995), and Ur (1996) attribute the learner autonomy and self-directed learning to a great extent to the textbooks for providing a reference resource for the learners. Reiterating the prominent role of textbooks in the teaching/learning process, Tok (2010, p. 509) introduces them as "the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners in a selected, organized way".

Teachers, quite similarly, could take numerous advantages of the textbooks ranging from teacher training (Ur, 1996), boosting the confidence of novice teachers (Cunning Worth, 1995; Tok, 2010), to the provision of a framework (Ur, 1996; Richards, 2001).

The literature, on the other hand provides some evidence on the disadvantageous aspect of the textbook on the ground that it might contain inauthentic language (Yule et.al. 1992; Richards, 2001; Litz, 2005), deskill teachers and limit them (Ur, 1996; Richards, 2001), reveal gender bias or stereotyping (Renner, 1997; Dominguez, 2003), and not reflect students' needs (Richards, 2001).

Despite such controversies over the positive and negative aspects of textbook utilization, all the educational theoreticians share one thing in common and that is careful selection of the textbook for satiating both learners' and teachers' needs and interests.

1.2.Why Evaluation?

One of the features that has absorbed a good deal of attention recently is the evaluation of textbooks as a crucial parameter in determining the success of an ELT material in pursue of the main objectives and principles of the latest pedagogical methodology in that era (Sahragard et al. 2009). In recent years, with the postulation of learner autonomy, it seems quite essential to conduct more evaluative works on the instructional materials available to learners.

The term "evaluation" has been used to define a variety of processes in the field of second or foreign language teaching. While Lynch (1996, p.2) defines evaluation as a "systematic attempt to gather information in order to make judgments and decisions", Cunning Worth (1995) and Ellis (1997) describe it as a method helping teachers to move beyond impressionistic assessments. Litz (2005, p.9) further considers the evaluation a great help to the teachers to "acquire useful, accurate, systematic, and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook material". Weir and Roberts (1994, cf. Richards, 2001) substantiates two major aims for the evaluation of a language program. The first objective which is conducted for the benefit of an external audience or decision maker, is assessing the effects of a special program by the end of an educational cycle. The second one as Alamri (2008) puts forward is indicating the suitability of particular approaches or techniques under given conditions, and whether they meet claims made for them.

Richards (2001) emphasizes the consideration of the role of the textbooks, the teachers, and the learners in the program before running an actual evaluation of a textbook. McGrath (2002) also believes that textbook evaluation is of significant value for the development and administration of language learning programs. Additionally, Tomilson (2001) highlights the magnificent role of textbook evaluation as an applied linguistic activity which proves to be quite beneficial to teachers, administrators, and material developers who judge on the effectiveness of materials on learners.

The necessity for conducting such evaluative works is seriously felt when one realizes that introduction of a textbook without a prior or post evaluation could definitely lead to a plethora of agonizing consequences in the whole field from the individual learners to the publishers who might have sacrificed the ethics of pedagogy for their own benefits. The present study is a partial attempt to

fill such gap with respect to a newly introduced ELT material called *Total English* Upper Intermediate (TEUI) in some of the Iranian English institutes. More precisely, the real advantages or disadvantages of the textbook will be addressed through administration of Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form (TTEF) and Student Textbook Evaluation Form (STEF). To fulfill so, the following research questions are posed:

1. How do EFL teachers and students assess *TEU* in terms of practical considerations?
2. How do EFL teachers and students evaluate *TEU* in terms of layout and design?
3. What are EFL teachers' and students' conceptions with regard to the activities of the *TEU*?
4. What are EFL teachers' and students' perception of the skills embedded in *TEU*?
5. Do EFL teachers and students assess the language type of *TEU* the same?
6. Do EFL teachers and students find the subjects and content of *TEU* beneficial?
7. Do EFL teachers and students come to the same conclusion/s regarding the utilization of *TEU*?

2. A review of textbook evaluation studies conducted in Iran

Considerable deficiencies have been pointed out by scholars working on ELT materials, especially the EFL textbooks taught at Iranian high schools. The most noticeable drawbacks includes: scarcity of sufficient work on vocabulary and listening skill (Jahangard, 2008; Koosha and Akbari, 2010), prevalence of lower-order skills over the higher-order ones (Riazi and Mosalanejad, 2010), not familiarizing learners with cultural issues of other countries (Khajavi and Abbasian, 2011); overemphasizing grammatical structures (Talebinezhad and Mohammadzadeh, 2011); highly focusing on stimulus-response pictures (Moghtadi, 2012); lack of emphasis on pronunciation and listening activities (Zohrabi, et al. 2012); and finally EFL teachers' negative attitudes toward the textbooks (Abbasian and Hassan Oghli, 2011). In sum, as Moghtadi (2014, P.67) reiterates "the education they [Iranian students] receive neither enables [them] to attain full competence in using the English language nor helps them to interact with competence".

Such deficiencies, quite evidently, will lead many EFL learners to look for a substitute in order to improve their communicative language ability. According to Alemi and Bagheri (2013) private language institutes could be reliable substitute for fulfilling such an aim. Multitude of materials, especially textbooks, are being utilized at different institutes evaluating which has been vigorously followed by scholars through various methods. Checklist, as one of the most reliable evaluation techniques, has been developed and utilized by different scholars including Sheldon (1988), Cunning Worth (1995), Ur (1996), Littlejohn (1998), Bloom's revised taxonomy (2001), Litz (2005), Razmjoo (2010). Studies conducted in the context of the present study such as Ahmadi Safa et al. (2015), Alemi and Bagheri (2013), Askaripur (2014), Razmjoo and Kazempourfard (2012), Moazam and Jodai (2014), Sahragard et al. (2009), Soozandehfar and Sahragard (2011), and Zaremoayed (2007) have made use of the abovementioned checklists for evaluating the most popular ELT textbooks including New Interchange, Top Notch, Four Corners, and Total English.

Having reviewed all the checklists, Litz's (2005) "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form" and "Student Textbook Evaluation Form" (TTEF and STEF respectively) were found to be the most suitable for the purpose of the present study. Litz's checklists have been utilized for evaluating Total English in Iran by studies conducted by Alemi and Bagheri (2013) and Moazam and Jodai (2014).

Alemi and Bagheri (2013) evaluated TE textbooks with particular attention to its cultural content. To fulfill so, they administered Litz's (2005) checklist, designed for the students, to 60 students in three proficiency levels. Their results demonstrated the students' satisfaction of all the focused aspects. Point of culture, however, some shortcomings were discerned. Participant students were of the idea that the books did not provide sufficient material for acquainting them with the target culture. They further criticized the books for lack of activities focusing on practices related to foreign culture such as games, families or schools, as well as introducing the English spoken countries. In another research, Moazam and Jodai (2014) presented the teachers' checklist adopted by Litz (2005) to a group of 20 Iranian male and female EFL teachers of varying teaching experience and university degrees. Results of descriptive statistics indicated that in general the TEI could reasonably well to an in-depth

evaluation. The participant teachers, in particular, evaluated the price, layout and organization quite satisfactory.

In the same vein, Jafarigohar and Ghaderi (2013) assessed the merits and demerits of Total English and Top Notch, as another commonly used textbook in Iranian institutes. Presenting a different checklist (Razmjoo, 2010) teachers with minimum one year teaching experience of both textbooks, they found out that Top Notch was evaluated positively with regard to language components, tasks, activities, exercises, and critical discourse analysis features. Total English, on the other hand, was assessed more satisfactorily in terms of general considerations.

Keeping the above mentioned advantages and disadvantages in mind and considering the fact that the studies conducted so far on Total English has not dealt with both EFL teachers' and students' perspectives on the textbook, the present study makes an endeavor to shed more light on the merits and demerits of the Total English Upper Intermediate via presentation of Litz's (2005) "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form" and "Student Textbook Evaluation Form" (TTEF and STEF respectively) to both EFL teachers and students as the main benefactors of the textbook evaluation (Richards, 2001; Ur, 1998).

3.Methodology
3.1. Participants

101 female EFL students along with 26 EFL teachers were randomly selected from two English language institutes of Iran Mehr in Garmsar, and Kish in Tehran. Results of demographic questionnaires demonstrated that the student subjects of the present study ranged in age from 19 to 26 years old, with an average of 22.5 years. They had started working on Total English from intermediate level and had passed at least 10 semesters on TE in general. Interchange series were the EFL material previously in vogue at both institutes. Teachers, mostly female (female=20, male=6), had an average of 28 of age. They had at least 4 years of EFL teaching experience in general, and 2 years of Total English in particular. The reason why the present study relied on active participation of both teachers and students was the fact that the evaluation of a specific EFL material is most beneficial when "it is collectively undertaken by everyone involved in the teaching and learning process" (Chambers, 1997, cf. Litz, 2005, p.10).

3.2.Instruments

Throughout history of textbook evaluation, various pedagogical scholars have introduced checklists intending to diagnose the possible strengths and weaknesses of the materials among which Cunning Worth's (1995), Ur's (1996), Littlejohn's (1998), and Litz's (2005) evaluation forms were the most prevalent. The present researchers found Litz's (2005) checklists along with the objectives and aims of the study. The 10-Likert type checklists titled as "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form" and "Student Textbook Evaluation Form" (TTEF and STEF), consisted of 7 sections on Practical considerations, Layout and design, Activities, Skills, Language type, Subject and content, and finally general consensus on the further utilization of the textbook. Each section on the checklists comprised varying items/statements pertinent to that specific part. The statements in the current study were labeled as "Highly Disagree (1-2)", "Disagree (3-4)", "Partially Agree (5-6)", "Agree (7-8)", and "Highly Agree (9-10)". They made a total number of 40 on TTEF, and 25 on STEF with the reliability index of .91 and .94 respectively as a whole. The results of TTEF and STEF are depicted in Table 1. As Table 1 demonstrates, when reliability coefficient is concerned, both TTEF and STEF checklists have high degrees of reliability.

Checklists	N of Respondents	N of Items	Alpha
Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form	26	40	.91

| Student Textbook Evaluation Form | 101 | 25 | .94 |

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of Teacher/Student Evaluation Forms

3.3. procedure

2.3.Statistical analysis
After collecting the filled out questionnaires from the participants, the data were fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 19) for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics including means and percentages of each section were calculated for describing and summarizing the participants' responses. Results related to each section are depicted in tables and figures and the following explanations are provided accordingly.

3.Results and discussion
Results of descriptive statistics concerning the overall performance of the respondents on TTEF and STEF in general and their sections, i.e. practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content, and general consensus are represented in Figure1 and Figure 2.
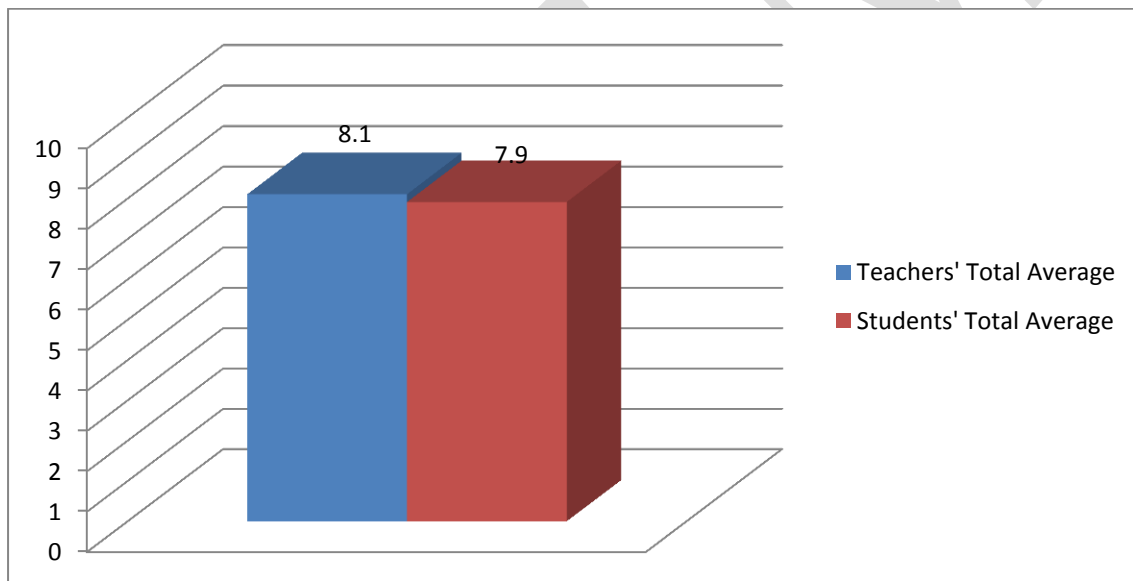
Figure 1. . Textbook Evaluation Form Analysis (Total English Upper Intermediate, Overall Average)

As Figure 1 demonstrates both teachers and learners with the total means of 8.1 and 7.9 agree with the points made in both checklists on the TEUI. The students however seem to enjoy a slightly lower rank and the possible reasons will be discussed in the following section deeply.
Participants also show high attitudes toward the TEUI's specific aspects included in the TTEF and STEF (Figure 2). Of the seven categories in the checklists, teachers and students made higher means on three of the sections, and the teachers could make higher means compared to the learners. Factors contributing to the students' lower averages in the categories will also be elaborated in the following section.
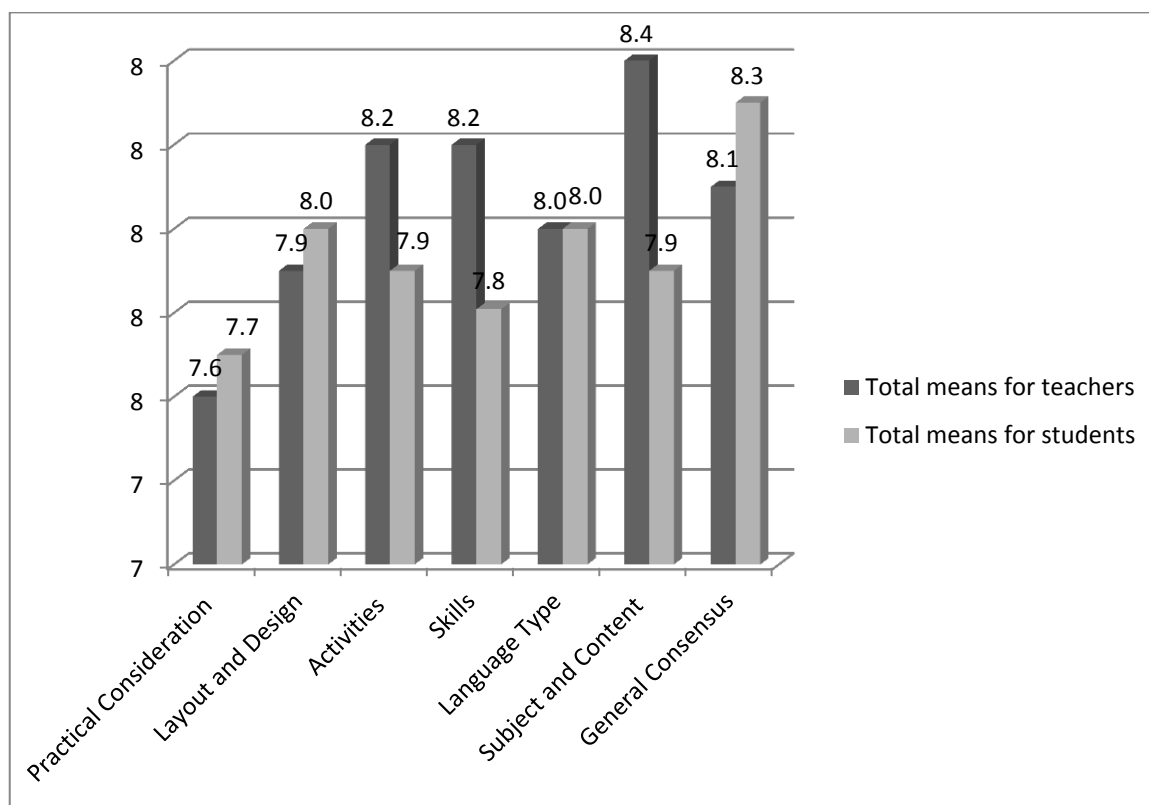
Figure 2. Teachers' and Students' overall average on each section of Checklists

3.1. Practical considerations

Practical considerations generally refers to the reasonable price and availability or accessibility of the textbook in the market. Scrutinizing whether it is up to date or not as well as its accessories, i.e., work book, audio tapes or CDs, and teacher's guide further locate under such category. Results of descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 revealed comparatively relative agreement of the respondents (teachers and students) on practical considerations with the total means of 7.68 and 7.70 respectively. To shed more light on this criterion, TEUI was published in 2005 by Longman corporation. As its authors, Richard Acklam and Araminta Grace, acknowledge both at the Student Book's cover page and Teacher's manual, they have been trying to help teachers and students through provision of a complete package of effective, easy-to-use resources including Students' Book and Work Book with/without catch-up CD Rom, DVD and Video, Teacher's Book, and the accompanying Website (WWW.longman.com/totalenglish). Teachers also appreciated the supplementary materials in addition to its cost and accessibility very highly (92.1 % agreement and high agreement).

Practical Considerations	Teachers	Students
	%	%
Highly Agree	46.1	56.2
Agree	46.0	23.8
Partially Agree	7.6	-
Disagree	-	8.6
Highly Disagree	-	7.6

Table 2. Respondents' percentages on practical considerations

Student's Book in addition to presenting a very clear organization enjoys movie and writing banks along with audio scripts of the units' listening modules on its last pages. Such supplementary sections as well as the effective and clear organization could have immensely affected the students'

perceptions and motivation in pursuing their English learning under the protection of TEUI, and the findings are indicative of such enthusiasm. 16.2 percent of students nevertheless did not agree with the criteria and the reason could be the Textbook's relatively high price.

3.2. Layout and design

The second research question dealt with how teachers and students evaluated *Total English* Upper Intermediate in terms of layout and design. Results of both TTEF and STEF are depicted in Table 3.

Layout and Design	Teachers	Students
	%	%
Highly Agree	73.1	64.7
Agree	19.1	16.2
Partially Agree	3.8	3.8
Disagree	8.8	7.6
Highly Disagree	-	3.8

Table 3. Respondents' percentages on layout and design

As the Table demonstrates 92.2 percent of teachers and 80.9 percent of students assessed the book so positively. Such positive outcome could be analyzed from different perspective. The first favorable point could be the organization of activities in such an effective way that led both respondents to assess the design criteria positively. Each unit includes a lead-in page, 3 triple-page input lessons, each following a specific "Can Do" learning objective, Vocabulary page, Communication page, Reference page, Review and practice page, Film bank, Writing bank and Pronunciation bank with each section having a specific purpose to follow. Such objectives are made apparent to both teachers and students at the outset of each lesson through "Grammar" and "Can Do" aims. "Can Do" however includes lexical and functional purposes, and for not being mentioned explicitly, 12.6 percent of teachers might have disagreed with this criteria. Another merit of the textbook could be the provision of vocabulary lists, review section and exercises, and evaluation quizzes in each unit. To be more precise, "Review and practice page", in TEUI authors' opinion, notify the teachers on the weak or strong areas of the learners, and hence help them in devising and incorporating further practice. This page along with "Reference page" are particularly reliable and effective sources for students who were not able to attend the class. They also lessen the teachers' responsibility in conveying the previously taught grammatical points and vocabulary to the students.

Another positive point is likely the teachers' high satisfaction with TEUI Teacher Resource Book containing four immensely helpful sections of 1) teaching suggestions for every individual activity in each lesson, 2) photocopiable resource bank "designed to practice the grammar and vocabulary covered in the Students' Book units in a freer, less structured and enjoyable context" (The Teacher's Resource Book, p. 8), 3) DVD sheets providing more practice on the DVD material already present in the Film bank in the Student's Book, and 4) Photocopiable progress Tests containing grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening and writing skills. Such support could also contribute to the teachers' favorable ideas with regard to TEU.

Twenty percent of the learners however did not reveal positive attitudes with the layout and design section and the most obvious reason for that can be the eye catching pictures (both real and cartoon) which despite being clearly pertinent, they are not organized in an effective way so that students could not follow the activities easily for the intrusion of the motivating pictures.

3.3. Activities

By the introduction of "ZPD" (Zone of Proximal Development) in 1970s, Vygotsky revolutionized the field of language teaching and learning on the ground that the best way for learners to move onto the next level of learning would be working with an adult or a more competent peer at a level that is just above the learner's present capabilities. Highlighting the significant role of context in learning, he emphasized on collaborative work set at a level just beyond the learner's current level of competence. He further focused on the use of language in all its aspects as a tool in both bringing meaning to and

obtaining meaning from learning activities. Such prominent activities seem to have been observed via communicative and meaningful activities as well as pair and group works, although the last activity, group work, is not emphasized as much as pair work and so leading to the students' 11.4 percent of dissatisfaction with grouping techniques.

Activities	Teachers	Students
	%	*%*
Highly Agree	76.8	68.7
Agree	19.0	16.2
Partially Agree	-	-
Disagree	3.8	3.8
Highly Disagree	-	7.6

Table 4. Respondents' percentages on activities

Grammar and vocabulary have got pivotal role in TEUI by occupying several sections. Although they are presented in real contexts, i.e., listening and reading throughout the units (one more point in favor of TEUI), the inductive method in presenting them might not have been appreciated well by the learners for the previously dominant method of audiolingualism in the context of Iranian educational system. The inductive approach despite having undeniably positive consequences, exerts more reflection on behalf of learners and they might not enjoy reflecting on every grammar point. This method on the other hand is to a great extent helpful to the EFL teachers since it lessens the load of explanation work on them. Still another rewarding perspective of TEUI is the demonstration of activities in a way conducive to both the internalization of the newly introduced language, and production of creative, independent responses on behalf of the learners. "Lifelong leaning section", "Communication page", and multitude discussing questions following every activity pave the way for fulfilling such objective. Incorporation of various free and controlled exercises and tasks which intend to foster both fluency and accuracy could be also regarded as a valuable aspect of TEUI. The Activities criteria on the whole was evaluated approximately positively by both EFL teachers and learners (m=7.92 vs. m=8.2 respectively, Figure 2).

3.4.Skills
The fourth research question was intending to assess EFL teachers' and students' ideas with respect to the Skills incorporated in TEUI. Results of analysis (Table 5) demonstrated teachers' mean of 8.2 (m=8.2) and students' mean of 7.8 (m=7.8) on the Skills criteria. Such agreement is obtained through consideration of various contributing factors. The first factor could be the students' ability to personalize the situation (their ultimate need) offered by the textbook via a plethora of communicative and meaningful tasks. Great care has also been taken to create a balance on the presentation of all skills as well as sub skills except for the writing skill which will be discussed in the following.

Skills	Teachers	Students
	%	*%*
Highly Agree	84.5	59.0
Agree	15.3	16.2
partially Agree	-	-
Disagree	-	3.8
Highly Disagree	-	7.6

Table 5. Respondents' percentages on skills

With respect to receptive skills (reading and listening), the textbook provides plenty of simple as well as more challenging listening and reading texts from authentic, real life resources such as TV or radio programs, journals, and magazines. Further sub skills related to listening and reading skills are

provided through a multitude of activities and exercises focusing on strategies such as listening for general or specific information, reading for the gist, inferencing, guessing the meaning of new vocabularies through the context, skimming, scanning and so on. Another advantageous factor worthy of consideration is the incorporation of various accents such as British, American, Australian and some non-native ones in the listening materials. Such method could definitely familiarize the learners with different variants of English, and besides prepares them for the real contexts in which they have to communicate with native or non-native speakers while getting their message across. Students of the present study however might not have a positive attitude towards such accents for contradicting their already acquired accent, i.e., American English consolidated through Interchange and New interchange series previously dominant among Iranian English academies.

Regarding productive skills (speaking and writing), the authors of TEUI have made an attempt to encourage speaking fluency in various ways such as students' completing some tasks, discussing interestingly challenging topics as well as structuring discourse. Additionally "How to sections" and "communication pages" provide further opportunity for their speaking practice. Concerning writing, the textbook not only provides miscellaneous tasks designed specifically on the writing process in each unit, but also some models for the designated writing task and some suggestions for writing at the back of the Student's Book. One of the merits of TEU in writing skill is its presentation of the skill in the first pages of the unit so creating this assumption among the learners that writing has a role as vital as the other skills. Other ELT materials such as Interchange, American Streamline, or Headway quite contrary postponed the activities related to writing skill to the end of each unit so belittling its real role. Looking at the other side of the coin, the TEU seems bias toward the number of writing tasks since the learners will have one opportunity in each unit to practice writing whereas they have to deal with various tasks on other skills or even sub skills simultaneously.

Another glaring feature of TEUI could be the integration of individual skills into the practice of other skills. Unit 1, for instance teaches writing through discussion, reading, and listening. Grammar in Unit 2, as another example is presented through listening and speaking hence letting the students practice their structure in the real contexts of listening and oral communication.

3.5.Language type

Table 6 demonstrates some findings related to the fifth research question, "Do teachers and students assess the language type of *Total English* the same"? A quick glance through the Table of language type gives the impression that while approximately a high proportion of teachers and learners agreed and highly agreed with the language type of the TEUI (99.9% of teachers vs. 88.5 % of students), a small percentage of learners (7.6) highly disagreed with that. In general, both respondents obtained exactly the same mean of 8.0 (Figure 2) on this section.

Language Type	Teachers	Students
	%	*%*
Highly Agree	69.3	68.5
Agree	30.6	16.2
Partially Agree	-	3.8
Disagree	-	-
Highly Disagree	-	7.6

Table 6. Respondents' percentages on language type

Inspecting the language type section more deeply, the TEUI presents the grammar points and vocabulary items not in an easy to difficult fashion throughout units, but mostly based on the topic related model in which they arise. The EFL students nevertheless might consider such method slightly above their current level. Throughout lessons in each unit however they start from the basic structure and then move to the more complex ones. Regarding authenticity as was mentioned earlier, the authors have tried to extract the materials from real contexts in which they appeared so they seem like real-life English. The aural texts also offer a diverse range of registers and accents. Following an inductive approach or "guided discovery" in authors' terms (Teacher's Resource Book, p.9), the TEUI

authors encourage learners to think deeply about the grammar and then work out the rules for themselves. Such objective is fulfilled through form focused and meaningful focused drillings as well as "Active grammar box" for explaining and analyzing new structure in much simple words. The textbook further places a fairly high emphasis on teaching high-frequency and useful vocabularies pertinent to the topic of the lesson both inductively (through reading and listening modules) and deductively (through vocabulary pages). Various aspects of vocabulary like guessing the meaning from the context, parts of speech, synonyms and antonyms, phrasal verbs, and idioms are also practiced via contextualization of new vocabularies in different activities such as comparing the structures, matching exercises, word maps, and the dialogues. This is one more positive point in favor of TEUI obtained through the current study.

Regarding language functions, the book has devised them in a way that students can personalize themselves in that situation and try to perform the required function such as writing a formal letter of application, an informal email, or a diary entry, talking about their possessions or memories, describing how to prepare and cook a dish, or telling a funny story. Such finding further substantiates the advantageous side of TEUI as well as the other ones mentioned up until now.

3.6. Subject and content

The sixth research question deals with the "subject and content" of the textbook under evaluation. As Table 6 reveals, both teachers and students evaluate the textbook positively (m=8.4 vs. m= 7.9, Figure 2) in this respect. Introduction of topics mostly related to the students' personal needs and interests have contributed immensely to such high level of agreement among the learners (85%). The authenticity of the subject and content of TEUI as a vital criteria in selecting a course book (Litz, 2010) has definitely resulted in both teachers' and learners' appreciation of that. The subject of each unit revolves on interesting topics such as making excuse, taking risks, exploring new people or places, dealing with crimes, reading the minds of others and so on. "Person to person" and "How to" sections also focus on the words or expressions which are essential for learners while performing on specific function/s.

Subject and Content	Teachers	Students
	%	%
Highly Agree	76.9	60.2
Agree	22.9	20.0
Partially Agree	-	4.8
Disagree	-	3.8
Highly Disagree	-	7.6

Table 7. Respodents' percentages on subject and content

Regarding stereotypes and cultural bias, the textbook seems to some extent successful since topics are likely to be common among different cultures which lead to setting any sort of bias against a special class, identity or ethnic background aside. One of the reading texts (Unit 5) however seemed to present some kind of bias against Iranian nationality. This point is not mentioned just for the fact that it is the nationality of the authors of the current research. It is intended to notify the TEU authors on some undeliberate incorporation of materials that might seem offensive to some learners or distort a nation's picture on the face of the globe. Such bias, although so trivial, could have also undermined the writers' justice in eliminating the political stereotypes. Alemi and Bagheri (2013) also in their study found out that the students did not praise the fact that Total English included texts transferring cultural bias. With respect to sexism, the book has made an attempt to present equal number of pictures on both genders. Unfortunately in three units, the males' illustrations outnumber the females' and it could pave the way for the students'(all female) 11.4% of dissatisfaction with subject and content. The illustrations used in TEUI also make obvious that the authors have been very careful to avoid stereotypes. The overall analysis shows that TEU does not present gender stereotypes in which women are assigned subordinate status because of their gender. As the pictures indicate women and men are assigned positive role models and given equal space in society. In Schaw and

Scott's opinion (1984) sex-fair materials broaden students' attitudes about gender roles and increase the motivation to learn. Such visibility is evident in pictures presenting women as police officers, directors, or solo sailors, and men teaching children, doing housework, or taking care of babies

3.7. General consensus

The last research question deemed both EFL teachers' and learners' assumptions on the further utilization of TEUI through four items on TTEF and two items on STEF, and the responses are presented in Table 8.

General consensus	Teachers	Students
	%	%
Highly Agree	53.9	68.0
Agree	42.3	8.6
Partially Agree	3.8	4.8
Disagree	-	7.6
Highly Disagree	-	3.8

Table 8. Respondents' percentages on general consensus

As the findings indicate both teachers and students highly agree on the use of the textbook for next semesters (96.2 % vs. 76.6% respectively). Such positive attitude is further strengthened via TEUI's raising of interest, its appropriateness for the language learning aims, and its suitability for both homogeneous and heterogeneous classrooms. Furthermore, in the previous sections, numerous merits were also mentioned on the practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, and subject and content which all substantiate not only teachers' vigorous attempts to make use of it, but also students' high levels of reliance on the textbook as an authentic and motivating resource for pursuing their EFL objectives in the context of Iran. The total means of 8.29 and 8.30 (teachers' and students' respectively, Figure 2) are further indicating such rewarding consequence. Jafarigohar and Ghaderi (2013) also substantiated the Total English books' priority over other ELT materials in their study, ofcourse only from the viewpoint of EFL teachers, not learners or both.

4. Conclusion

Total English is a relatively new ELT material currently introduced to Iranian English institutes. The real benefits or shortcomings of the textbook however has remained unknown to all those involved in the learning and teaching process, i.e., pedagogical authorities and administrative, teachers, and students. The present study was an endeavor to shed more light on the obscure aspects of the TEUI through an in-depth evaluation of the textbook by both EFL teachers and learners. What differentiates this study from previously conducted ones is its reliance on both teachers and students as indispensible parts of the educational curriculum. Chambers (1997, cf. Litz, 2010) also contended that the evaluation could be quite effective in case that it is undertaken by all those who are involved in the learning and teaching process. A close inspection of the results revealed that both teachers and learners assessed the textbook much favorably with the total means of 8.1 and 7.9 respectively. Students however obtained a relatively lower rank than the teachers (Figure 1). Taking the seven sections of the checklists into consideration, teachers and students also revealed approximately high levels of satisfaction with the practical considerations, layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content, and overall consensus (Figure 2). Alemi Bagheri (2013) also came to the same conclusion concerning the above mentioned items. Students as the only participants in their study, however believed that TEUI was not capable of meeting the students' expectations for having opportunities to discuss and think critically about their world view. In their opinion, the textbook was not either successful in providing the activities which focus on perspectives and practices of the foreign culture

With respect to practical considerations, the availability of the book, the teachers' manual, workbook, and audio CDs were acknowledged by teachers. Such acknowledgement was also

obtained in a study conducted by Jafarigohar and Ghaderi (2013) on TEUI series. The students despite agreeing with its availability, might have found the TEUI a bit costly.

Both respondents evaluated the layout and the design of the textbook really optimistically with averages of 8.0 and 7.9 respectively. Such high averages indicate the TEUI's success in providing the glossary, review sections and evaluation quizzes. The Teacher's Book also could satisfy the EFL teachers' real needs in presentation of the material via suggesting innovative ideas on teaching different activities in the Student Book, photocopiable worksheets, and extra tests. The order of its eye catching illustrations is nevertheless disproportionate which leads to the students' confusion in following the organization of activities and exercises.

Regarding activities, the TEUI also presents equal spaces for them and the respondents' positive assessment of this section revealed the textbook's focus on both accuracy and fluency, incorporation of individual, pair and group work, and contextualization of the new structures and vocabularies. Such findings seems to be in line with Alemi and Bagheri (2013) in which the students revealed to be fairly satisfied with sufficiency of communicative practices and the incorporation of individual and pair work. The TEUI also encouraged students' internalization of the newly introduced language through introduction of meaningful and awareness raising tasks. One shortcoming concerning the activities was the fact that the number of group works was quite disproportionate to the individual and pair works. Enhancing the group work among the students would undeniably establish successful communication.

The TEUI also confirmed to have worked on all skills and sub skills essential for the learners' progress. Jafarigohar and Ghaderi (2013) also came to the same conclusion regarding the skills and subskills. The writing skill however did not receive the same attention that the other skills had obtained. Two significantly bright aspects of TEU was found to be the incorporation of natural accents, and the integration of individual skills into the practice of other skills. Concerning stress and intonations, the units did not offer any explicit working on them and such problem might have resulted in the students' 11.4 percent of dissatisfaction with the book's skills. Presentation of only one writing activity could have affected the learners' expectations of the textbook.

With respect to language type, results demonstrated that the textbook contained authentic English, briefly and easily explained grammar points, and a diverse range of registers and accents. Findings of Alemi and Bagheri (2013) however were not in total agreement with the findings of the present study since they had found out that the students partially agreed with the fact that the textbook provided a wide range of registers and accents. In their opinion, the book did not progress so properly in teaching grammar and vocabulary.

Participants additionally had high regards toward the subject and content of the book since they were challenging enough to motivate the students to continue their efforts on learning English via TEUI. Great measures had been taken to remove any sort of bias toward a specific nationality or gender, but a close analysis of the book showed the prevalence of male pictures over the females, and it could have distorted the picture of the TEUI's authors in the minds of the respondents, all female. The textbook also presented a text which was not greatly in favor of the Iranian nationality. By the elimination of such biases or stereotypes, the textbook might reveal to have observed the justice quite well.

In conclusion, for the multitude number of worthwhile and notable features obtained through the current study, it can be claimed that the TEUI is to a great extent in line with the criteria in selecting and administering the ELT material in EFL contexts such as Iran. Despite a few shortcomings, both EFL teachers and students substantiated the advantageous aspects of the textbook. Through this evaluative work, it is hoped that not only TEUI's real stance can be recognized properly, but it also substantiates its credence as a reliable ELT source among EFL language institutions.

References

Abbasian, G.R. & Hassan Oghli, E. (2011). Evaluation of EFL textbooks: a study of learner-teacher criteria compatibility. Iranian EFL Journal, 7 (4), 1-307.

Ahmadi Safa, M. , Moradi, M., & Hamzavi, R. (2015). Iranian EFL teacher and learners' perspectives on potentiality of Top Notch series for intercultural competence development. Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 3(2), 47-66. www.urmia.ac.ir/ijltr

Alamri, A.A. (2008). An Evaluation of the Sixth Grade English Language Textbookfor Saudi Boys' Schools. Unpublished MA thesis, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia.

Alemi, M. & Bagheri, H. (2013). Evaluation of Total English" textbooks from cultural perspectives. Journal of English as an International Language, 8 (1), 69-80.

Askaripour, S.A.A. (2014). A textbook evaluation of new version (2nd edition) of "Top Notch English Series". English for Purposes World, 44(15), 1-30.

Byrd, P.(2001). Textbook: Evaluation for selection and analysis for implementation. In M. Celce-Murcia(Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3 rd ed.) (pp: 415-428).Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Cunnings Worth, A. (1995). *Choosing Your Coursebook*. Heinemann.

Dominguez, L.M. (2003). Gender Textbook Evaluation. Unpublished MA thesis, University of Birminghham, United Kingdom.

Ellis, R. (1997). The Empirical Evaluation of Language Teaching Materials. *ELT Journal*,(51)1.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Graves. K. (2000). *Designing Language Course*. Heinle & Heinle publishers.

Jafarigohar, M. & Ghaderi, E. (2013). Evaluation of two popular EFL textbooks. International journal of applied linguistics and English Literature. 2 (6), 194-201.

Khajavi, Y. & Abbasian, R. (2011). English language teaching, national identity and globalization in Iran: the case of public schools. International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 1 (10), 181-186.

Littlejohn, A. (1998).The analysis of Language teaching materials: Inside the Trojan horse. In B.Tomlinson(Ed.), *Materials development in language teaching* (pp: 190-216). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Litz, D. (2005). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: A South Korean case study. Asian EFL Journal,n.a., pp.1-53. http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Litz_thesis.pdf

Lynch, B. K. (1996). *Language Program Evaluation: Theory and Practice.* Cambridge:Cambridge University Press.

McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*. Edinburgh:Edinburgh University Press. Moghtadi, L. (2012). Visual elements within Iranian EFL high school textbooks. International journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Reseach, 1(1), 45-55.

Moazam, L. & Jodai, H. (2014). Textbook evaluation: a reflection on Total English (Intermediate). Theory and Practice in Language Studies., 4 (11), 2402-2409.

Moghtadi, L. (2012). Visual elements within Iranian EFL highschool textbooks. International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 1(1), 45-55. jfl.iaun.ac.ir/pdf_4203_b0647b01b3dec722d607d1490220b3ed.html

Moghtadi, L. (2014). Iranian high school EFL textbooks: why they should be modified. International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistic World, 5(2), 53-69. www.ijllalw.org/finalversion**525**.pdf

Rashidi, N. and Zare Asl, H.R. (2011). A Comparative in-Depth Evaluation of Two Pre-University English Textbook. *Iranian EFL Journal,* 7(1), 18-33.

Razmjoo, S.A. (2010). Developing a textbook evaluation scheme for the expanding circle. Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies. 12 (1), 121-136.

Richards, J.C. (2001). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge, : Cambridge University Press.

Razmjoo, A. & Kazempourfard, E. (2012). On the representation of Bloom's revised taxonomy in Interchange coursebooks. The Journal of Teaching Language Skills, 4(1), 171-204. www.jtls.shirazu.ac.ir/article_336_0.htm

Riazi, A.M., & Mosalanejad, N. (2010). Evaluation of learning objectives in Iranian high-school and pre-university English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy,. The Internet TESL Journal, 13 (4), 1-16. www.zabangroup94.mooche.ir/

Sahragard, R. Rahimi, A. and Zaremoayeddi, I. (2009). An Indepth Evaluation Of Interchange Series (3rd Edition). Porta Linguarum, 12, 37-54. www.ugr.es/~**porta**lin/...nume**ro12**/3%20R%20

Sauvignon, S.J. (1991). Communicative language teaching: State of the art. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25, 261-277.

Sheldon, L. (1988). Evaluating ELT Textbooks and Materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(2).

Soozandehfar, S.M. & Sahragard, R. (2011). A text evaluation of speech acts and language functions in Top-Notch series. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 1(12), 1831-1838. www.academypublication.com/issues/past/tpls/vol01/**12**/23.pdf

Tok, H. (2010). TEFL textbook evaluation: From teachers' perspectives. *Educational Research and Review*, 5(9), 508-517. www.academicjournals.org/journal/ERR/article-full.../3CAEBA44186

Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Talebinezhad, M.R. & Mahmoodzadeh, M. (2011). Re-evaluation of internationally and locally developed ELT materials in Iran: a bimodal approach to material development. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2 (6), www.academia.edu/

Tomlinson, B. (2001). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ur, P. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yule, G., Matthis, T., and Hopkins, M. (1992). On Reporting What Was Said. *ELT Journal*, 46(3).

Appendix I
STUDENT TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM
A/ Practical Considerations:
1. The price of the textbook is reasonable.
2. The textbook is easily accessible.
B/ Layout and Design:
3. The layout and design is appropriate and clear.
4. The textbook is organized effectively.
C/ Activities:
5. The textbook provides a balance of activities (Ex. There is an even distribution of free vs. controlled exercises and tasks that focus on both fluent and accurate production).
6. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.
7. The activities incorporate individual, pair and group work.
8. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts.
9. The activities promote creative, original and independent responses.
D/ Skills:
10. The materials include and focus on the skills that I need to practice.
11. The materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills.
12. The textbook pays attention to sub-skills - i.e. listening for gist, note-taking, skimming for information, etc.
E/ Language Type:
13. The language used in the textbook is authentic - i.e. like real-life English.
14. The language used is at the right level for my current English ability.
15. The progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate.
16. The grammar points were presented with brief and easy examples and explanations.
17. The language functions exemplify English that I will be likely to use in the future.
18. The language represents a diverse range of registers and accents.
F/ Subject and Content:
19. The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to my needs as an English
language learner.
20. The subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic.
21. The subject and content of the materials is interesting, challenging and motivating.
22. There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbook.

23. The materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.

G/ Overall Consensus:

24. The textbook raises my interest in further English language study.

25. I would choose to study this textbook again.

Appendix II

TEACHER TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM

A/ Practical Considerations:

1. The price of the textbook is reasonable.

2. The textbook is easily accessible.

3. The textbook is a recent publication.

4. A teacher's guide, workbook, and audio-tapes accompany the textbook.

5. The author's views on language and methodology are comparable to mine (Note: Refer to the 'blurb' on the back of the textbook).

B/ Layout and Design:

6. The textbook includes a detailed overview of the functions, structures and vocabulary that will be taught in each unit.

7. The layout and design is appropriate and clear.

8. The textbook is organized effectively.

9. An adequate vocabulary list or glossary is included.

10. Adequate review sections and exercises are included.

11. An adequate set of evaluation quizzes or testing suggestions is included.

12. The teacher's book contains guidance about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage.

13. The materials objectives are apparent to both the teacher and student.

C/ Activities:

14. The textbook provides a balance of activities (Ex. There is an even distribution of free vs. controlled exercises and tasks that focus on both fluent and accurate production).

15. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.

16. The activities incorporate individual, pair and group work.

17. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts.

18. The activities promote creative, original and independent responses.

19. The tasks are conducive to the internalisation of newly introduced language.

20. The textbook's activities can be modified or supplemented easily.

D/ Skills:

21. The materials include and focus on the skills that I/my students need to practice.

22. The materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills.

23. The textbook pays attention to sub-skills - i.e. listening for gist, note-taking, skimming for information, etc.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

24. The textbook highlights and practices natural pronunciation (i.e. stress and intonation).

25. The practice of individual skills is integrated into the practice of other skills.

E/ Language Type:

26. The language used in the textbook is authentic - i.e. like real-life English.

27. The language used is at the right level for my (students') current English ability.

28. The progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate.

29. The grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations.

30. The language functions exemplify English that I/my students will be likely to use.

31. The language represents a diverse range of registers and accents.

F/ Subject and Content:

32. The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to my (students') needs as an English language learner(s).

33. The subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic.

34. The subject and content of the textbook is interesting, challenging and motivating.

35. There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbook.

36. The materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.

G/ Conclusion:

37. The textbook is appropriate for the language-learning aims of my institution.

38. The textbook is suitable for small-medium, homogeneous, co-ed classes of university students.

39. The textbook raises my (students') interest in further English language study.

40. I would choose to study/teach this textbook again.

LANGUAGE TEACHERS' ASPECTS OF IDENTITY AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR: IDENTITY, BEHAVIOR AND PROFESSIONAL CHANGE

Zeinab Kafi, PhD Candidate, English Department, Islamic Azad University, Torbat Heydarieh Branch, Iran.
kafizb@gmail.com

Khalil Motallebzadeh, Associate Professor, English Department, Islamic Azad University, Torbat Heydarieh Branch, Iran.
kmotallebz@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

PROFESSIONALISM HAS BEEN DIFFERENTLY GIVEN DEFINITIONS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS AND ITS SETS OF ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS AS WELL AS COMPONENTS ARE MAINLY DESCRIBED AND IDENTIFIED WITH REGARD TO THE SPECIFIC PROFESSION ONE AIMS TO UNCOVER. TO FURTHER DEVELOP AND INVESTIGATE THESE PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS IN EXPERIENCED TEACHERS, WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY HELP THEM AS WELL AS EDUCATORS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THEIR TEACHERS' IDENTITY AND DO AT THEIR BEST TO DEVELOP SUCH BEHAVIORS IN THEIR STUDENTS! CONSEQUENTLY, THIS PAPER WILL OFFER AN IN DEPTH INSIGHT INTO THE PROBABLE RELATION BETWEEN A SAMPLE OF 100 IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' ASPECTS OF IDENTITY (PERSONAL, RELATIONAL, SOCIAL AND COLLECTIVE) AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT OF TWO VALIDATED AND RELIABLE QUESTIONNAIRES AND AFTERWARDS WILL EXHIBIT THE OUTCOMES AS WELL AS THE DISCUSSIONS RELEVANT TO THE CONTEXTS OF TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

KEYWORDS: INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY, COLLECTIVE IDENTITY, RELATIONAL IDENTITY, SOCIAL IDENTITY, PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR, ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

1. Introduction

One of the target issues of the modern education world of today is definitely the issue of teacher identity in general and language teacher identity in particular which in contrast to years of remaining dark, has recently been receiving limelight. Moreover, as language teachers, you ,must have come up with the issue that why is it that some teachers, though coming from the same educational backgrounds and degree of education or even the same years of teaching experience, stand out more than their counterparts in their profession or let's say their immediate working context? Or you may even ponder upon the issue that why it is that such teachers are labelled as professionals in public eye? Is it something more attached to their self-identity that has ever urged them to behave professionally? This crucially occurs based on what Lundell and Collins (2001) propose, claiming that people construct their social selves, or better put their social selves, within the everyday realities that they inhabit, that is to say through giving it much critical reflection of values, world views, and perceptions that they themselves or others around them are exposed to and acquire. Once this social identity tends to occur within the career settings, and the specific scientific and behavioral aspects of one's career emerge in it, one's professional identity/behavior is shaped. As Kerby (1991) put it,

professional identity is an on-going process of interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences. Therefore, as MacLure (1993) highlighted, many teachers have repeatedly reported feelings of tension between the identities they constructed over time and the professional values that they had been holding (as cited in Jalili, T. and Nosratzadeh, H.,2015).

Keeping all these issues in perspective, the purpose of this study would be to delve into Iranian EFL teachers aspects of their identity (personal, relational, social and collective) in order to check out the existence of its probable relation with the extent they behave professionally in their teaching as their immediate profession! Besides, the researchers would also pin point the kind of identity, personal, relational, social and collective, that has got the most significant correlation/contribution to teachers' professional behavior.

2. Review of Related Literature
2.1. Professionalism and Professional Behavior
Talking about professionalism and going through various definitions provided by many researchers, it sounds crucial to shed light on what is meant by this widely used term. Largely, one can come up with the idea that professionalism is comprised of attitudes and behaviors and that attitudes are often described and measured because of their relationship to behaviors and this behavior is best defined as the manner of conducting oneself. Besides, in a more detailed explanation of the notion, professional behavior can also be described as behavioral professionalism i.e. behaving in a manner to achieve optimal outcomes in professional tasks and
Interactions (Hammer, 2000).

Professional behavior is closely related and similar to one's professional Identity. It is the constructed professional identity that results in behaving professionally. What adds to this interrelatedness between the two is the fact that according to Marcelo (2009), "many scholars share the view that professional identity is important in the education sector and it is through professional identity that teachers perceive themselves, hence creating a sense of camaraderie and professional connection and recognition. As such, professional identity is a function of teachers' efforts to define themselves and others" (p. 9, as cited in Komba, Anangisye and Katabaro, 2013).

2.2. Perspectives on Identity and Its Various Facets
Prior to delving into how identity is dealt with, it seems urgent to bring to surface a clear picture of what identity is. The concept of identity has become more widely discussed in applied linguistics after Peirce's (1995)/Norton's (1997) publication of her study with immigrant women in Canada. Norton (1997) defined identity as "people's understanding of their relationship to the world, the construction of that identity across time and space, and people's understanding of their possibilities for the future" (p. 410, as cited in Maria and Barcelos, 2015).

 Crucial to bear in mind, is this facet of identity which insists on its being dynamic, multifaceted and multiple! Therefore, one cannot expect a stable, unchanging identity of the same person through time, since individuals develop aspects of their identity through time or even adopt new identities! Following this pattern of thought, "Lemke (2008) presents five interesting perspectives on identities that help shed light on their relationship to beliefs and emotions. First, identities are multiple. This means that we behave differently in different situations (formal and informal) and settings (professional and intimate) and with different people (children or peers). Second, identities are multi-faceted and dynamic, they develop and change as who we are is constructed within the constraints of our interactions in different settings in our lives with different people" (p. 19). "Third, identities are hybrid. Thus, we may be forced to act in more normalized ways than we would like to since there may exist contradictions between our subjective identities, who we are to ourselves, and our projected identities, who we wish to seem to be to others (p. 20). Fourth, identities are contested and conflictual, not only because there are struggles over the kinds of identities we are allowed to *claim* for ourselves, but also over the kinds of identities we can *conceive* for ourselves (p. 31). Lastly, identities are performed. In other words, we have what Lemke (2008, pp. 24-25) has called longer and short-term identities and identity-in-practice. Longer-term identities, inscribed in our habitus, are dispositions for action in the moment, and are themselves constituted through many actions across

many moments. Our longer-term identities are performed and constituted through ways of enacting relationships to people who are significant to us in scenarios we recognize as familiar" (as cited in Maria and Barcelos, 2015).

2.3. Related Studies

Since the scope and purpose of the current study is to provide a more comprehensive perception of EFL teachers' professional behavior and their aspects of identity, some relevant studies in the field will be pin pointed hereby. For instance, as Sarani and Najjar (2012) have stated in their reviewed literature, the social dimension of teacher professional identity was examined from cultural perspectives. Duff and Uchida (1997), for example, conducted a study on teachers' sociocultural identities in EFL classrooms. They examined professional, social, and cultural roles of English language teachers. According to this study, identity is not context free but interlocutors, institutional settings, and so on influence on the ways English language teachers perceive and interpret themselves and, as a result, identity affects their choices and strategies of professional development and the way they get involved in the profession of teaching community.

Also, Tafazoli and Jafari (2013) added a new dimension to the relevant literature showing that "teachers' perception of professional identity differ significantly from the early days of experiencing language teaching as a prospective teacher. In other words, language teachers perceive their identity as a process in flux and like a pendulum swinging back and forward. Besides, teachers' agency and how it can be manipulated to change professional identity has been examined by Zolghadri and Tajeddin (2013) i. e. construction of professional identity in the EFL context is also influenced by language teachers' colleagues as well as their previous teachers. It was revealed that language teachers follow and imitate some characteristics of their teachers who taught them in the past" (p. 173, as cited in Sarani and Najjar, 2012).

Finally, Zhang, and Zhang (2015), took an ethnographic approach to address the research questions by following two NNESTs over a period of 15 years to see how their experiences as teachers affected their way of looking at themselves as well as other English speakers with reference to their professional competence and practice, which are part of their professional identity. They came up with multifaceted conclusions in each regard, including that the NNESTs thought that being able to speak English beautifully from a prosodic point of view was significant, but native Singapore English speakers did not become aware of this.

3. Methodology
3.1. Research Question

In accordance with the aforementioned purpose of the study, the present research will largely aim to uncover the answer to the following research question:

1. Is there any significant relation between any of the four aspects of identity (personal, relational, social and collective) and teachers' professional behavior?

3.2. Participants

With the intention of maintaining the scope a representative one, the participants of the current study were of varied educational settings in Mashhad, Iran. They included 100 EFL university and language school teachers (22 male, 78 female) teaching English to students of TEFL and Translation in some universities in Mashhad including Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Khayam University as well as Islamic Azad University of Mashhad. Language school teachers were mainly the ones who were teaching upper-intermediate and advance levels in Zabansara, Kish-Air, Shokuh, Khorasan, and Mahan Language School. Majority (53 percent) of these teacher participants were experienced ones who also had an educational degree of M.A. and PhD (51 percent).

The reason for a focus on involving experienced, educated teacher participants was to make sure teachers had reached a better personal understanding of Professional Behavior (PB) through their years of teaching experience in various teaching-learning contexts.

3.3. Materials
3.3.1. Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV)

Cheek & Briggs (2013) designed and validated a questionnaire which is widely referred to and employed in various researches as a basis for studies relevant to Identity. The reliability index for Aspects of Identity Questionnaire is .92. This questionnaire sheds light on four aspects of identity namely as Individual (10 items), Collective (8 items), Social (7 items), and Relational (10 items) which all result in a 45 item questionnaire which requires participants to read each statement and mark them from 1 to 5 (not important to strongly important) based on the level of importance/significance they attach to each of the presented ideas. There also exist 10 items in the questionnaire which seek individuals' ideas relevant to general aspects of one's identity and therefore no value is specifically assigned to them in the data analysis procedure. The allotted time for the questionnaire to be filled was 15 minutes.

3.3.2. Professional Behavior Questionnaire (PBQ)

In order to come up with a tangible understanding about teachers' sense of their professional behavior, the researchers designed a 25 item questionnaire which asked teacher participants to mark their ideas about different issues related to their professional conduct as an EFL teacher. The participants were to mark each statement from 1 to 5 (never to always) based on how frequent they believed they cared to do each of the typical professional behaviors. The allotted amount of time was 10 minutes.

Once the questionnaire was designed, it was validated by two experts in the field and suggestions were applied accordingly i.e. the wording for some of the statements were modified, some items were removed because of similarity to other statements or some new items relevant to teacher's professional behavior were added. Afterwards, it was administered on 30 EFL teachers and the reliability, using Cronbach Alpha, turned out to be .850.

Worth noting here that the researchers were cautious enough for designing the PBQ questionnaire since it had to represent the typical professional behaviors teachers of language would normally possess. Consequently, these items were designed based on principle constructs relevant to professional behavior including Responsibility, Communication, Interpersonal skills, Professionalism, Effective use of time and resources, Stress management, and Intrapersonal skills.

3.4. Procedure

As with regard to the data collection procedure, Aspects of Identity Questionnaire plus Professional Behavior Questionnaire were simultaneously employed to gather data about four of the teachers' identity types (collective, individual, relational and social) as well as their professional behavior through asking them how often they cared to do various professional conducts relevant to the teaching of English. Afterwards, the time and place were set with each of the universities and language schools to administer the questionnaires and the researchers attempted to be present whilst the administration in order to keep the condition constant and add to the reliability of the collected data. A total amount of two months was spent on gathering the data.

Once the data was collected, the accumulated information for each of the identity categories was processed separately into 4 different groups for each individual teacher participant along with the data collected through the PB questionnaire. Afterwards, Systematic Equation Modeling (SEM) which is a recent, and widely established method of data analysis was employed to check the linear interrelationship of the four categories of identity with each other as well as with teachers' professional behavior. However, since the number of items in both questionnaires was large, and the interpretation of the obtained results was rather impossible, the researchers picked Regression as the data analysis procedure. Finally, the results as well as the implications of the research were discussed.

4. Data Analysis and Results

To analyze the obtained data, the researchers aimed to employ Systematic Equation Modeling (SEM) at first place. Once the data was processed through SEM, it fit the designed model but the relation was not a significant one and the obtained output was a complicated model, which made its

interpretation rather far-fetched, mainly because it is not common to use SEM for questionnaires with large number of items. Therefore, the researchers opted Multiple Regression as the method of data analysis.

In order to check the multicollinearity assumption and also for comparing the contribution of each of the independent variables to the dependent variable and also with the intention of answering the first research question i.e. whether there existed any significant relation between any of the four aspects of identity (personal, relational, social and collective) and teachers' professional behavior, Coefficient Correlation was employed (through Regression) and the results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	71.118	9.422		7.548	.000
	Individual	.835	.260	.402	3.212	.002
	Relational	.245	.202	.141	1.215	.228
	Social	-.259	.281	-.155	-.919	.360
	Collective	-.057	.199	-.038	-.288	.774
	General	-.103	.293	-.062	-.351	.726

a. Dependent Variable: professional Behavior

According to Table 1, Standardized Coefficients (Beta) was used to compare the contribution of each independent variable to the prediction of the dependent variable. Since it is believed that the larger the Beta value proves to be, the more contribution that particular independent variable will depict for the prediction of the dependent variable, the largest Beta value in Table 1 belongs to "Individual Identity", and the least amount of contribution is attributed to "Collective Identity". Finally, the sig. values are employed in order to check whether the Beta values are making a statistically significant contribution to the dependent value or not and the results exhibited that among all the four aspects of identity, "Individual Identity" depicts a statistically significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable (.002). Also, if the T index for any of the variables is greater than 2, it indicates that the relation between the dependent and independent variable is a significant one and according to Table 1, Individual Identity has got a T value of 3.212 which is greater than 2 and therefore once again the relation between Individual identity and teachers' professional behavior is stressed.

5. **Discussion and Conclusion**

As the depiction of the results in data analysis revealed, Individual Identity, among the four sub categories, has got a significant unique contribution to and relation with teachers' professional behavior. Therefore, based on the obtained result of the present study, it does not matter significantly, to belong to which society (Social Identity), and how strong and high your relations with others are (Relational Identity) and how much importance you attach to your identity as you belong to different groups (collective identity). But what matters is, when it comes to behaving professionally within any mile of your profession/occupation, it is the "self" which stands at the very top of your professionalism and therefore, one can conclude that professional behavior occurs within self-evolution and self- development regardless of the type of job you are doing: want it be the teaching or being a doctor!

What distinguishes the current study from others is that although professionalism has long been under close attention by the vast number of English language teachers, researchers and practitioners, the focus, to the best knowledge of the researchers, has ever since been on ways of improving teachers' professionalism mainly through workshops, or training programs and thus, little attention has ever been offered to teachers' self, individual concept of professional behavior! Thus, further studies in the realm of teachers' identity in general and their professional behavior in particular could

undoubtedly add to the repertoire of teachers' and educators'' educational and behavioral awareness! However, since various scholars have offered definitions of identity, which appear to represent different dimensions and such plurality in definition makes it impossible to review them all (Zhang, L., and Zhang, D., 2015), the researchers in this study aimed to investigate the aspects of professional identity/behavior which are mostly relevant to language teaching profession.

The implications of the current study would be to provide the hindsight for teacher educators and practitioners to think more seriously and cautiously about preparing programs directed at self-awareness and self-actualization of the community of teachers, which can surely have a crucial impact on teachers' professional behavior. This factor comes as vital since according to what many renown researchers have emphasized "Many of the university lecturers have had no formal training in pedagogy. They were recruited to teach on the basis of their high GPAs and these teachers will gain teaching experience as university lecturers through trial-and-error. And also, few of these lecturers recognize that their lack of professional teaching training constituted a challenge that needs to be addressed through exposure to pedagogical training" (Komba, Anangisye and Katabaro, 2013, p.191). Thus, other similar researches can be suggested to be carried out where teacher-awareness programs are held so as to check the impact on the strength and continuity of teachers' professional behavior.

Moreover, the need is felt to highlight the importance of professional behavior (PB) which results in one's professional identity because "the world of work for a teacher is not an end in itself; rather, it constitutes a beginning towards teachers' re-education programs in their respective areas of specialty. Therefore, continuing professional growth is a necessary condition for enriched professional teacher identity. Similarly, the available literature reaffirms the importance of professional identity in reinforcing quality issues in the education sector" (Komba, Anangisye and Katabaro, 2013, p.191).

After all, let us bear in mind that the above mentioned professional behavior can be achieved as the end-product of a teacher's professional knowledge. Once we teachers get involved in the process of conscientization (Kumaravadivelu, 2012), with regard to any walk of our life including our occupation, and little by little acquire the needed professional knowledge, a strong sense of commitment will inspire us to behave professionally which will continuously construct and re-construct our unique type of individual identity!

References

Cheek, J. M. & Briggs, S. R. (2013). Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV). Measurement Instrument Database for the Social Science. Retrieved from www.midss.ie

Duff, P. A., & Uchida, Y. (1997).The negotiation of teachers' sociocultural Identities and practices in post-secondary EFL classrooms. TESOL Quarterly, 31, 451-486.doi:_203.72.145.166.

Hammer, D. (2000). Professional Attitudes and Behaviors: The "A's and B's" of Professionalism1, School of Pharmacy, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

Jalili, T. and Nosratzadeh, H. (2015). The Relationship between Current and Prospective Iranian English Language Teachers' Professional Identity. International Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics, 1 (3): 62-71.

Komba, W., Anangisye, w., and Katabaro, J. (2013). The Development of Teacher Professional Identity at the University of Dar es Salaam: Perceptions and Influencing Factors. Journal of International Cooperation in Education,15 (3), pp.187 -204.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). Language Teacher Education for a Global Society. Routledge: New York.

Lemke, J. L. (2008). Identity, development, and desire. In C. R Caldas-Coulthard & R. Ledema (Eds.), Identity trouble: Critical discourse and contested identities (pp. 17-42). London: Palgrave/MacMillan.

Marcelo, C. (2009). Professional Development of Teachers: past and future. Sisifo. Educational Sciences Journal, 8: 5 - 20.

Maria, A., and Barcelos, F. (2015). Unveiling the relationship between language learning beliefs, emotions and identities. Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, SSLLT 5 (2), 301-325.

Norton, B. (1997). Language, identity, and the ownership of English. TESOL Quarterly, 31(3), 409-429.

Peirce, B. N. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. TESOL Quarterly, 29(1), 9-31.

Sarani, A., and Najjar, R. (2013). Formulation of Language Teachers Identity in the Situated Learning of Language Teaching Community of Practice. Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies, 5(2).

Tafazoli, D., & Jafari, G. (2013).Professional identity: Perceptions of current & prospective English language teachers. Paper presented at the 11th TELLSI International Conference, Mashhad, Iran.

Zhang, L., and Zhang, D. (2015). Advances and Current Trends in language Teacher Identity Research. International Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, Routledge Publications; New York.

Zolghadri, M., & Tajeddin, Z. (2013).Perceptions and practices of professional identity: EFL teachers' agency facing curriculum constraints. Paper presented at the 11th TELLSI International Conference, Mashhad, Iran.

THE AFFORDANCES OF COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUES: THE CASE OF EFL LEARNERS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

Parisa Abvali

Department of TEFL, College of Literature and Foreign Languages, Karaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Alborz, Iran

Mojtaba Mohammadi [3]

ELT Department, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Roudehen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran

ABSTRACT
AS THE PRIMARY GOAL OF MOST SECOND AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES IS TO MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERACTION, COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUES OPEN NEW WINDOWS TO CREATE A LEARNING-RICH CLASSROOM INTERACTION. THE PRESENT STUDYIS AN ATTEMPT TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBLE EFFECT OF COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE TASKS ON PRE-INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE. TO THIS END, A PRETEST-POSTTEST EXPERIMENTAL METHOD WAS EMPLOYED WITH 70 PARTICIPANTS (MALE AND FEMALE). THE PARTICIPANTS WERE DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS. THOSE IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP WERE PARTICIPATED IN COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE TASKS SUCH AS JIGSAW, TEXT-RECONSTRUCTION, AND DICTOGLOSS FOR AROUND SIX WEEKS WHILE THOSE IN THE CONTROL GROUP UNDERWENT NON-COLLABOPRATIVE ACTIVITIES. THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED BY COMPARING THE STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE. FINDINGS FROM THE ANALYSES OF DATA SUGGEST THAT COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ENHANCING EFL LEARNERS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE. FURTHERMORE, GIRL STUDENTS OUTPERFORMED THE BOY COUNTRERPARTS REGARDING THEIR IMPROVEMENTS IN SPEAKING PERFORMANCE.

KEYWORDS: COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE, JIGSAW, DICTOGLOSS, TEXT-RECONSTRUCTION, SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

1. Introduction

In today's world, most language learners are eager either to speak English like native speakers or at least to be able to meet their daily needs using English language. A key factor in second or foreign language development is the opportunity given to learners to engage in the language-promoting interactions within the class. This issue was initially raised in Krashen's (1985) comprehensible input hypothesis with the emphasis on input and was later dealt with Long's (1996) interaction hypothesis focusing on the modification to input as a result of the lack of comprehensibility. Having focused on the output, Swain (1997, 2000) pointed out that collaborative dialogue is a "knowledge-building dialogue" (p. 97). It is tailored to foster concurrently both language learning and language performance (written/spoken) in learners.

---

[3] Corresponding author. Email: m.mohammadi@riau.ac.ir; mojtabamohammadi@gmail.com

A number of studies in the literature have investigated the functionality of collaborative dialogue in language learning. In a comprehensive review, Swain, Brooks, and Tacalli-Beller (2002), for instance, concluded that "peer-peer collaborative dialogue mediates second language learning…[and] teaching learners how and why to collaborate may be important to enhance peer-mediated learning" (p. 171). A few recent studies worked on technology –based collaborative dialogues (e.g., McDonough & Sunitham, 2009; Zeng & Takatsuka, 2009) and a few others investigated its effect on writing performance of the learners (e.g., Bruton, 2007; Dobao, 2012; Dobao & Blum, 2013; Memari Hanjani & Li, 2014; Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005). Other part of literature is devoted to such aspects as interaction patterns and/or learner proficiency (Edstrom, 2015; Leeser, 2004; Watanabe & Swain, 2007), its impact on vocabulary (e.g., Dobao, 2014), grammatical structures (e.g., Nassaji & Tian, 2010), learning pragmatics (e.g., Taguchi & Kim, 2014), and an instructional tool for in-service teachers (e.g., Atay, 2004). While the effects of collaborative dialogue on different aspects of language (e.g., writing performance, interaction patterns, general proficiency, vocabulary, and grammatical structures) have been studied, little attention has been paid to its effects on the oral performance of the English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

This study, thus, aims to investigate the effect of three collaborative dialogue tasks on Iranian EFL learners' speaking performance. The study intends to examine whether the mediation of Jigsaw, Text-reconstruction, and Dictogloss as three collaborative dialogue tasks can improve the learners' speaking performance. The theoretical framework of the study is grounded on Swain's (1997, 2000) concept of collaborative dialogue and the affordances it bears in improving speaking performance.

2. Literature review

2.1. Sociocultural perspective

In the process of second language learning, communication occurs when two or more learners interact. A native-nonnative interaction, according to Long (1996), can increase the chance of comprehension. However, in an EFL context where the only exposure to language is within the walls of the classroom, finding opportunity to interact is gold. From the vantage point of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, social interaction has a pivotal role in the process of language acquisition underlining the significance of collaboration in EFL classroom. That is why language teachers are advised to form groups of dyads or triads in order to foster dialogic interaction leading to communicative competence. Based on the sociocultural theory and SLA, working within the zone of proximal development (ZPD) empowers peers to support learning through asking questions, proposing solutions, managing and completing tasks. In this respect, interaction provides wide ranges of opportunities in which students are able to negotiate meaning, receive feedback and consequently modify their output while communicating with their peers or teachers.

The sociocultural theory of mind argues that "cognition and knowledge are dialogically constructed" (Swain, Brooks, & Tocalli-Beller, 2002, p. 171). Hence, according to Vygotsky (1978), all mental activities such as problem solving, voluntary memory, and attention are mediated by social interaction. This external interactions with the more knowledgeable others turn to be internalized which per se lead to individual's development. The dialogic interaction of learners with their peers in pair and group activities, then, culminates in the development of the knowledge of language.

2.2. Collaborative dialogue

Language as a mediating tool is the basis of Swain's (2006) concept of languaging. She defined it as "the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language" (p. 98). The development of language knowledge is characterized both intrapsychologically through private speech and interpsychologically through dialogical interaction. Collaborative dialogue is held as a type languaging (Swain & Watanabe, 2013). It is a "dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem- solving and knowledge- building" (Swain, 2000, p. 102).This idea was extended from the output hypothesis (Swain, 1995) which was based on an information-processing framework of learning. As a means of scaffolding, collaborative dialogue enables learners to construct and reconstruct their knowledge in collaboration and assistance with their peers in class. This further allows learners to find the best way to express what they have in mind. In performing a task, according to Zeng and Takatsuka (2009), "learners become contributing members by pooling their knowledge and resources for joint decision making and problem solving" (p. 436). Thus, language

learning is a kind of collaborative endeavor to access each other's ZPD and to achieve better results through joint performance (Ohta, 2000).

Swain and Watanabe (2013) enumerated three mediational tools during collaborative dialogue: Scaffolding, the use of first language (L1), and repetition. Scaffolding is the process in which a more enabled member assists a less enabled one to perform a task beyond his present developmental level. Learners' use of first language is another tool in L2 classes. In the studies conducted within the sociocultural framework, the results indicated that L1 played the role of a mediator to perform cognitively difficult activities (Anton & DiCamilla, 1998) and a cognitive tool for learners to complete problem-solving activities (Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). Repetition can also be used to mediate the solutions to language problems. DiCamilla and Anton (1997) concluded that repetition could enable the adult L2 Spanish learners to shape and reshape their linguistic knowledge.

The literature has suggested a number of collaborative tasks in which learners in pairs or groups of three or more work together, produce language, and communicate language to solve a problem. These tasks "encourage learners to reflect on language form while still being oriented to meaning making … [and to] engage students in collaborative dialogue of the sort …" (Swain, 2000, p. 112). As a result of learners' engagement, they "develop a shared responsibility over final production of the text and a sense of co-ownership, thereby encouraging their active contribution to the co-constructed resolutions" (Zeng & Takatsuka, 2009, p. 436).

2.3. Collaborative tasks

Research on tasks within the sociocultural framework has as its forefront the notions of scaffolding and zone of proximal development. Within such framework, task completion is achieved to the degree the learners could scaffold their capabilities and process of language learning while doing the task. In the same vein, according to Vygotsky (1978), ZPD is the distance between two levels of development: Developmental level of a novice which refers to what learner can do without help and the potential level of development which refers to what one can do with the help of an expert. Hence, sociocultural framework has the concept of collaborative interaction as its core.

The general goal of tasks in both research and teaching, as suggested by Crooke (1986), is to elicit language use. That is why they are often integrated into language instruction syllabi to establish interaction and negotiation of meaning during dyadic and triadic classroom exchanges culminating to language learning. Storch (2001) believed that allocating students to work on tasks in small groups promotes learners' oral proficiency and enables them to negotiate meaning in a better way. In collaborative dialogue tasks, learners practice language as a means of L2 development. This, according to Swain &Watanabe (2013), has formed the bases of research in the field of task-based interaction. For Nassaji and Tian, (2010), collaborative tasks resulted in a greater accuracy of task completion than individual tasks. A number of studies (e.g. LaPierre, 1994; Leeser, 2004; Swain & Lapkin, 1998; Williams, 2001) reported that the use of collaborative tasks encourages learners to make language-related episodes (LREs) which have positive effects on L2 development. While students are conveying meaning, the use of collaborative tasks motivates them to think about their language use consciously.

A review of the studies working on collaborative dialogue has revealed that there are a few collaborative tasks adopted quite more frequently. Based on the frequency of use, these collaborative tasks include dictogloss (Abadikhah, 2012; Colina & Mayo, 2007; Fortune, 2005; Fortune & Thorp, 2001; Kim, 2008; Kim & McDonough, 2008, 2011; Kowal & Swain, 1997; Lapierre, 1994; Leeser, 2004; Swain, 1998; Swain & Lapkin 2000, 2001), jigsaw (de la Colina & Garcia Mayo, 2007; Storch & Aldosari, 2010, 2013; Swain & Lapkin, 1998, 2001), text reconstruction (Mayo, 2001a, 2001b, 2002; Niu, 2009; Storch, 1998, 2008), essay (Watanabe & Swain, 2007, 2008), data documentary (Storch, 2005; Storch & Wiggleworth, 2007; Wiggleworth & Storch, 2009), and editing (Garcia Mayo, 2001a, 2001b; Nassaji & Tian, 2010; Storch, 1997, 2007; Storch & Aldosari, 2010, 2013). Depending on the dual nature of some of these tasks, they were both used for oral and written output although a few were only used in producing written performance (e.g., essay, editing).

The most frequently used collaborative tasks as mentioned above are jigsaw, dictogloss, and text-reconstruction which are adopted in this study. Jigsaw, as de la Colina and Garcia Mayo (2007) put forward, is "an information gap task in which each participant has part of the necessary information

and must exchange it in order to perform the task" (p. 97). That is, the input information is shared between all members of the group and they are expected to work together to complete the task. In text reconstruction task, the function words and inflections of a text are removed and students have to work collaboratively and insert the appropriate ones in order to produce an accurate product. After completing the text, students will be asked to articulate the text in their own words. In Dictogloss task, according to Wajnryb (1990), a short text is read twice at normal speed. As for the first time the learners just listen and for the second time they write down some words quickly on a piece of paper which can help them recall the text. Then, the two members of the same group work together to reconstruct the text and state the final version completely.

2.4. Research questions

To reach the purpose of the study, that is, to find out whether there is any significant difference between the speaking performance of the students who are trained through collaborative dialogue and oral performance of those who are trained through the traditional method, we raised the following questions:

Q_1. Does collaborative dialogue have any significant impact on the EFL learners' speaking performance?

Q_2. Is there any significant difference between boys and girls regarding the impact of collaborative dialogue on the EFL Learners' speaking?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 70 Iranian English language learners who were selected out of 85 pre-intermediate students of both genders studying English as a Foreign Language in two girl and boy branches of an English language center in the city of Karaj in Iran. Their age ranged from 14 to 30. After homogenizing the participants, they were divided into two experimental and control groups. Due to the language center's limitation of class size and schedule, they were randomly assigned to four classes according to the students' convenient time and day at the time of registration. There were two classes in boy branch (experimental= 18 and control=17) and two others in girl branch (experimental=19 and control=16) with each branch totally 35 learners.

3.2. Instrument

To minimize the influence of general proficiency, as an extraneous variable, we administered Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET), an equivalent to CEFR level B1, prior to the treatment. 85 students sat for the test which consisted of three main papers: reading and writing (35 + 7 items), listening (25 items), and speaking (4 parts). The allocated time for the test was about 140 minutes.

Due to the limitation set by the language center and the practicality issue, the results of the speaking paper of the PET was also used as the pretest both to measure the level of students' speaking performance and to homogenize them accordingly before the treatment. A new PET speaking paper was administered for the posttest to reduce the practice effect. Both speaking tests were taken with one examiner and two participants in every session. The interviews in both pre- and posttests were tape-recorded to be marked later by another rater to further verify the reliability of the marking by two raters. The speaking tests were rated according to Cambridge PET Scale including such components as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and fluency, interactive communication, and global command of the students in speaking performance. The results of Pearson correlation coefficient to check the inter-rater reliability of the raters in both pre- and posttests indicated an index of 0.83.

3.3. Procedure

Out of 85 learners who sat for the PET, 70 were selected who were homogeneous regarding their general proficiency in English and their speaking performance. The learners were then randomly assigned to four classes. There were two classes in each of the boy and girl branches to have about the same number of boys and girls in both experimental and control groups. Each branch, then, had one experimental and one control class.

The study lasted 16 sessions, three sessions a week. One of the researchers taught all four classes. In the experimental group, the teacher used three tasks of collaborative dialogue including jigsaw, text-reconstruction, and dictogloss while teaching the speaking section, doing the post-listening and post-

reading phases, and conducting the stabilizing phase of teaching vocabulary items of their coursebook assigned by the language center. In performing the Jigsaw task, the teacher selected some pictures related to students' course contents. Pictures were divided into two groups. Each worked as a complement to another. Students had to share their knowledge to find out what the situation was about. In the second task, text-reconstruction, the teacher provided the students with a text in which inflection words were omitted. The students had to insert words themselves to complete the text. Then, they had to state what the text was all about. In Dictogloss, the teacher read the text twice. At the same time, students were allowed to write down the words of the text they heard. To reconstruct the text completely, students of the same groups had to work together. The students were told the purpose of collaborative dialogue and that by discussing the material together in groups and helping each other, they can improve their own speaking skill. Every session, some topics were presented to the students to work in groups. In the control group, like the experimental one, the same coursebook was similarly taught except that the tasks of collaborative dialogue were not included.

After the course ended, the speaking section of the PET was administered as the post-test. This was done to determine the participants' degree of improvement in their speaking performance in both groups and to examine if the application of collaborative dialogue can distinctly differentiate the improvement in the experimental group.

4. Results

4.1. Analyzing Pretest

Prior to analyzing the results of the posttest, speaking performance of the male and female students in experimental and control groups was compared using a two-way ANOVA in order to show that they enjoyed the same level of speaking performance.

As displayed in Table 1, the interaction effect between group and gender was not statistically significant, $F (1, 66) = 2.59$, $p > .01$. Regarding the main effect of groups, the results was not statistically significant, $F (1, 66) = .47$, $p > .01$; $\eta^2 = .007$ representing a small effect size (Cohen, 1988, p. 22). It can be concluded that there was not any significant difference between means of experimental ($M = 17.10$, $SE = .21$) and control ($M = 17.32$, $SE = .23$) groups on the pretest of speaking performance. Moreover, there was not a statistically significant difference between male and female students regarding their speaking performance, $F (1, 66) = 2.86$, $p > .01$; $\eta^2 = .041$ representing a small effect size. This means that males ($M = 17.48$, $SE = .22$) and females ($M = 16.94$, $SE = .22$) do not differ in terms of their speaking performance prior to the study.

Table 1
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects, Pretest of Speaking by Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Group	.843	1	.843	.475	.493	.007
Gender	5.070	1	5.070	2.857	.096	.041
Group * Gender	4.598	1	4.598	2.591	.112	.038
Error	117.139	66	1.775			
Total	20841.453	70				
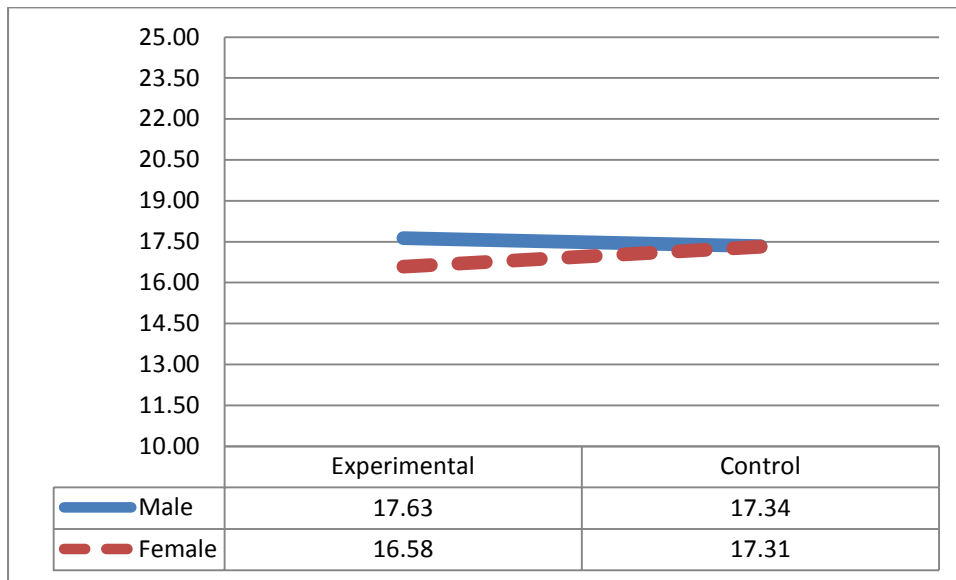
Fig. 1. Pretest of speaking performance (groups by gender)

4.2. Analyzing posttest

Before discussing the two-way ANOVA results, it should be mentioned that assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's F = 1.60, p < .05). Table 2 indicated that the interaction effect between group and gender was not statistically significant in the posttest, $F_{(1, 66)} = 3.11$, p> .01. In terms of the main effects of the groups, the results was statistically significant, $F_{(1, 66)} = 14.20$, p < .01; η^2 = .18 representing a small effect size. It can be concluded that there was a significant difference between means of experimental (M = 19.15, SE = .23) and control (M = 17.88, SE = .24) groups on the posttest of speaking performance. Moreover, there was a statistically significant difference between male and female students regarding their speaking performance, $F_{(1, 66)} = 18.64$, p < .01; η^2 = .22 representing a large effect size. This means that males (M = 17.79, SE = .23) and females (M = 19.24, SE = .23) significantly differ in terms of their speaking performance. Comparing the mean indices, it is revealed that female outperformed the male students in this respect.

Table 2

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects, Posttest of Oral Proficiency by Groups

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Group	27.829	1	27.829	14.205	.000	.177
Gender	36.525	1	36.525	18.643	.000	.220
Group * Gender	6.086	1	6.086	3.107	.083	.045
Error	129.304	66	1.959			
Total	24278.000	70				

	Experimental	Control
Male	18.72	16.87
Female	19.58	18.91
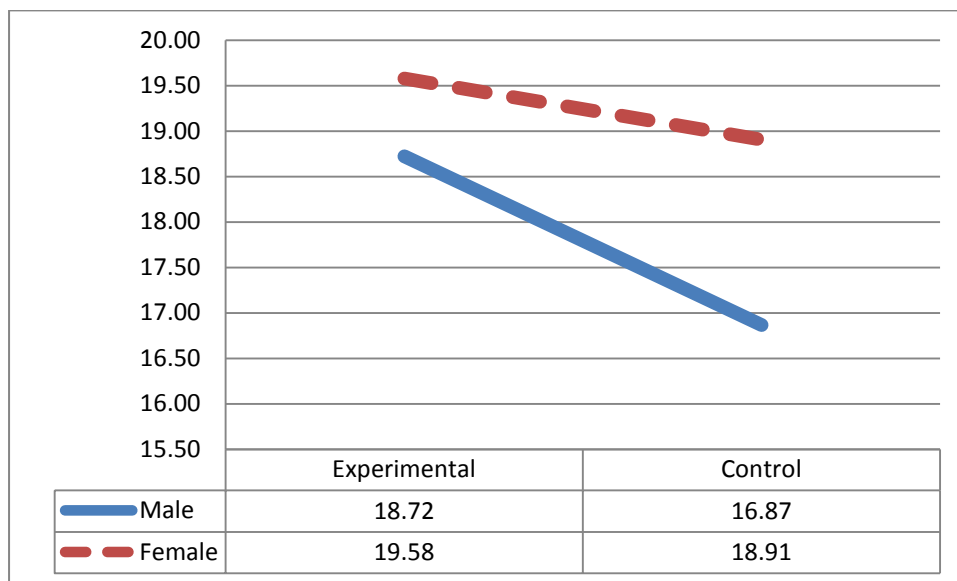
Fig. 2. Posttest of speaking performance (groups by gender)

5. Discussion and conclusions

The present study set out to investigate the probable affordances of applying jigsaw, text-reconstruction, and dictogloss, as collaborative dialogue tasks, in foreign language classrooms to enhance speaking performance. The results indicated that students who centered their peer-peer classroom interaction on collaborative dialogues revealed improved speaking performance. Such findings echo some previous studies which support peer-peer collaborative dialogues as a source of language learning. This set of studies (e.g., Brooks & Swain, 2009; Donato, 1994; Swain & Lapkin, 2002; Watanabe & Swain, 2007) underlined the role of collaborative dialogue as a means of forming, reforming, testing, and retesting hypotheses about the proper use of the language as reflected in their language use. The findings also suggested that groups with high peer-peer collaborative activities can produce relatively high quality performance as compared with those working alone. This was also reflected in the works of Borer (2007) and Kim (2008) in learning vocabulary as well as Storch (1999) and Storch and Wigglesworth (2007) in learning L2 grammar in writing. It is worthwhile to mention that the improvement of the learners' speaking performance in this study was the result of the application of all three collaborative tasks in experimental group altogether and the effectiveness of each of them was not separately considered here. The other line of the results revealed that girl students performed better in speaking section of PET than the boy students. It, however, might be interpreted cautiously since the result is limited to the comparison of two single sex classes. It, however, might be interpreted differently if the study had been carried out in a co-educational context.

The results of this study can further suggest that teachers should provide the learners with more opportunities to engage in collaborative information exchange activities. Learners' interactions within small groups, as O'Donnell (2006) stated, can help them restructure their own knowledge and therefore understand better. This promotes the assistive performance on the side of the learners and enriches the class environment so that learners can most benefit from it. Collaborative activities can foster negotiation and remove the focus from teacher-fronted to learner-centered classrooms since this way learners are exposed to bountiful linguistic input and output leading to language development and ultimately to learners' independence.

This study aimed to take a product-oriented approach to collaborative dialogue tasks and delved into an investigation of the effectiveness of collaborative versus non-collaborative tasks. Nonetheless, there are a few suggestions for further studies. First, new studies can be conducted to examine different combinations of the collaborative tasks in classes (e.g., reconstruction-data documentary-editing or jigsaw-essay-disctogloss). Second, you can take a process-oriented approach. That is, these

or other similar tasks can be adopted in different classes to compare their effectiveness separately. Finally, we did not control the use of L1 while doing the task. The quantity and quality of L1 use can be investigated to verify its constraints and affordances especially in multi-national classroom with learners having different L1 and/or EFL contexts with learners having the same L1.

References

Abadikhah, S. (2012). The effect of mechanical and meaningful production of output on learning English relative clauses. *System, 40* (1), 129-143.

Antón, M., & DiCamilla, F. (1998). Socio-cognitive functions of L1 collaborative interaction in the L2 classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 54*, 314–42.

Atay, D. (2004). Collaborative dialogue with student teachers as a follow-up to teacher in-service education and training. *Language Teaching Research, 8* (2), 143-162.

Borer, L. (2007). Depth of processing in private and social speech: Its role in the retention of word knowledge by adult EAP learners. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 64*, 269–95.

Brooks, L., & Swain, M. (2009). Languaging in collaborative writing: Creation of and response to expertise. In A. Mackey & C. Polio (Eds.), *Multiple perspectives on interaction* (pp. 58–89). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bruton, A. (2007). Vocabulary learning from dictionary reference in collaborative EFL translational writing. *System, 35* (3), 353-367.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Crookes, G. (1986). *Task classification: A cross-disciplinary. Technical Report No. 4.* Honolulu: Center of Second Language Classroom Research, Social Science Research Institute, University of Hawaii.

De la Colina, A., & Garcia Mayo, M. (2007). Attention to form across collaborative tasks by low proficiency learners in an EFL setting. In M. Garcia Mayo (Eds.*), Investigating tasks informal language learning* (pp. 91– 116). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

DiCamilla, F., & Antón, M. (1997). Repetition in the collaborative discourse of L2 learners: A Vygotskian perspective. *Canadian Modern Language Review, 53*, 609–33.

Dobao, A. F. (2012). Collaborative writing tasks in L2 classroom: Comparing group, pair, and individual work. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 21* (1), 40-58.

Dobao, A. F., Blum, A. (2013). Collaborative writing in pairs and small groups: Learners' attitudes and perceptions. *System, 41* (2), 365-378.

Edstorm, A. (2015). Triads in the L2 classroom: Interaction patterns and engagement during a collaborative task. *System, 52,* 26-37. doi:10.1016/j.system.2015.04.014

Fortune, A., & Thorp, D. (2001). Knotted and entangled: New light on the identification, classification and value of language related episodes in collaborative output tasks. *Language Awareness, 10*(2&3), 143-160.

García Mayo, M.P. (2001a). Are collaborative focus-on-form tasks worthwhile among advanced EFL learners? Some insights from an empirical study. In A. I. Moreno & V.

Colwell (Eds.) Perspectivas Recientes sobre el Discurso/ Recent Perspectives on

Discourse. León: Universidad de León. Documento CD-ROM document.

García Mayo, M. P. (2001b). The effectiveness of two focus-on-form tasks in advanced

EFL pedagogy. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *12* (2), 156-175.

Kim, Y. (2008). The contribution of collaborative and individual tasks to the acquisition of L2 vocabulary. *Modern Language Journal, 92*, 114–30.

Kim, Y., & McDonough, K. (2008). The effect of interlocutor proficiency on the collaborative dialogue between Korean as a second language learners. *Language Teaching Research, 12*, 211–34.

Kowal, M., & Swain, M. (1997). From semantic to syntactic processing: How can we promote it in the immersion classroom? In K. Johnson & M. Swain (Eds.), *Immersion education: International perspectives* (pp. 284–309). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Krashen, S.D. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications.* Longman, New York.

Leeser, M. J. (2004). Learner proficiency and focus on form during collaborative dialogue. *Language Teaching Research, 8*(1), 55-81. doi:10.1191/1362168804lr134oa

LaPierre, D. (1994). *Language output in a cooperative learning setting: Determining its effects on second language learning*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W.C. Ritchie & T.K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 413–468). Academic Press, San Diego.

McDonough, K., & Sunitham, W. (2008). Collaborative dialogue between Thai EFL learners during self-access computer activities. *TESOL Quarterly, 43* (2), 231-254.

Memari Hanjani, A., & Li, L. (2014). Exploring L2 writers' collaborative revision interactions and their writing performance. *System, 44*, 101-114.

Nassaji, H., & Tian, J. (2010).Collaborative and individual output tasks and their effects on learning English phrasal verbs. *Language Teaching Research, 14*(4), 397-419. doi: 10.1177/1362168810375364

O'Donnell, A. M. (2006). The role of peers and group learning. In P. Alexander and P. Winne (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology.* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Ohta, A.S. (2000). Rethinking interaction in SLA: Developmentally appropriate assistance in the zone of proximal development and the acquisition of L2 grammar. In J. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning.* (pp. 51-78). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shehadeh, A. (2011). Effects and student perceptions of collaborative writing in L2. *Journal of second language writing, 20* (4), 286-305.

Storch, N. (1998). A classroom-based study: Insights from a collaborative text reconstruction task. *ELT Journal 52*(4), 291-300.

Storch, N. (1999). Are two heads better than one? Pair work and grammatical accuracy. *System, 27*, 363-374.

Storch, N. (2001). How collaborative is pair work? ESL tertiary students composing in pairs. *Language Teaching Research, 5*(1), 29-53. doi: 10.1177/136216880100500103

Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of second language writing, 14* (3), 153-173.

Storch, N. (2008). Metatalk in a pair work activity: level of engagement and implications for language development. *Language Awareness, 17*(2), 95e114.

Storch, N., & Wigglesworth, G. (2007). Writing tasks: The effects of collaboration. In M. P. García Mayo (Ed.), *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 157–77). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Storch, N., & Aldosari, A. (2010). Learners' use of first language (Arabic) in pair work in an EFL class. *Language Teaching Research, 14*(4), 355-375.

Storch, N., & Aldosari, A. (2013). Pairing learners in pair work activity. Language Teaching Research, 17(1), 31e48.

Swain, M. (1995).Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook and B. Seidlhofer (Ed.), *Principles and practice in applied linguistics: studies in honor of H. G. Widdowson* (pp. 125-44). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (1997). Collaborative dialogue: Its contribution to second language learning. *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses, 34*, 115-132.

Swain, M. (2000). The output hypothesis and beyond: Mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 97–114). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swain, M. (2006). Languaging, agency and collaboration in advanced second language learning. In H. Byrnes (Ed.), *Advanced language learning: The contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky* (pp. 95-108). London, UK: Continuum

Swain, M., Brooks, L., & Tocalli- Beller, A. (2002). Peer-peer- dialogue as a means of second language learning. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 22*, 171-185. doi: 10.1017/ S0267190502000090

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1998). Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together. *The Modern Language Journal, 82*(3), 320–37.doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.1998.tb01209.x

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2000). Task-based second language learning: The uses of the first language. *Language Teaching Research 4* (3), 251-274.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (2001). Focus on form through collaborative dialogue: Exploring task effects. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks: Second language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 99–118). London, England: Longman.

Swain, M., & Watanabe, Y. (2013). *Collaborative dialogue as a source of learning. In C. Chapelle (Ed*.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics.* Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Taguchi, N., & Kim, Y. (2014). Collaborative dialogue in learning pragmatics: Pragmatic related episodes as an opportunity for learning request-making. *Applied Linguistics, July*, 1-23.

Villamil, O. S., & Guerrero, M. C. M. de. (1996). Peer revision in the L2 classroom: Social-cognitive activities, mediating strategies and aspects of social behavior. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 3*, 51–75.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wajnryb, R. (1990). *Grammar Dictation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Watanabe, Y., & Swain, M. (2007). Effects of proficiency differences and patterns of pair interaction on second language learning: Collaborative dialogue between adult ESL learners. *Language Teaching Research, 11*(2), 121-142. doi: 10.1177/136216880607074599

Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2009). Pair versus individual writing: Effects on fluency, complexity and accuracy. *Language Testing, 26*(3), 445-466.

Williams, J (2001). The effectiveness of spontaneous attention to form. *System, 29*, 325–40.

Zeng, G., & Takatsuka, S. (2009). Text-based peer–peer collaborative dialogue in a computer-mediated learning environment in the EFL context. *System, 37*, 434–446. doi:10.1016/j.system.2009.01.003

ON THE PROBLEMATIC ISSUES FACED IN IRANIAN M.A. STUDENTS OF TRANSLATION STUDIES DEFENSE SESSIONS

Amin Karimnia
Department of English Language, Fasa Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Iran
E-Mail: aminkarimnia@yahoo.com

Samira Ahmadi
Department of Translation Studies, Marvdasht
Branch, Islamic Azad University, Fars, Iran
E-Mail: samira_3665@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
THE PRESENT WORK AIMED AT INVESTIGATING THE PROBLEMATIC ISSUES REPORTED BY TRANSLATION STUDIES (TS) PROFESSORS AND EXAMINERS DURING M.A. DEFENSE SESSIONS. TO DO THIS, THREE INSTRUMENTS WERE USED TO COLLECT THE DATA INCLUDING (A) AN AUTHOR-DESIGNED CHECKLIST CONTAINING THE REQUIRED PARTS IN A THESIS PROJECT; (B) SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH FIVE TS PROFESSORS MOSTLY ACTING AS TS EXAMINERS; AND (C) PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS MADE ON TRANSLATION STUDIES' M.A. DEFENSE SESSIONS. FIRST, THE RESEARCHERS SELECTED FOUR IAU BRANCHES THROUGH ACCIDENTAL SAMPLING. THESE INCLUDED FARS SCIENCE AND RESEARCH BRANCH, BANDAR ABBAS BRANCH, SHAHREZA BRANCH, AND SOUTH TEHRAN BRANCH. HAVING DEALT WITH THE AFORE-MENTIONED INSTRUMENTS, THE DATA WERE COLLECTED, ANALYZED AND FURTHER DISCUSSED. AS THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCHER-MADE CHECKLIST REVEALED, "REFERENCES", "DATA ANALYSIS", AND "DISCUSSION" SECTIONS WERE AMONG THE MOST PROBLEMATIC CASES REPORTED BY THE PARTICIPANTS. IN ADDITION, THE RESULTS OF THE PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS REVEALED THAT "STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM" AND "REFERENCES" WERE AMONG THE MOST PROBLEMATIC ISSUES IN TS M.A. DEFENSE SESSIONS. LIKEWISE, "DATA ANALYSIS" AND "DISCUSSION" SECTIONS SHARED THE SAME FREQUENCIES. FINALLY, RESULTS OF THE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH THE FIVE TS PROFESSORS REVEALED THAT M.A. THESES ON TS HAVE BEEN HIGHLY PROBLEMATIC. THE FINDINGS SHOWED THAT THESE CASES WERE MOSTLY RELATED TO THE STUDENTS' WAY OF WRITING AND THEIR UNFAMILIARITY WITH THE OUTLINES OF AN ACADEMIC PIECE OF WRITING.

KEWORDS: M.A. THESES, DEFENSE SESSIONS, RESEARCH OUTLINE, TRANSLATION STUDIES

1. Introduction
Translation has long been an indispensible part of humans' lives from the beginning. This fact supports Jakobson's (1959/2004)) inter-semiotic translation, which claims that any kind of rendering from a non-verbal sign system to a verbal sign system is in fact an act of translation. The other two types of translation introduced by Jakobson (ibid.) include inter-lingual and intra-lingual translation. While the former deals with two different languages, the latter is related to the elements of one language.

The systematic study of language has recently turned into an academic field of science. Nida (1964) and Snell-Hornby (1995) were among the first scholars who used the term "science" in order to refer to translation. As Munday (2008) believes, it is in fact for less than a century that TS has been treated as an academic discipline globally.

Likewise, in Iran, there are several universities offering TS major at different levels of education. Concerning M.A. (postgraduate) level, the students are supposed to work on a thesis project related to different issues of translation. In doing so, the students are supposed to adopt a topic to work on under the guidance of two professors, one as a thesis advisor and the other as the consulting professor. Many revisions are then made during the process of research to reach to a standard draft to be defended.

There are a considerable number of students studying at different majors at universities of Iran. One of the most nascent academic disciplines is Translation. M.A. students of Translation have been conducting their researches on different categories with different intentions and orientations. Some tend to choose one of the comparative studies by taking two texts, mostly one in English and the other in Persian and then look into a specific problem of translation such as shift, equivalent, etc. Others might use various types of questionnaires and interviews in order to measure the relationship or significance of a special issue relating to translation (e.g., the relationship of multiple intelligence on translator's work along with its level of significance).

One of the main concerns of the M.A. students in Translation is selecting the suitable topic for their theses writings. There are a number of issues which must be taken into consideration before conducting the research. For instance, the topic should not be repeatedly conducted by other researchers in the same field and/or with the same significance. The topic should be meaningful and justifiable with an orientation toward a special problem in knowledge. Manageability is another important item in conducting a research and so on and so forth. With all these parameters students should consider, they take a topic to work on.

One of the main issues M.A. students of TS deal with is their defense session. In other words, most of the students are not familiar enough with the process of defending thesis projects. Although some overcome these issues by the most available and reasonable procedures, i.e., observing other students' defense sessions, many of them still are concerned with this issue.

Thus, as a tool to better understanding the phenomena in question, the present study aims at investigating the problematic issues and cases reported by the examiners during the process of defending researches and thesis projects. We believe that the results of the present study serve as a contribution to such students. The following is a list of the possible objectives the present study seeks to consider. These objectives might vary from general to specific issues, each trying to put a special topic into consideration:

1. Delving into the problematic cases reported by professors and examiners during the defense session of M.A. students of TS in Iran.
2. Minimizing the process of edition, addition, deletions etc. made by such professors and examiners.
3. Providing Iranian M.A students of TS with an overview of the processes of defending their theses projects.

In line with the above discussion, the present study aims at providing suitable answers to the following research questions proposed while dealing with the study:

1. What are the most problematic cases reported by the examiners concerning TS M.A. defense sessions?
2. Concerning TS M.A. defense sessions, are there any statistically significant differences between the frequencies of the problematic cases reported by the examiners?

2. Literature Review

There have been many studies carried out with similar aims comparable to the present's aim. Although not many of them focus on the students' defense sessions and the problematic cases reported by the thesis defense observes, several different issues have been worked on by the researchers around the world. For example, the priority of Cathcart and Olsen's (1976) study was to examine the role of the teacher in correcting or over-correcting the learners in academic lectures.

Allwright (1986) investigated the ways and means of making learning difficult in classrooms. DeCarrico and Nattinger(1988) addressed the issue of lexical phrases in academic lectures when lectures are given by English-speaking lecturers to English-speaking learners. Murphy (1992) studied the different methods used in classrooms, suggesting an approach to prepare learners to understand speech courses.

Her (1991) narrowed down his topic to cover English "chunks" and idioms, discussing the possessive, existential, and locational usages of the Mandarin Chinese chunks and idioms in relation to those of English. He found similarities between the two groups.

Khuwaileh (1995) addressed ESP students' level of comprehension when they were taught by professors who are not native speakers of English. He also presented eight dimensions which can disappoint adult ESP learners. These dimensions were found to be the factors which would make ESP teaching end up with failure.

As Khuwaileh (1999) believes, the most important and significant study among all the studies relating to classroom lectures was conducted by Neal (1995). Neal examined the language used by lecturers and the language used by the learners taught by the same lecturers. Neal (ibid.) also tested "hyper-fluency" in learners' language. He found that learners try to imitate their lecturers by acquiring certain linguistic structures from them. As far as hyper-fluency is concerned, it is explained by Neal as "...the juxtaposition of colloquialisms with sophisticated academic structures and unintentionally humorous misuse of academic phrases and forms…" (p. 148). He also argues, "one possible source for hyper-fluency is the speech patterns of instructorsthemselves, especially when they speak in a particularly academic way ininstructional situations (ibid.).

Flowerdew et al. (2000, pp. 201-231) addressed the attitudes of lecturers towards the English medium of instruction policy at Hong Kong University. They also studied the classroom interaction in that situation, where they revealed that the learners' level of interaction and comprehension was very low both in English and Cantonese, their mother tongue. Flowerdew et al. (ibid., p. 218) state that:

…Students' Chinese language ability was also declining. This state of affairs is not surprising, as students in Hong Kong are educated at secondary school through the medium of English and therefore have not acquired the requisite command of the technical register in spoken Cantonese…. Closely related to students' weaknesses in English is the extent to which students participate lectures…students did not ask as many questions as they would like.

The topic of chunks and phrases seems to be an important factor in academic lectures because chunks and phrases are used frequently in lecturing. However, after surveying the Compact Diskette Room (CDR), Khuwaileh (1999) found that this topic was worth investigating from a different angle for the following reasons. As discussed before, most of the studies carried out on chunks or phrases were based on English-speaking lecturers and/or learners. This is natural because of the ESP literature which has been dominated by native speakers of English. Second, no study of this type has ever been carried out in the Middle East on chunks (ibid.).

Thompson (2003) focused on the roles of text-structuring meta-discourse and intonation in signaling the larger-scale organization of academic talks. The occurrence of meta-discoursal and intonational signals of organization was compared in authentic under graduate lectures and in talks appearing in listening skills materials. It was argued that both meta-discourse and intonation were used by academic speakers to help an audience form a coherent "mental map" of the overall talk and how its parts were interconnected. However, it appeared that the models of organization in lecture discourse provided by some materials might be misleading. The article ended by considering the implications of the findings for listening skills courses.

3. Methodology
3.1. Materials
A researcher-made checklist (see Appendix A) was given to the professors as TS examiners. The checklist contained the main categories and sub-categories the students have to deal with during the process of their thesis projects conduction. In addition, a set of researcher-made questions were posed based on the Likert scale to be answered by such professors. These questions are reported in the following section.

3.2. Participants

Twenty professors acting as examiners in TS were chosen through accidental sampling. These professors, who were chosen from different Islamic Azad University (henceforth IAU) branches in Iran, were then asked to check the parts dismissed in the projects to see what categories represent the most problematic cases in TS theses projects. These branches of IAU included Fars Science and Research Branch, Bandar Abbas Branch, Shahreza Branch, and South Tehran Branch. These are all among the universities which offer TS at M.A. level of education in Iran. In addition, they were asked to write down their comments on extra-issues not mentioned in the questionnaires. Table 1 illustrates a descriptive overview of the participants of the study.

Table 1. **A Descriptive Overview on the Participants of the Present Study**

University	Branch	N of Participants
IAU	Fars Science and Research Branch	6
IAU	Bandar Abbas Branch	4
IAU	Shahreza Branch	4
IAU	South Tehran Branch	6
Total		20

Likewise, out of this number (N=20), five professors were selected through accidental sampling in order to participate in the semi-structured interview. In this section, the following questions were posed in order to be answered by these professors:

-In your opinion, to what extent are TS M.A. theses problematic?

-What are these problematic issues mostly related to? Are these contents, writing styles, Punctuations, etc.?

-In your opinion, why are students faced with such errors and mistakes?

-What are your suggestions for tackling such problems?

3.3. Data Collection procedures

In addition to the questionnaires, five defense sessions in TS theses were observed and the desired data were gathered. The researchers then took notes out of the issues reported by the examiners during the session. The examiners and professors were also asked to add any comments and views about the probable dismissed parts concerning the theses projects. A semi-structured interview was then conducted with five professors in order to see what the main problematic issues would refer to, with special reference to M.A. students of translation.

3.4. Data Analysis

The answers provided to the questions were analyzed and further discussed qualitatively. In addition, carrying out chi-square test, the research question concerning the differences between the problematic categories was statistically reviewed. Finally, the results were discussed descriptively, providing the readers with qualitative discussions and arguments.

4. Results and Findings

4.1. The Checklist

First, the results related to the checklists are reported. These checklists were given to the professors and examiners (N= 20) in order to find out what the most problematic cases were during the process of defending a TS M.A. Thesis project. The participants were also asked to add any extra comments. It is important to mention that the professors were asked to check the parts that they believed (a) were mostly dismissed during the process of research conduction (i.e., were not available at all); and (b) were considered, although they were problematic to varying degrees. Concerning this part of the research, Table 2. shows the frequency of each reported item.

Table 2. **The Frequency of Each Reported Item in the Checklist**

Problematic Issue	Frequency (f)
List of Abbreviations	2
English Abstract	8

Statement of the Problem	12
Significance of the Study	5
Objectives	4
Research Questions	2
Research Hypothesis	2
Definition of Key Terms	1
Limitations and Delimitations of the Study	5
Literature Review	14
Data Collection Procedures	10
Data Analysis	16
Findings and Results	8
Discussion	16
Conclusion	7
References	17

4.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

To obtain better results out of the study, some semi-structured interviews were conducted with five professors. Effort was made to select the participants out of those with at least ten years of teaching experience. Concerning the semi-structured interviews, the following questions were asked:

The first question was concerned with the extent to which TS M.A. thesis projects were problematic. This question was posed as follows:

-In your opinion, to what extent are TS M.A. theses problematic?

All five of the participants agreed that TS M.A. thesis projects have been problematic to a high extent. According to these professors, this problem complicates other language-related fields of study, as well as TS. In their opinion, all other fields of study would face some problems in terms of conducting their thesis projects. The results supporting this fact are reported both in the checklist as well as the personal observations.

The second research question was concerned with the categories these problematic issues would mostly belong to. Therefore, this question was posed as follows:

-What are these problematic issues mostly related to (e.g. contents, writing styles, punctuations, etc.)?

Three of the professors believed that the most problematic cases with TS M.A. thesis projects were related to the students' style of writing. They believed that students' writing styles would not be in line with academic writing standards. In their opinions, these problems would range from less significant issues such as the use of cohesion and coherence (although still significant) to issues with higher significance such as syntax. Two of the professors believed that the students in question mostly neglect the leading role of a unique and acceptable writing style (i.e., mostly APA in Iranian society). These could in turn problematize the readability of a piece of academic writing.

The third question was concerned with the reasons to such phenomena. In accordance with the second question, this issue was posed as follows:

-In your opinion, why are students faced with such errors and mistakes?

Four of the professors believed that these problematic issues were mostly due to lack of sufficient academic study. In fact, they mostly believed that this would be directly up to the students themselves to acquire rules of conducting a research project. One of the professors claimed that these issues are neither taught at B.A. level nor learnt through theoretical issues. In contrast, students must deal with these issues empirically in order to tackle them.

The fourth question was related to the suggestions made by the participants in order to tackle such problems:

-What are you suggestions for tackling such problems?

Three of the professors believed that studying other thesis projects before conducting a research program would suffice. However, one of the participants claimed that it would be better for the students to go through the topics related to their own theses dissertations. In addition, one of the

participants believed that all the issues related to the process of research conduction are available in different sources (e.g., books, handouts, web-sites, etc.).

4.3. Personal Observations

An author's personal observation is a common way of collecting data (Cohen et al., 2007). In this type of data collection, the researchers mostly pay personal visits in order to collect the data needed for a study. Likewise, in the present work, the researchers visited five TS M.A. defense sessions. Professors and examiners begin to ask different questions usually right after the student's claims about the topic of the thesis are articulated. Through all these questions asked, sometimes the problematic cases observed in different parts of the project are reported and discussed. The present researchers then made use of this phenomenon and took notes out of it. Table 3 reports the frequency of each problematic issue reported by such examiners:

Table 3.   Frequencies of the Problematic Issues Reported in the Five TS M.A Defense Sessions

Problematic Issue	Frequency (f)
Statement of the Problem	4
Limitations and Delimitations of the Study	2
Data Collection Procedures	1
Data Analysis	3
Discussion	3
Conclusion	2
References	4

5. Discussion

The data were analysed and the findings of the study were reported. The following section discusses the different findings reported. Likewise, some additional concerns which might lead into problematic issues are taken into consideration.

5.1. Writing Errors

All of the professors who participated in the semi-structured interviews agreed that TS M.A. theses projects have been problematic to a high extent. They mostly believed that the problematic cases observed in TS M.A. thesis projects would be related to the students' way of writing. They argued that in most cases, the students' writing styles were not in accordance with the basics of an academic writing. Four of the professors believed that these problematic issues were mostly due to lack of study. In fact, they mostly believed that this would be directly up to the students themselves to learn the rules of conducting a research program. To tackle these problems, the participants interviewed believed that studying other thesis projects before conducting a research program would considerably help the students.

The findings of the study were in accordance with the basic rules of outlining a research program presented by Cohen et al. (2007). In their study, Cohen et al. (2007) draw on different outlines for a researcher to choose from. Although these outlines are related to different aspects of research in terms of its nature, they seem to follow a unique pattern in researchers' several steps during the process of conducting a research. As mentioned before (see literature review section), there are several different types of research programs (e.g., cross sectional, longitudinal, case studies, surveys, etc.). Although these research programs vary in type and nature, they mostly follow a special outline.

The findings of the study also supported the outlining rules mentioned by Otto (2013) who provided systematic steps for M.A. students to follow while conducting their thesis projects by highlighting the most important items a research must include. In fact, these steps are: (a) an introduction to clear problem definition, reflected in the research or development necessity and feasibility, and novelty compared to existing solutions, exploring object description, and problem-solving methods general description; b) a clearly defined work objectives (goals) and tasks (3-4 tasks); c) a description of the work done and results obtained in the analysis (quantitative and /or qualitative assessment of the results of the work); and d) a summary of the main results, their importance and remained unsolved opportunities.

5.2. Speaking Issues

The findings of the study supported the common belief that giving a lecture may not always entail the good understanding of learners (Khuwaileh, 1999). In a study, Khuwaileh (1999) gave teachers or lecturers a reflection on the conditions under which some university teachers would use chunks, phrases, and body language to ensure better understanding. This topic had been relatively neglected, though any lecture should be judged by what the learners understand of it.

The lecturing method is the most common form of teaching in institutions of higher education throughout the world, and is likely to continue to be so. Many studies with similar methodology were outlined and elaborated within this study. Efforts were made to familiarize the audience with the most problematic issues reported and/or observed during their defence sessions. The fact that lecture discourse is conventionally known to be of a mono-logical nature was pointed out in this study. However, lectures are more appreciated if they allow for reciprocal discourse, especially for students of other languages who need help in understanding the content and in appropriating the language (Morell, 2007).

Based on the findings of this study, one of the most targeted skills in a defence sessions would be related to the speaking abilities of the students. In this regard, Roth and Lawless' (2002) article was concerned with understanding situations in which speakers talk in the presence of scientific inscriptions (lectures in science classes, public presentations). Drawing on extensive video materials accumulated in middle and high school science classrooms and university lectures, the researchers developed a framework for the resources speakers presented to their audience for understanding the topic. As the results of their study, Roth and Lawless (ibid.) distinguished three situations according to the nature of reference to the phenomenon talked about. These included:

a) Talk is about a phenomenon but mediated by reference to a two-dimensional (2-D) inscription;

b) Talk is about a phenomenon but mediated by reference to a three-dimensional (3-D) inscription, and;

c) Talk is directly about a phenomenon. Associated with these three situations are different body orientations, distances from inscriptions, and types of gestures.

Roth and Lawless (2002) finally argued that when speakers laminate talk characteristics of two different types of situations, the orientation "up" can become "down" and "down" can become "up," potentially leading to confusing statements. (i.e., gesture, orientation, spatial arrangements, body movement).

5.3. The Role of Stress

Stress is defined as an organism's response to a stressor such as an environmental condition or a stimulus (Wikipedia, 2014). This biological trait usually has a leading role on the failure of a good presentation. In other words, a student might be well-qualified to present and discuss on his/her thesis project, but might then lose his/her ability due to the high pressure of stress (Karimnia, personal communication, August 2014).

This is in agreement with the findings of Dewele and Furnham (1999, cited in Khuwaileh, 1999), who examine the French speech production of some students in terms of their individual personality traits. The study focused on one particular psychological dimension, extraversion and introversion. The correlational analyses illustrated that extravert bilinguals reflected more fluency than introvert bilinguals, especially in stressful situations. Extraverts were characterized as more stress-resistant and less anxious in second language production. Besides, they were superior to the introverts in the capacity of short-term memory, a significant feature for fluent L2 production.

5.4. Power-Point Presentation

Using a Power-point presentation is the most common method while trying to present and discuss information to a target audience (Bryant et al., 2006). Like many other countries around the world, Iranian students have to use outlined talks mostly presented in a power-point presentation. However, many of the students fail to tackle this issue in a precise and acceptable way. This might be due to different issues discussed, including one's ability of speaking, as well as the role of stress on an individual's presentation in public (Bryant et al., 2006).

6. Conclusion

Having insights from both the checklist as well as the personal observations, the results of the study revealed that students mostly have their problematic issues within two main sections. These are a) 'discussion' and b) 'references'. A series of reasons were also pointed out before (c.f. section 4.2.).

Having insights form the results and findings of the study, TS M.A. students who are concerned with conducting their thesis projects are advised to consider the outcome of the present work. The instruments used, especially in semi-structured interviews (see section 4.1.2.) could probably help students figure out: (a) to what extent TS M.A. theses are problematic; (b) what these problematic issues are mostly related to; (c) why students are faced with such errors and mistakes; and (d) what possible suggestions can be shared to tackle such problems.

Generally speaking, it could be concluded that such problematic issues mostly face M.A. theses, although all other related fields of language studies (e.g., Teaching, Linguistics, Literature, etc.) may encounter the same problems, as well as non-related fields. The main merit of the present study, however, was to familiarize M.A. students with the most problematic issues reported while defending their thesis projects, which are assumed to be the climax and the most important part of their education at the M.A. level.

REFERENCES

Allwright, D. (1986). Seven ways of making classroom language learning difficult. Prospect2(1), pp. 50-66.

Bryant, A.A., Sanders-Jackson, A., & Smallwood, A.K. (2006). IMing, text messaging, and adolescent social networks. J.C. Computer-Mediated Communication 11(2), pp. 577-592.

Cathcart, R.L. & Olsen, J.W. (1976). Teachers' and students' preferences for correction of classroom conversation errors. In: Fanselow, J., Crymes, A. (Eds.), On Tesol 1976. TESOL: Washington, pp. 41-53.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). Research methods in education (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.

DeCarrico, J. & Nattinger, J.R. (1988). Lexical phrases for the comprehension of academic lectures. English for Specific Purposes 7, pp. 91-102.

Flowerdew, J., Miller, L., & Li, D. C. S. (2000). Chinese lecturers' perceptions, problems and strategies in lecturing in English to Chinese-speaking students. RELC Journal, 31, pp. 116-138.

Her, O. (1991). On the Mandarin possessive and existential verb "you" and its idiomatic expressions. Language Sciences 13(3), pp. 381-398.

Http://www.wikipedia.com.

Jakobson, R. (1959/2004). On linguistic aspects of translation, in L. Venuti (ed.) (2004).

Khuwaileh, A. A. (1999). The role of chunks, phrases and body language in understanding co-ordinated academic lectures. System 27, pp. 249-260.

Morell, T. (2007). What enhances EFL students' participation in lecture discourse? Student, lecturer and discourse perspectives. Journal of English for Academic Purposes 6, pp. 222-237.

Munday, J. (2008). Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

Murphy, J.M. (1992). Preparing ESL students for the basic speech course: Approach, design and procedure. English for Specific Purposes 11, pp. 151-170.

Neal, M. (1995). Academic register, hyperuency, and the acquisition of academic discourse. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the 46th Conference on College Composition and Communication, Washington DC, 23-25 March.

Nida, E. (1964). Toward a science of translating, Leiden: E. J. Brill. pp. 138–43.

Otto, T, (2013). A general guide to writing and defending master's thesis. Retrieved form http://www.ttu.ee/public/m/Mehaanikateaduskond/Tudengile/MARM-General_Guide_to_write_the_Master_Thesis_2013.doc

Roth, W.M., & Lawless, D.V. (2002). When up is down and down is up: Body orientation, proximity, and gestures as resources. Language in Society 31, pp. 1-28.

Snell-Hornby, M. (1995). Translation studies: An integrated approach (Rev. ed.). Amsterdam: J. Benjamins Pub.

Thompson, S.E. (2003). Text-structuring metadiscourse, intonation and the signalling of organisation in academic lectures. Journal of English for Academic Purposes 2, pp. 5-20.

Appendix A: The Checklist

Dear Professor;

Please kindly tick the headings and sub-heading which you think are the most problematic cases dismissed by M.A students of TS. Any additional comments are also welcomed.

Thank you for your cooperation

Headings and Sub-Headings	Tick	Additional Comments
Contents		
List of Abbreviations		
List of Tables		
List of Figures		
English Abstract		
Chapter One: Introduction		
1.0. Overview		
1.1. Statement of the Problem		
1.2. Significance of the Study		
1.3. Objectives		
1.4. Research Questions		
1.5. Research Hypothesis		
1.6. Definition of Key Terms		
1.7. Limitations and Delimitations of the Study		
Chapter Two: Literature Review		
2.0. Overview		
1.1. Theoretical Considerations		
2.2. Empirical Background		
Chapter Three: Method		
3.0. Overview		
3.1. Materials		
3.2. Participants		
3.3. Data Collection Procedures		
3.4. Data Analysis		
Chapter Four: Results and Findings		
4.0. Overview		
4.1. Findings and Results		
4.2. Discussion		
Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Implications		
5.0. Overview		
5.1. Summary		
5.2. Conclusion		
5.3. Implications		
5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies		
References		
Appendix		
Persian Abstract		
Speaking Issues		
The Role of Stress		
Use of PowerPoint		

Name of the examiner   Signature

GENDER-BASED EFFECTS OF INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES ON SPEAKING ACCURACY AND FLUENCY OF IRANIAN UPPR-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

Forough Bahadori
Department of English, Isfahan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
E-mail: foroghbahadori@yahoo.com

Omid Tabatabaei, Ph.D
Department of English, Isfahan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
E-mail: tabatabaeiomid@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
THIS REAEARCH AIMED TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES ON SPEAKING ACCURACY AND FLUENCY OF IRANIAN FEMALE AND MALE UPPER-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS. IN ORDER TO SELECT HOMOGENEOUS LEARNERS QUICK PLACEMENT TEST AND SPEAKING MODULE OF IELTS WERE RUN AND 60 OUT OF 100 LEARNERS, WERE SELECTED (30 FEMALE/30 MALE) TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY. THEN, EACH GENDER WAS RANDOMLY DIVIDED INTO 2 EQUAL GROUPS; EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS AND CONTROL GROUPS. IN BOTH EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS, INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES WERE TAUHT. HOWEVER, FOR CONTROL GROUPS THERE WAS NO TEACHING OF INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES. AFTER 6 SESSIONS, A POSTTEST WAS RUN FOR THE FOUR GROUPS. THE RESULTS OF QPT, THE PRETEST, AND POSTTEST WERE ANALYZED THROUGH ONE-WAY ANOVA AND INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES *T*-TEST RESPECTIVELY. FINDINGS DEMONSTRATED THAT EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS IN POSTTEST OUTPERFORMED THE CONTROL GROUPS ($P < 0.05$). THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY SUGGEST THAT TEACHERS USE MORE INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH CLASSES, TO HELP LEARNERS ENHANCE THEIR SPEAKING ACCURACY AND FLUENCY.

KEY WORDS: ACCURACY, FLUENCY, INTERACTIONAL STRATEGIES, SPEAKING

1. Introduction

Speaking is one of the productive skills and the laborious one for EFL learners, because it happens in real situations in which many events are not predictable; moreover, speakers should be fluent and accurate in order to be understood, thus making speaking more difficult to be acquired. Lindsay and Knight (2006) stated that it is indispensable for a good speaker to consider elements such as producing connected speech, interaction, talking about what they do not know and about different types of contexts balancing accuracy and fluency. Accuracy and fluency are two factors that can prognosticate students' English progress in the future and are two important characteristics of speaking to achieve comprehensibility. Yuan and Ellis (2003) defined accuracy as "the extent to which the language produced conforms to target language norms" (p.2). Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985) believed that fluency is a feature of speech that makes it natural and standard like native speakers. In addition to Richards etal.'s statement, Skehan (1996) argued that fluency refers to producing spoken language "without undue pausing or hesitation" (p.22).

Gender is another important factor in the field of second language (L2) learning. Based on Oxford (2002) in most L2 studies, gender has played a significant role in using strategies to learn a L2. For instance, women use strategies for language learning, including memory, cognitive, metacognitive,

affective, and social strategies (Lan & Oxford, 2003; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995) more than men. By the same token,   Goh and Foong (1997) found out that there were differences between males and females in using compensation and affective strategies.

In order to gain acceptable proficiency level in speaking, helpful strategies should be provided by teachers. One of these strategies is called 'interactional strategy'. Interaction is a significant point in language learning that can encourage students to become effective communicators in a foreign language. Interaction is a reciprocal relation to give and receive the message that can be understood. Ellis (1985) believed that interaction happens between the leaners and their peers through discourse jointly constructed. Naegle (2002) added that instructors should encourage students to have more interaction in the classroom and talk about the course content with the interlocutors, because it helps learners to be active and improves the process of learning. According to Dornyei and Scott (1995), there are some interactional strategies (cooperative strategies) that can be helpful in learning a language, such as: (a) asking for repetition (AR) , (b) appeal for help (AH), (c) comprehension check (CC), (d) clarification request (CR), (e) asking for confirmation (AC), (f) expressing non-understanding (EN).

Based on what Krashen (1985) proposed as Input Hypothesis explaining how second language acquisition happens, he discussed that learners can acquire a language when they understand the messages which is contained in the utterances or text. If the received input is one-level beyond their current knowledge 'i+1', understanding takes place. However, if the level of input is much higher than the current one, comprehension does not happen, and if it is lower than the present knowledge, learners do not acquire new items and this process would be dull.

1.1. Research Questions

According to what was mentioned above, the following research questions were posed:

RQ_1. Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking accuracy of Iranian upper-intermediate female EFL learners?

RQ_2. Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking accuracy of Iranian upper-intermediate male EFL learners?

RQ_3. Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking fluency of Iranian upper-intermediate female EFL learners?

RQ_4. Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking fluency of Iranian upper-intermediate male EFL learners?

1.2. Research Hypotheses

The above-mentioned research questions, were reformulated in the form of the following hypotheses:

$H0_1$. Teaching interactional strategies does not affect the speaking accuracy of Iranian upper-intermediate female EFL learners.

$H0_2$. Teaching interactional strategies does not affect the speaking accuracy of Iranian upper-intermediate male EFL learners.

$H0_3$. Teaching interactional strategies does not affect the speaking fluency of Iranian upper-intermediate female EFL learners.

$H0_4$. Teaching interactional strategies does not affect the speaking fluency of Iranian upper-intermediate male EFL learners.

2. Review of Literature

Today's global culture makes communication possible through speaking a foreign language and it is the most desirable and salient tool for improving personal and professional relations. Many language learners, who want to learn English as a foreign language, are more interested in speaking skill rather than the other skills and see it as a basic skill (Richards, 2008). Development in speaking ability is measured according to these features: Fluency, Accuracy, and Complexity. Fluency and accuracy are two characteristics of speaking skill that make the speech comprehensible.

2.1. Fluency

According to Nunan (1999) when speakers start to speak abruptly, having the ability to continue the speech without hesitation is a necessary factor for fluency. It does not mean that speakers should speak fast, since sometimes pauses help the speech be understandable and can be a sign of fluency. Nevertheless, Lewis (1999) noted that fluency is not a characteristic of speaking; it is the speaking ability itself.

To speak fluently, speakers need to be able to pronounce phonemes correctly, consider stress and intonation and talk in different situations based on different genres. They should also be able to use conversational repair strategies when necessary (Harmer, 2007). According to Farhady, Jafarpor, and Birjandi (2009, p.239) to assess fluency the following guideline is used:

Table 1. Guideline for Assessing Fluency

Scale	Point	Behavioral Statement
Fluency	6	Fluent and effortless speech like a native speaker.
	5	Natural and continuous speech with pauses at un natural points.
	4	Fluent speech with occasional poblems.
	3	Frequent problems hinder fluency and demand greater effort.
	2	Slow speech, hesitant, and sometimes silent.
	1	Virtually unable to make connected speech.

2.2. Accuracy

To have comprehensible communication, speech should be accurate as well as fluent. Sentences should be grammatically correct to be accurate and learners should have the ability to speak accurately. Therefore, Accuracy is one of the most significant elements in measuring linguistic ability and helping learners avoid communicative problems. Accuracy is the ability of students to create a grammatically correct sentence (Richards, Platt, Platt, 1992).

Cameron (2001) asserted that accuracy refers to the correct use of language form. Speaking accuracy is "the extent to which the language produced conforms to target language norms" (Yuan & Ellis, 2003, p.2). According to Farhady etal. (2009, p.239) to assess accuracy the following guidelines are used:

Table 2. Guideline for Assessing Accuracy

Scale	Point	Behavioral Statement
Accent	6	Phonemically acceptable pronunciation throughout.
	5	Few phonemic errors but never hindering comprehension.
	4	Occasional phonemic errors necessitate attentive listening.
	3	Frequent phonemic errors require frequent demands for repetition.
	2	Constant phonemic errors make comprehension very hard.

	1	Severe errors make understanding virtually impossible.
Structure	6	Almost no error.
	5	Few insignificant errors only.
	4	Occasional petty errors but no problem with understanding.
	3	Frequent errors occasionally interfere with meaning.
	2	Constant errors interfere with understanding.
	1	Severe errors make understanding virtually impossible.
Vocabulary	6	Appropriate and extensive use of words in domain.
	5	Appropriate use of adequate vocabulary to discuss general topics and special interests.
	4	Occasional use of inappropriate word distort the message.
	3	Frequent use of inappropriate words distort the message.
	2	Constant use of words, limited vocabulary.
	1	Inadequate basic vocabulary.

It should be noted that fluency and accuracy are interrelated constructs. Some degree of accuracy is essential for fluency. If the speech is fluent but inaccurate in vocabulary, syntax, or pronunciation, it could be difficult to understand. It jeopardizes comprehensibility, which is the main feature of fluency. It is possible for a speaker to have some pauses and be accurate. If the speech is accurate but not fluent, it will irritate the listeners and they will not be able to concentrate on the meaning and message.

2.3. Interactional Strategies (ISs)

Interaction is a significant point in language learning that can encourage students to become effective communicators in a foreign language. Long (1985) shed light on the role of interaction in L2 acquisition by Interaction Hypothesis which is the most effective and useful theory in learning a new language by stressing personal and direct interaction. It has two major claims (1) to acquire a second language, the role of comprehensible input and feedback should be highlighted, (2) interactional structure of conversations must be modified and happens while negotiating problems and helps to make input, comprehensible to an L2 learner. Interactional strategies "carry out trouble shooting exchanges cooperatively, and therefore mutual understanding is a function of the successful execution of both pairs of the exchange" (Dornyei & Scott, 1997, p. 198-199).

2.4. Previous Studies

English is an international language and is spoken in many countries. Zareie, Gorjian, & Pazhakh (2014) asserted in the article, the effects of interactional and transactional speaking strategies on the speaking of Iranian female EFL learners. The results demonstrated that both interactional and transactional speaking strategies help learners to develop fluency and accuracy. Amini, Amini, and Amini (2013) in the article about gender differences in anxiety and speaking skill in Iranian context,

pinpointed that female learners experience much more anxiety than male ones, even when they are prepared to speak. Female learners preferred not to volunteer to answer questions in English. The authors suggested that lecturers should encourage   and help students to express themselves and minimize anxiety. Sadeghi and Edalati (2014) reported that pushed output which was defined by Ellis (2003) as output that learners produce when they have to use target language accurately, had positive impact on accuracy but pushed output had no impact on fluency.

3. **Methodology**

3.1. **Participants**

   This study was conducted with the cooperation of 60 Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners learning English at a language institute. The selected participants were both male (N= 30) and female (N= 30). The 60 participants were selected out of a whole population of 100 based on their performance on Quick Placement Test. The selected participants' scores were 40-47 (based on QPT rating level chart) out of 60 (34 female/ 35 male) to be at upper-intermediate level. After that, the ones selected were interviewed to ensure their homogeneity regarding their speaking ability and 60 participants were selected (30 female/ 30 male).

3.2. **Instruments and Materials**
   3.2.1. Quick Placement Test
   The Quick Placement Test (QPT, Version 1) is a flexible test of English language proficiency developed by Oxford University Press and Cambridge ESOL to provide teachers with a reliable and time-saving method for finding a student's level in English and consists of 60 multiple-choice items. QPT band score is shown below:

Level	Score (out of 60)
Beginner	0-17
Elementary	18-29
Lower Intermediate	30-39
Upper Intermediate	40-47
Advanced	48-60

3.2.2. Accuracy and Fluency Guidelines
   To check accuracy and fluency, there are two rating scales developed to be used with EFL speakers. These two scales rate the interviewee's performance separately as related to accuracy (accent, structure, vocabulary), and fluency (speaking effortlessly, naturally with natural pauses at natural points) (Farhady etal., 2009).

3.2.3. Pretest
   Speaking module of IELTS taken from Cambridge IELTS 5 (Cambridge University Press) was served as the pretest. It contained 3 phases: first, the learners introduced themselves and answered general questions about themselves and familiar topics (family and job). It lasted for about four or five minutes. Second, the learners talked about a topic which was given to them for one or two minutes. Third, the learners discussed a topic for about four to five minutes. The examiner and the candidate engaged in a discussion of issues which were linked to the topic in phase two.

3.2.4. Posttest
   In this study, after 6 sessions of treatment, the speaking module of IELTS taken from Cambridge IELTS 5 (Cambridge University Press) was used to play the role of posttest to make a comparison between the control and experimental groups determining the effectiveness of the instruction.

3.2.5. Text Book

The text book that was used for group discussion was "*For and Against*" (Alexander, 1968). This book provides material which can be suitable for class discussion. It includes 70 topics that can be used for oral practice and interviews.

3.3. Procedures

The first step was to ensure the students' homogeneity in terms of proficiency level. To do so, about three weeks before instruction, Quick Placement Test (Version 1) was administered to 100 participants. Moreover, to check the participants' speaking ability, the researcher interviewed all 69 selected participants. All L2 exchanges were recorded and the researcher requested two independent and competent raters to score the interviews separately. To check the inter-rater reliability, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used in this study to show the average rate of agreement for an entire set of scores and it was .85. Two raters scored the interviewees performance according to guidelines that are in the book of Farhady etal. (2009). Based on the raters' scores, 30 participants of each gender were selected. The female participants of 30 was randomly divided in to 2 groups: control and experimental. The same was done for the male participants. For both genders in the experimental groups, from the first session the treatment included teaching interactional strategies (AR, AH, CC, CR, AC, EN). For the both control groups, the participants had group discussions about the selected topic, and were subjected to traditional instruction. The researcher paid attention to the students' wrong use of words and mispronunciation and used brainstorming techniques. Finally, both control and experimental groups underwent a post-test that was an interview.

3.4. Data Analysis

To assure that all participants in 4 groups were homogeneous One-Way ANOVA was used. The mean scores were analyzed by SPSS 19. To see if there was a statistically significant difference between control and experimental groups according to gender, independent sample *t*-test was utilized.

4. Results of Data Analysis

4.1. Results of the Quick Placement Test

Based on the QPT results, the homogeneity of the 60 selected learners was assured.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for the Placement Scores of the Four Groups

Groups		*N*	Mean	*Std.* Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Female	EG	15	44.24	6.21	36.00	61.00
Male	EG	15	46.09	5.85	33.00	62.00
Female	CG	15	45.61	4.77	39.00	56.00
Male	CG	15	44.32	6.21	35.00	55.00

The results of One-Way ANOVA is shown in table 4.

Table 4. Results of One-Way ANOVA for Comparing the Placement Scores of the Four Groups

	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	*Sig.*
Between Groups	14.13.38	3	706.69	1.86	.09
Within Groups	33293.60	57	378.33		
Total	34706.98	60			

Based on the comparison between the *p* value under the *Sig.* column and level of significance it can be concluded that there was no significant differences between groups.

4.2. The Answer to the First Research Question

The first research question was "Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking accuracy of Iranian upper-intermediate female EFL learners?" descriptive statistics are shown in the table below.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Female CG and EG Accuracy Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	CG	15	13.5000	1.32288	.34157
	EG	15	12.4000	2.66726	.68868
Posttest	CG	15	13.5667	1.34784	.34801
	EG	15	15.8000	1.88793	.48746

To check the statistical (in-) significance of these differences between the pretest scores of the two groups and between their posttest scores, one needs to consult the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column in the *t* test table which follows.

Table 6. Results of the Independent-Samples t Test for Comparing Female CG and EG Accuracy Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F.	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Lower	Upper
FPreAccEqual variances assumed	11.228	.002	1.431	28	.164	1.10000	.76873	-.47468	2.67468
Equal variances assumed			1.431	20.495	.168	1.10000	.76873	-.50107	2.70107
FPostAcc Equal variances assumed	7.461	.147	-3.729	28	.001	-.2.23333	.59894	-3.46021	-1.00646
Equal variances assumed			-3.729	25.328	.001	-.2.23333	.59894	-3.46606	-1.00060

The conclusion to be drawn would be that female learners in the two groups were at roughly the same level of accuracy prior to the experiment (.164 >.005), but after the experiment, significant difference was observed between them (.001<.005). Therefore, teaching interactional strategies had positive impact on female's accuracy.

4.3. **The Answer to the Second Research Question**

The second research question was "Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking accuracy of Iranian upper-intermediate male EFL learners?" to see the difference, descriptive statistics are shown below.

Table 7.**Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Male CG and EG Accuracy Scores on the Pretest and Posttest**

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	CG	15	12.8333	2.78816	.71990
	EG	15	13.5333	2.79327	.72122
Posttest	CG	15	13.1333	3.09069	.79801
	EG	15	15.7000	2.33605	.60317

To check the statistical (in-) significance of these differences between the pretest accuracy scores of the male learners in the two groups and between their posttest scores, one should examine the *p* value under the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column in Table below.

Table 8. Results of the Independent-Samples *t* Test for Comparing Male CG and EG Accuracy Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t* test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F.	*Sig.*	*t*	*df*	*Sig.* (2-tailed)	*Mean Difference*	*Std. Error Difference*	Lower	Upper
MPreAcc Equal varia assumed	1.15	.293	-.687	28	.498	-.70000	1.01903	-2.78738	1.38738
Equal varianc assumed			-.687	28.000	.498	-.70000	1.01903	-2.78738	1.38738
MPostAcc Equal varia assumed	.751	.393	-2.566	28	.016	-2.56667	1.00032	-	.-51761
Equal varian									

Based on the *p* value, it could thus be concluded that the two male groups were at different level of accuracy after experiment. Therefore, teaching interactional strategies can help male learners to improve their accuracy.

4.4. The Answer to the Third Research Question

The third research question of the study was "Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking fluency of Iranian upper-intermediate female EFL learners?" To discover the difference between female learners in the CG and EG regarding their fluency, their pretest scores were compared by means of an independent-samples *t* test. This was done to be sure they were different regarding their fluency level at the commencement of the study. The result of descriptive statistics is shown in the table.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Female CG and EG Fluency Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	**CG**		2333	5277	.19437
	EG		.8333	87966	.22713
Posttest	**CG**		4000	9043	.22991
	EG		0333	.39940	.10313

To check the statistical (in-) significance of these differences between the pretest scores of the two groups and between their posttest scores, one needs to use the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column in the *t* test table which follows.

Table 10. Independent-Samples t Test Results for Comparing Female CG and EG Fluency Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F.	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
FPreFlu	Equal variances assumed	1.033	..318	1.338	28	.192	.40000	.29894	-.21235	1.01235
	Equal variances assumed			1.338	27.347	.192	.40000	.29894	-.21301	1.01301
FPostFlu	Equal variances assumed	34.227	.000	-2.513	28	.018	-.63333	..25198	-1.14948	-.11718
	Equal variances assumed			-2.513	19.414	.021	-.63333	.25198	-1.15996	-.10670

There was not statistically significant difference in pretest fluency scores for CG (M = 4.23) and EG (M = 3.83), t (28) = 1.33, p = .19 (two-tailed). This is so because the p value under the *Sig.* (2- tailed) column was greater than the specified level of significance (i.e. .05). However, the p value was less than the alpha level (.018 < .05) for the posttest analysis, and thus the difference between the fluency scores of CG (M = 4.40) and EG (M = 5.03) female learners was significant.

4.5. The Answer to the Fourth Research Question

Finally, the fourth research question of the study was "Does teaching interactional strategies affect the speaking fluency of Iranian upper-intermediate male EFL learners?" The researcher compared their pretest fluency scores to be sure they were not drastically different with respect to the variable under investigation at the beginning of the study. An independent-samples t test was used again, to compare the CG and EG male learners' fluency scores after the completion of the experiment. The result of descriptive statistics is shown below.

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics for Comparing Male CG and EG Fluency Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

Groups		N	an	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	CG		333	372	.22817
	EG		333	550	.16667
Posttest	CG		33	50	.22608
	EG		00	.54116	.13973

The mean score of the male CG learners on the pretest (M = 4.43) was a little bit more than the mean score of the male learners in the EG (M = 4.33). On the contrary, the CG learners' mean score (M = 4.53) on the posttest was less than that of EG (M = 5.10). To check the statistical (in-) significance of these differences between the pretest fluency scores of the male learners in the two groups and between their posttest scores, the p value should be examined, which is shown under the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column in Table 4.10. below.

Table 12. Independent-Samples t Test Results for Comparing Male CG and EG Fluency Scores on the Pretest and Posttest

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F.	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
MPreFlu nces	Equal assumed	.622	.354		28	.726	.10000	.76873	-.47880	.67880
nces	Equal			.354	25.62	.726	.10000	.76873	-.48122	.68122

	assumed								
MPostFlunces	Equal	222	.173	-2.132	28	.042	-.56667	-.59894	-08	-.02226
	assumed								
nces	Equal			-2.132	23.33	.042	-.2.23333	-.56667	-02	-.01731
	assumed								

There was not a statistically significant difference in pretest fluency scores for male learners in CG (*M* = 4.43) and EG (*M* = 4.33), *t* (28) = .35, *p* = .72 (two-tailed). By contrast, the *p* value under the *Sig.* (2-tailed) column (.042) was smaller than the significance level (.05) for the posttest scores of the both groups. Therefore, the difference between the CG (*M* = 4.53) and EG (*M* = 5.10) male learners regarding their fluency was statistically significance. It means that, teaching interactional strategies helped male learners' to improve their fluency.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the result of pretest and posttest for the male and female learners in the CG and EG were contrasted; and it was revealed that teaching interactional strategies had positive effects on female and male learners' accuracy. Similarly, for fluency the results for both female and male control groups were collated and compared with the experimental ones separately; the contrast between CG and EG on the posttest demonstrated that there was a remarkable difference between the fluency after the treatment. Therefore, the third and fourth null hypotheses, which concerned the ineffectiveness of teaching interactional strategies on fluency of female and male participants, were refuted due to comparison made between the *p* value and level of significance. The results of this study are in line with those of Yang (2014) in that within a collaborative learning environment, the speaking fluency improved. Moreover, Zareie etal. (2014) found out that fluency was positively affected by working on transactional strategies. Sadeghi and Edalati (2014) also reported the positive role of pushed output on speaking fluency.

It was concluded that, working on interactional strategies improved speaking fluency for both male and female learners. Concisely, interactional strategies helped learners to improve accuracy and fluency for both male/female groups and focusing on these kinds of activities will help English learners to gain the expected qualities.

REFERENCES

Alexander, L. G. (1968). *For and Against*. Harlow: Longman Group Ltd.

Amini, S., Amini, N., & Amini, M. (2013). Gender Differences in Anxiety and Speaking English as a Second language among Iranian English Major Students of Payame Noor University. *International Journal of Applied Linguistic Studies*, 2(4), 70-76.

Cameron, L. (2001). *Teaching languages to young learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dornyei, Z., & Scott, M. L. (1995). Communication strategies: an empirical analysis with retrospection. In: J.S. Turley, K. Lusby (Eds.): *Selected papers from the proceedings of the 21st annual symposium of the Desert Language and Linguistics Society* (pp. 155–168). Provo, UT: Brigham Young University.

Dornyei, Z., & Scott, M.L. (1997). Communication strategies in a second language: Definitions and taxonomies. *Language Learning*, *47*(1), 198-199.

Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Farhady, H., Jafarpoor, A., & Birjandi, P. (2009). *Testing language skills: From theory to practice.* Tehran: SAMT Publications. pp.239-241, 231.

Goh, O., & Foong, K. (1997). Chinese ESL students' learning strategies: A look at frequency, proficiency, and gender. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2(1), 39-53.

Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English language teaching.* Essex: Pearson Longman.

Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and implications*. London: Longman.

Lan, R., & Oxford, R.L. (2003). Language learning strategy profiles of elementary school students in Taiwan. *IRAL, 41*, 339–379.

Lewis, M. (1999). *How to study foreign languages*. Basingstoke: MacMillan.

Lindsay, C., & Knight, P. (2006*). Learning and Teaching English*: *A Course for Teachers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Long, M. H. (1985). Linguistic and conversational adjustments to non-native speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 5*, 177-193.

Long, M.H. (1990). Task, group, and task-group interactions. In S. Anivan (Ed.), *Language teaching methodology for the nineties*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, *24*, 31-50.

Naegle, P. (2002). *The New Teacher's Complete Sourcebook. USA:* Scholastic Professional Book.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching & learning*. Boston: Heinle& Heinle.

Oxford, R. (2002). *Sources of variation in language learning.* In R. Kaplan (Ed.), *Oxford Hand Book of Applied Linguistics* (pp.245-252). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oxford, R. L., & Ehrman, M. E. (1995). Adults' language learning strategies in an intensive foreign language program in the United States. *System, 23*(3), 359- 386.

Richards, J.C. (2008). *Teaching listening and speaking: From theory to practice.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (2nd Ed.) (pp.141-142). Harlow, Essex: Longman.

Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Weber, H. (1985). *Longman dictionary of applied linguistics*. London: Longman.

Sadeghi, A. R., & Edalati, V. (2014). The impact of pushed output on accuracy and fluency of Iranian EFL learners' speaking. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 2(2), 51-72.

Skehan, P. (1996). *Second language acquisition research and task-based instruction*. In J. Willis, & D. Willis (Eds.), *Challenge and Change in Language Teaching* (pp.17-30). Oxford: Heinemann.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1995). Problems in output and the cognitive processes they generate: A step towards second language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 16*, 370–391.

Yang, Y. (2014). The Implementation of Speaking Fluency in Communicative Language Teaching: An Observation of Adopting the 4/3/2 Activity in High Schools in China. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 2(1), 193-214.

Yuan, F., & Ellis, R. (2003). Effects of pre task planning and on-line planning on fluency, complexity, and accuracy in L2 monologic oral production. *Applied Linguistics, 24*, 1–27.

Zareie, B., Gorjian, B., & Pazhakh, A. (2014). The Effect of Interactional and Transactional Speaking Strategies on Teaching Speaking Skills to Iranian EFL Learners at senior High School Level. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 5*, 443-459.

THE EFFECT OF TRADITIONAL SCAFFOLDING TREATMENTS ON THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE ON THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILLS OF PRONUNCIATION, FLUENCY, LEXICON, AND GRAMMAR

Seyyed Hassan Mirahmadi, PhD Student; Department of English language and Literature, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
Email: mirahmadi2009@gmail.com
Postal Address: Islamic Azad University-Kharg Island, Shohada St., Kharg Island, Boushehr

Seyyed Mohammad Alavi, PhD; Department of English, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran
Email: smalavi@ut.ac.ir
Postal Address: University of Tehran, Northern Kargar St., Amirabad, Tehran

ABSTRACT
THE PRESENT STUDY DESIGNED FOLLOWING A SCAFFOLDING PRINCIPLE OF SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY (WOOD, BRUNER & ROSS, 1976) ATTEMPTED TO INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF THE THREE TRADITIONAL SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUES, NAMELY HARD, SOFT (SAYE & BRUSH, 2002), RECIPROCAL (HOLTON AND CLARKE, 2006) IN DEVELOPING IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' SPEAKING SUBSKILLS OF PRONUNCIATION, LEXICON, GRAMMAR AND FLUENCY. TO ACCOMPLISH THE PROJECT, 120 MARITIME STUDENTS AT KHARG AZAD UNIVERSITY (IAU-KHARG) WERE SELECTED AS PARTICIPANTS BASED ON CONVENIENCE SAMPLING. A NUMBER OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS WERE IMPLEMENTED IN LINE WITH THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH: AN OXFORD PLACEMENT TEST (OPT), A PRETEST OF SPEAKING, AND A POST TEST OF SPEAKING, TO FULFILL THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH, THE QUESTION WAS FURTHER BROKEN DOWN TO FIND STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILLS OF FLUENCY, LEXICON, GRAMMAR, AND PRONUNCIATION OF THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS. A MULTIVARIATE ANOVA (MANOVA) WAS RUN TO COMPARE THE THREE GROUPS' MEANS ON THE PRETESTS OF FLUENCY, LEXICON, GRAMMAR AND PRONUNCIATION IN ORDER TO PROBE THE ASSUMPTION OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES, AND IT WAS MET. BASED ON THE SECOND RUNNING OF MANOVA TO COMPARE THE THREE GROUPS' MEANS ON THE PERFORMANCES OF THE FOUR SUBSKILLS, THE FOLLOWING RESULTS CAME OUT TO BE KNOWN: THE SCAFFOLDING CONTEXTS HAD STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE FLUENCY, LEXICON, GRAMMAR AND PRONUNCIATION OF THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS.

KEYWORDS: HARD SCAFFOLDING, RECIPROCAL SCAFFOLDING, SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY, SOFT SCAFFOLDING, SPEAKING SUBSKILLS

1. Introduction

For many years, the understanding of foreign language learning difficulties has been a crucial point of interest among foreign language (FL) educators. Great attention has been paid to teaching the literacy skills needed to succeed in tertiary institutions abroad to EFL students (Ferris & Tagg, 1996, p. 479). Though these studies (Ferris, 1998) have been very helpful to EFL teachers, few have looked beyond reading and writing skills (Ferris &Tagg, 1996; Iwashita et al., 2008; Kim, 2006). Furthermore, as Ostler (1980) contends, listening and speaking skills are most problematic for EFL students while they study in English-speaking countries.

Speaking is undeniably the fundamental language skill in language learning and teaching. Richards and Renandya (2002) assert: "A large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking" (p. 201). The fact that mastery of speaking takes priority is also reflected in the tendency of society to deem speaking skill as a measure of one's mastery of English.

Students often have difficulty producing fluent speech simply because they lack the vocabulary or grammar to express what they want to express. Rather than just have students 'speak' in the classroom we should be teaching students specific speaking skills, known as sub -skills or micro skills. Since conversations outside the class are bound to be better learning experiences than those inside the class, rather than trying to duplicate real world conversations in the classroom, we should be teaching students skills they are not likely to learn outside the classroom. By raising awareness of speaking sub-skills and providing classroom practice with them, we will be providing students with strategies to improve their communication outside the classroom, which is, or should be, the ultimate goal.

More than ninety percent of global trade is carried by sea. As a result it has fostered an interdependency and inter-connectivity between people who would previously have considered themselves completely unconnected (Mitropoulos, 2005). For the maritime industry which facilitates this activity, it is essential that a common working language, namely English, be competently used to safeguard the ship, its crew and the environment in which it sails.

According to (Ziarati, Ziarati, Bigland & Acar, 2010), English has been set as the language of the sea at an international level and it is used in all situations such as ship-to-ship, ship-to-shore and between maritime personnel.

In addition, a careful study identified that 80% of maritime accidents are down to human factors, of which failure of communication represents one-third (Ziarati, 2009). On the other hand, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has also underlined the importance of effective communication in an International Seminar as a crucial issue for Marine Safety (Winbow, 2002). This study investigated the ways to help improve the speaking ability among maritime students on Kharg Island so as to reduce the number of maritime accidents caused by the human factor due to communication failures which have become a problem in the maritime industry.

2. Sociocultural Theory and ZPD

Sociocultural theory has a holistic view about the act of learning. Williams and Burden (1997) claim that the theory opposes the idea of the discrete teaching of skills and argues that meaning should constitute the central aspects of any unit of study. Any unit of study should be presented in all its complexity rather than skills and knowledge presented in isolation.

The theory emphasizes the importance of what the learner brings to any learning situation as an active meaning-maker and problem-solver. It acknowledges the dynamic nature of the interplay between teachers, learners and tasks and provides a view of learning as arising from interactions with others. According to Ellis (2000), sociocultural theory assumes that learning arises not through interaction but in interaction. Learners first succeed in performing a new task with the help of another person and then internalize this task so that they can perform it on their own. In this way, social interaction is advocated to mediate learning.

One of the fundamental concepts of sociocultural theory, according to Lantolf (2000), is its claim that the human mind is mediated. Lantolf claims that in Vygotsky's psychology tools play a significant role in humans' understanding of the world around him and of themselves. According to Lantolf, Vygotsky advocates that humans do not act directly on the physical world without the intervention of

tools. As Vygotsky contends, tools, symbolic or signs, are artefacts created by humans under specific cultural and historical conditions carrying with them the characteristics of the culture in which they exist.

Wertsch (1985) and Shayer (2002), cited in Turuk (2008), claim that Vygotsky's introduction of the notion of the ZPD was due to his dissatisfaction with two practical issues in educational psychology: the first is the assessment of a child's intellectual abilities and the second is the evaluation of the instructional practices. With respect to the first issue, Vygotsky believes that the established techniques of testing only determine the actual level of development, but they do not measure the potential ability of the child. In his view, psychology should address the issue of predicting a child's future growth, "what he/she not yet is". Because of the value Vygotsky attached to the importance of predicting a child's future capabilities, he formulated the concept of ZPD which he defines as the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving, and the higher level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. According to him, the ZPD helps in determining a child's mental functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that are currently in an embryonic state, but will mature tomorrow.

3. Scaffolding Theory and Techniques

According to Donato (1994), scaffolding is a concept derived from cognitive psychology and L1 research. It states that in a social interaction, a knowledgeable participant can create a context by means of speech and supportive conditions in which the student (novice) can participate in and extend current skills and knowledge to a high level of competence. In an educational context, however, scaffolding is an instructional structure whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task then gradually shifts responsibility to the students.

Rogoff (1990), cited in Donato (1994), holds the view that scaffolding implies the expert's active stance towards continual revisions of the scaffolding in response to the emerging capabilities of the learner, and a learner's error or limited capabilities can be a signal for the adult to upgrade the scaffolding. As the learner begins to take on more responsibility for the task, the adult dismantles the scaffold indicating that the child has benefited from the assisted performance and internalized the problem-solving processes provided by the previous scaffolded episode. Wertsch(1979a), cited in Donato (1994), claims that scaffolded performance is a dialogically constituted interpsychological mechanism that promotes the learner's internalization of knowledge co-constructed in shared activity. Donato (1994) advocates that in an L2 classroom, collaborative work among language learners provides the same opportunity for scaffolded help as in expert-novice relationships in the everyday setting. The study of scaffolding in L2 research, according to Donato, has focused exclusively on how language teachers provide guided assistance to learners.

3.1. Hard and Soft Scaffolding

Soft scaffolding has been referred to as dynamic, situation-specific aid provided by a teacher to help with the learning process. Such scaffolding requires teachers to continuously diagnose the understandings of learners and provide timely support based on student responses (Saye & Brush, 2002). This type of assistance is generally provided on-the-fly, where the teacher monitors the progress students are making while engaged in a learning activity and intervenes when support or guidance is needed.

Hard scaffolding, in contrast, is a static support that can be anticipated and planned in advance based upon typical student difficulties with a task (Saye & Brush, 2002). The teacher gives explanations and the necessary feedback to the learners depending on his teaching experiences and anticipating the learners' problems. Jacobson.

3.2. Reciprocal Scaffolding

In the last two decades, pair and group work has been widely used in many second language (L2) education contexts thanks to its pedagogical and theoretical values. From a pedagogical perspective, research has suggested that pair and group work has positive influence on learners' development (see

Barnard, 2002; Gibbons, 2002; McDonough, 2004). From a theoretical point of view, collaborative learning is supported by a social constructivist perspective of learning, which is grounded in Vygotskian sociocultural theory of development (Vygotsky, 1978). This perspective sees learning as socially constructed through social interactions such as pair and group work.

Peer collaboration has also been largely studied in the L2 literature. However, research on peer scaffolding in L2 writing as well as reading within ESL contexts seems to currently constitute the largest volume of research in the area of peer scaffolding in L2 learning (Shehadeh, 2011). There is a lack of focus on peer scaffolding in L2 listening and speaking skills and other aspects of L2 (Nguyen, 2013). As Nguyen argues, in EFL settings, exposure to opportunities for L2 learning, especially speaking development, is usually less accessible in comparison with ESL settings, and peers appear to be an important source of learning for EFL learners. To support EFL teachers and learners in taking advantage of peer support in developing learners' English speaking ability, there needs to be more research data in this area to inform practice.

Research on peer scaffolding and L2 learning in particular has focused on two major themes, the effectiveness and mechanisms of peer scaffolding. In the effectiveness theme, peer scaffolding is often presented in L2 research as an effective way to foster L2 learners' development. Within the area of L2 writing, which represents the largest volume of L2 research on peer scaffolding, de Guerrero and Villamil (2000) observed a pair of ESL learners revising a written text and found evidence of development in both the student writer and the student reader. The student writer showed emerging self-regulation and grew into a more independent writer and reviser while the student reader developed aspects of L2 writing, revision, strategic assistance and collaboration. In a series of studies on peer scaffolding in collaborative ESL writing, Storch (2002, 2005) found a great number of instances showing development in L2 learners as a result of peer scaffolding. For example, Storch (2002) found evidence of transfer of knowledge as the members of the dyads co-constructed knowledge about language. Storch (2005) reported that peer-scaffolded learners produced shorter but better texts in terms of task completion, grammatical accuracy, and complexity in comparison with individual student writers. Similarly, Storch (2005) found opportunities for learners to use the target language for a range of functions that play an important role in language learning. Moreover, Shehadeh's study (2011) found that collaborative writing had a statistically significant effect on improving students' L2 writing in terms of content, organization, and vocabulary. The study shows that the peer scaffolding experience enhanced not only students' writing competence, but also their speaking ability and self-confidence.

In other L2 areas, Le's (2006) study on the use of group work in vocabulary learning in Vietnam finds that in both "unassisted" group work (5 students from the same class working together) and "assisted" group work (4 students from the same class working with 1 student from a higher class), students learnt new words, used collective memory and received help from other group members in learning and using the new words. However, the group assisted by a more capable peer used more target language in the discussion than the unassisted group.

Similarly, Le's study (2007) shows that expert-novice group work created more learning opportunities than unassisted group work. Other researchers (e.g. Barnard, 2002; Gibbons, 2002; McDonough, 2004) also report that L2 students working in pairs or groups can produce results that extend beyond their individual competence.

As stated by Lantolf (2000) and Van Lier (2000), Vygotsky was of the view that language development begins on the social plane and becomes internalized, based on the theory that humans use language and social interaction as a guide to accomplish tasks. Through guidance from an expert or more-skilled peer, novices may be able to "accomplish tasks that they would not be capable of performing independently" (Kasper, 2001, p. 34).

4. Research Questions
Major Question: Do the (traditional and virtual) scaffolding treatments have any statistically significant effects on the Iranian EFL learners' performance on the overall speaking sub-skills?
4.1. Do the scaffolding treatments have any statistically significant effects on the fluency of the Iranian EFL learners?

4.2. Do the scaffolding treatments have any statistically significant effects on the lexicon of the Iranian EFL learners?

4.3. Do the scaffolding treatments have any statistically significant effects on the grammar of the Iranian EFL learners?

4.4. Do the scaffolding treatments have any statistically significant effects on the pronunciation of the Iranian EFL learners?

5. Methods

5.1. Participants

There were a total number of 120 male sophomore students majoring in Maritime Navigation enrolled in their first conversation course with the researcher in the year 2014-2015 academic year. Since there were no female students majoring in Maritime Navigation, the research project was run with male participants only, not counting the gender of the participants as a variable. As the Maritime students had started their studies soon after high school, they were the same age (19 to 20). Prior to the study, it was made sure that none of the participants had any experience of living in an English-speaking country having a noticeable command of English speaking or listening.

Having conducted the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) for the purpose of selecting a homogeneous sample of the students, the researcher marked a number of 20 students as outliers. The research, therefore, went on with 100 students as participants of the study. The resulted 100 participating subjects were randomly categorized into the three traditionally-scaffold groups of hard, soft, and reciprocal.

Table 2

Classification of participants in terms of groups

Group	No.	Intact	Total
Hard	27	6	33
Soft	27	6	33
Reciprocal	27	7	34

5.2. Instrumentation

In the process of the research project the required data were gathered at different junctures prior to, within and after the treatments through employing the following instruments:

5.2.1. Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

The test selected for the purpose of finding homogeneous participants was the second version of the Oxford Placement Test (2001), administered at the onset of the research prior to the treatment sessions. The test was divided into part 1 (40 items) and part 2 (20 items). The rationale behind such division, as stipulated by the guidelines attached, was the presumption that students who could answer the 20 items in the second section of the test had a proficiency higher than Intermediate, namely Advanced or Very Advanced. There was attached to the test a scoring table that represented different groups of proficiency ranging from beginners to very advanced.

Table 3

Oxford Placement Test Scores

Levels	Scores
Beginner	0---15
Elementary	16---23
Lower Intermediate	24---30
Upper Intermediate	31---40
Advanced	41---53

Very Advanced	53---60

5.2.2. Textbook

All the treatment sessions were conducted using the textbook at Pre-intermediate level developed and designed by the Iran Language Institute (ILI) where the researcher has been teaching for almost two decades continuously. The selected textbook is designed into eight units comprising a vocabulary list, a conversation, a reading passage, grammar notes and drills followed by a listening task at the end. Each unit was accomplished in two sessions. The ILI English Series follows an integrated approach to teaching English, the book focuses on grammar and writing, reading, listening and speaking at the same time. From Basic to Intermediate levels, much attention has been given to listening and speaking skills; little attention to reading, and the least attention to writing. The main objectives of the courses for Basic to Intermediate levels are improving the learners' listening and speaking abilities, the fact which motivated the researcher to choose and implement the textbook for the purpose of the study.

5.3. Procedure

5.3.1. Pretreatment Phase

At the onset of the research project, an Oxford Placement Test was administered to all the 120 available learners to find homogeneous students. Having placed the 100 homogeneous learners into the three scaffolding groups, prior to any treatments, a pretest of speaking ability in the form of interviews was given to all the learners in the three scaffolded groups.

5.3.2. Whilst the Treatment

Hard Scaffolding

Based on the long experience of the teacher in teaching the same level for more than 15 years and teaching the same textbook for about 10 years, the researcher-teacher used his prewired lesson plans and anticipated the possible problems to arise. In teaching the vocabulary, he drove the students' attention to those words and expressions that were more challenging and thus demanding on the part of the learners in paraphrasing and comprehending the dialog and reading passage ahead. Derivatives were also taught to the students asking them to make new sentences. Structural notes that were supposed to pose ambiguity or difficulty were explained as he was reading the dialog or passage for comprehension. Every problem was anticipated by the researcher and thus ironed out before the learners raised their hands.

Soft Scaffolding

As the materials were presented, the teacher gave the students the opportunity to ponder and raise their questions on the problematic issues. The teacher then took his time removing the problems by giving clear explanations and vivid examples. The teacher was walking around the class waiting for any possible question from the learners and was ready and well-equipped to help them out.

Reciprocal Scaffolding

Students were divided into five groups of 6 persons including high and low proficient ones. They were encouraged to look at the pages and tasks and discuss the issues together. The more proficient ones were advised to keep others motivated. The researcher did not leave them on their own for a long time and joined the groups at times to monitor their cooperative work and progress. In the process of joint work, students frequently used their dictionaries and sometimes hints and clues from other group members.

5.3.3. Post-treatment Phase

Upon finishing the eight-week-long treatment sessions, and in line with the research questions, a post-test of speaking ability was given to the learners in the three groups of scaffolding.

5.4. Research Design

This research took a quasi-experimental design in that it followed a One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design in which all the participants were randomly assigned to three experimental or treatment groups, namely Hard, Soft, and Reciprocal. Quasi-experiments have been used as far back as the 18th century and continue to be frequently utilized by researchers today for three primary reasons: (1) to meet the practical requirements of funding, educational administrators, and ethics, (2) to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention when the it has been implemented by educators prior to the

evaluation procedure having been considered and (3) when researchers want to dedicate greater resources to issues of external and construct validity (Shadish, et al., 2002). Quasi-experiments are based on creative design techniques to reduce the various threats that may cause a study's findings to be invalid or unreliable (Green, et al., 2006).

6. Results

This study was an attempt to employ the three scaffolding techniques known as Traditional (Hard, Soft, Reciprocal) in an ELT context in order to investigate their effects on the speaking subskills of the Iranian EFL learners at Islamic Azad University on Kharg Island. For the purpose of the study, and further analysis of the results, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT, 2001) was conducted on the 120 students available to place them into the same proficiency groups. The result of the OPT came out to be 110 participating students as well as 10 outliers.

6.1. Testing Normality Assumption

The data were analyzed through one-way ANOVA and multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) which assumes normality of the data. As displayed in Table 4.1 ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their standard errors were lower than +/- 1.96, hence normality of the data.

Table 4.1

Testing Normality Assumption

Group		N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
		Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
Hard	PreFlu	28	.566	.441	1.28	.552	.858	-0.04
	PreLex	28	.345	.441	0.78	-.913	.858	-0.13
	PreGram	28	.426	.441	0.97	-.646	.858	-0.10
	PostGram	28	.124	.441	0.28	-.576	.858	-0.28
	PostPro	28	.053	.441	0.12	-.612	.858	-0.71
	PostSP	28	.837	.441	1.90	.202	.858	-0.56
	PrePro	28	.809	.441	1.83	-.572	.858	-0.67
	PreSP	28	.621	.441	1.41	-.638	.858	0.14
Hard	PostFlu	28	-.290	.441	-0.66	-.839	.858	-0.19
	PostLex	28	-.232	.441	-0.53	-.379	.858	-1.24
	PostGram	28	-.605	.441	-1.37	.190	.858	-0.28
	PostPro	28	-.173	.441	-0.39	-.548	.858	-0.71
	PostSP	28	.376	.441	0.85	-.100	.858	-0.56
Reciprocal	PreFlu	28	.294	.441	0.67	-.034	.858	0.27
	PreLex	28	.282	.441	0.64	-.114	.858	-0.28
	PreGram	28	.222	.441	0.50	-.087	.858	-0.37
	PrePro	28	-.090	.441	-0.20	-.573	.858	1.22
	PreSP	28	.648	.441	1.47	.120	.858	0.98
	PostFlu	28	-.247	.441	-0.56	-.163	.858	-0.97
	PostLex	28	-.094	.441	-0.21	-1.064	.858	-0.22
	PostGram	28	-.538	.441	-1.22	-.237	.858	0.27
	PostPro	28	.361	.441	0.82	-.612	.858	-1.05
	PostSP	28	-.089	.441	-0.20	-.483	.858	-1.18
Soft	PreFlu	28	.036	.441	0.08	-.174	.858	-0.04
	PreLex	28	-.476	.441	-1.08	-.319	.858	-0.13
	PreGram	28	-.303	.441	-0.69	-.315	.858	-0.10
	PrePro	28	-.676	.441	-1.53	.183	.858	-0.67
	PreSP	28	-.407	.441	-0.92	-.200	.858	0.14
	PostFlu	28	.479	.441	1.09	.868	.858	-0.19
	PostLex	28	-.144	.441	-0.33	-.517	.858	-1.24

6.2. Pretest of Speaking

A one-way analysis of variances was run to compare the hard, soft, and reciprocal groups' means on the pretest of speaking in order to prove that they were at the same level of speaking ability prior to the main study. Before discussing the results it should be mentioned that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's F (3, 108) = .631, P = .597) (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.631	3	108	.597

As displayed in Table 4.3 the hard (M = 29.86, SD = 5.54), reciprocal (M = 27.14, SD = 6.53), and soft (M = 28, SD = 6.39) groups had almost the same means on the pretest of speaking.

Table 4.3
Descriptive Statistics, Pretest of Speaking by Groups

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Hard	28	29.86	5.549	1.049	27.71	32.01
Reciprocal	28	27.14	6.530	1.234	24.61	29.68
Soft	28	28.00	6.394	1.208	25.52	30.48

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.4 (F (3, 108) = 1.29, P = .279, ω^2 = .008 representing a weak effect size) it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between the means of the three groups on the pretest of speaking. Thus it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their speaking ability prior to the main study.

Table 4.4
One-Way ANOVA, Pretest of Speaking by Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	139.384	3	46.461	1.297	.279
Within Groups	3869.536	108	35.829		

6.3. Pretests of Speaking Components

A multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) was run to compare the three groups' means on the pretests of fluency, lexicon, grammar and pronunciation in order to prove that they were homogenous in terms of the speaking fluency, lexicon, grammar and pronunciation. Before discussing the results it should be mentioned that the assumptions of homogeneity of variances was met. As displayed in Table 4.5 the probabilities associated with the Levene's F-values were all higher than .05.

Table 4.5
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
PreFlu	1.576	3	108	.199
PreLex	.621	3	108	.603
PreGram	1.172	3	108	.324
PrePro	.958	3	108	.416

The assumption of homogeneity of covariance matrices was also met (Box's M = 46.78, P > .001) (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6
Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

Box's M	46.783
F	1.454
df1	30
df2	32069.041
Sig.	.052

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.7 and Table 4.8 it can be claimed that:

A: There were not any significant difference between hard (M = 7.78, SE = .31), reciprocal (M = 7.07, SE = .31), and soft (M = 7.10, SE = .31) groups' means on pretest of speaking fluency (F (3, 108) = 2.06, p = .109, Partial η^2 = .054 representing a weak effect size). Thus it can be claimed that the three groups were homogenous in terms of their speaking fluency prior to the main study.

B: There were not any significant difference between hard (M = 7.25, SE = .32), reciprocal (M = 6.53, SE = .32), and soft (M = 7.10, SE = .32) groups' means on pretest of speaking lexicon (F (3, 108) = .943, p = .423, Partial η^2 = .026 representing a weak effect size). Thus it can be claimed that the three groups were homogenous in terms of their speaking lexicon prior to the main study.

Table 4.7
Descriptive Statistics; Pretests of Speaking Components by Groups

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PreFlu	Hard	7.786	.311	7.169	8.403
	Reciprocal	7.071	.311	6.454	7.688
	Soft	7.107	.311	6.490	7.724
PreLex	Hard	7.250	.323	6.611	7.889
	Reciprocal	6.536	.323	5.896	7.175
	Soft	7.107	.323	6.468	7.747
PreGram	Hard	7.786	.312	7.168	8.404
	Reciprocal	7.143	.312	6.525	7.761
	Soft	7.143	.312	6.525	7.761
PrePro	Hard	7.036	.310	6.422	7.650
	Reciprocal	6.393	.310	5.779	7.007
	Soft	6.643	.310	6.029	7.257

C: There were not any significant difference between hard (M = 7.78, SE = .31), reciprocal (M = 7.14, SE = .31), and soft (M = 7.14, SE = .31) groups' means on pretest of speaking grammar (F (3, 108) = 2.25, p = .086, Partial η^2 = .059 representing a weak effect size). Thus it can be claimed that the three groups were homogenous in terms of their speaking grammar prior to the main study.

D: There were not any significant difference between hard (M = 7.03, SE = .31), reciprocal (M = 6.39, SE = .31), and soft (M = 6.63, SE = .31) groups' means on pretest of speaking pronunciation (F (3, 108) = .730, p = .536, Partial η^2 = .020 representing a weak effect size). Thus it can be claimed that the three groups were homogenous in terms of their speaking pronunciation prior to the main study.

Table 4.8
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects; Pretests of Speaking Components by Groups

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Group	PreFlu	16.813	3	5.604	2.066	.109	.054
	PreLex	8.241	3	2.747	.943	.423	.026
	PreGram	18.429	3	6.143	2.257	.086	.059

	PrePro	5.884	3	1.961	.730	.536	.020
Error	PreFlu	292.964	108	2.713			
	PreLex	314.750	108	2.914			
	PreGram	294.000	108	2.722			
	PrePro	290.179	108	2.687			

In order to probe the research question, the results of the posttests of speaking in terms of subskills were compared against those of the pretests. A multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) was run to compare the three groups' means on the posttests of fluency, lexicon, grammar and pronunciation. Before discussing the results, it should be mentioned that the assumptions of homogeneity of variances was met. As displayed in Table 4.13 the probabilities associated with the Levene's F-values were all higher than .05.

Table 4.13

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
PreFlu	.381	3	108	.767
PreLex	.376	3	108	.771
PreGram	2.224	3	108	.089
PrePro	.229	3	108	.876

The assumption of homogeneity of covariance matrices was also met (Box's M = 37.79, P > .001) (Table 4.14).

Table 4.14

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

Box's M	37.798
F	1.175
df1	30
df2	32069.041
Sig.	.234

Based on the results displayed in Table 4.15, Table 4.16 and Table 4.17 it can be claimed that

A: There was a significant difference between hard (M = 11.25, SE = .64), reciprocal (M = 9.25, SE = .64), and soft (M = 8.39, SE = .64) (Table 4.15) groups' means on posttest of speaking fluency ($F (3, 108)$ = 3.47, p = .019, Partial η^2 = .088 representing a moderate to large effect size) (Table 4.16). Thus it can be claimed that the scaffolding contexts had statistically significant effects on the fluency of the Iranian EFL learners.

The results of post-hoc Scheffe's tests indicated that the hard group (M = 11.25) significantly outperformed the soft group (M = 8.39) (MD = 2.86, p = .025) on the posttest of fluency. There were not any significant differences between other comparisons.

B: There was a significant difference between hard (M = 12.03, SE = .60), reciprocal (M = 11.03, SE = .60), and soft (M = 8.53, SE = .60) (Table 4.15) groups' means on posttest of speaking lexicon ($F (3, 108)$ = 7.50, p = .000, Partial η^2 = .172 representing a large effect size) (Table 4.16). Thus it can be claimed that the scaffolding contexts had statistically significant effects on the lexicon of the Iranian EFL learners.

The results of post-hoc Scheffe's tests indicated that

B-1: The hard group (M = 12.03) significantly outperformed the soft group (M = 8.53) (MD = 3.50, p = .001) on the posttest of lexicon.

B-2: The reciprocal group (M = 11.03) significantly outperformed the soft group (M = 8.53) (MD = 2.50, p = .045) on the posttest of lexicon.

There were not any significant differences between other comparisons.

Table 4.15
Descriptive Statistics; Pretests of Speaking Components by Groups

Dependent Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PostFlu	Hard	11.250	.649	9.963	12.537
	Reciprocal	9.250	.649	7.963	10.537
	Soft	8.393	.649	7.106	9.680
PostLex	Hard	12.036	.606	10.834	13.237
	Reciprocal	11.036	.606	9.834	12.237
	Soft	8.536	.606	7.334	9.737
PostGram	Hard	17.000	.762	15.489	18.511
	Reciprocal	15.179	.762	13.667	16.690
	Soft	11.893	.762	10.382	13.404
PostPro	Hard	12.393	.635	11.134	13.651
	Reciprocal	9.179	.635	7.920	10.437
	Soft	7.286	.635	6.027	8.544

C: There were a significant difference between hard (M = 17, SE = .76), reciprocal (M = 15.17, SE = .76), and soft (M = 11.89, SE = .76) (Table 4.15) groups' means on posttest of speaking grammar (F (3, 108) = 8.29, p = .000, Partial η^2 = .187 representing a large effect size) (Table 4.16). Thus it can be claimed the scaffolding contexts had statistically significant effects on the grammar of the Iranian EFL learners.
The results of post-hoc Scheffe's tests indicated that
C-1: The hard group (M = 17) significantly outperformed the soft group (M = 11.89) (MD = 5.11, p = .000) on the posttest of grammar.
C-2: The hard group (M = 17) significantly outperformed the virtual group (M = 13.50) (MD = 3.50, p = .018) on the posttest of grammar.
C-3: The reciprocal group (M = 15.17) significantly outperformed the soft group (M = 11.89) (MD = 3.29, p = .030) on the posttest of grammar.
There were not any significant differences between other comparisons.
Table 4.16
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects; Posttests of Speaking Components by Groups

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Group	PreFlu	122.884	3	40.961	3.470	.019	.088
	PreLex	231.527	3	77.176	7.503	.000	.172
	PreGram	404.929	3	134.976	8.293	.000	.187
	PrePro	406.750	3	135.583	12.013	.000	.250
Error	PreFlu	1274.893	108	11.805			
	PreLex	1110.893	108	10.286			
	PreGram	1757.786	108	16.276			
	PrePro	1218.929	108	11.286			

D: There were a significant difference between hard (M = 12.39, SE = .63), reciprocal (M = 9.17, SE = .63), and soft (M = 7.28, SE = .63) (Table 4.15) groups' means on posttest of speaking pronunciation (F (3, 108) = 12.01, p = .000, Partial η^2 = .250 representing a large effect size) (Table 4.16). Thus it can be claimed that the scaffolding contexts had statistically significant effects on the pronunciation of the Iranian EFL learners.
The results of post-hoc Scheffe's tests indicated that

D-1: The hard group (M = 12.13) significantly outperformed the soft group (M = 7.28) (MD = 5.11, p = .000) on the posttest of pronunciation.

D-2: The hard group (M = 12.13) significantly outperformed the reciprocal group (M = 9.17) (MD = 3.21, p = .007) on the posttest of pronunciation.

There were not nay significant differences between other comparisons.

	Fluency	Lexicon	Grammar	Pronunciatio o
Hard	11.25	12.04	17.00	12.39
Reciprocal	9.25	11.04	15.18	9.18
Soft	8.39	8.54	11.89	7.29
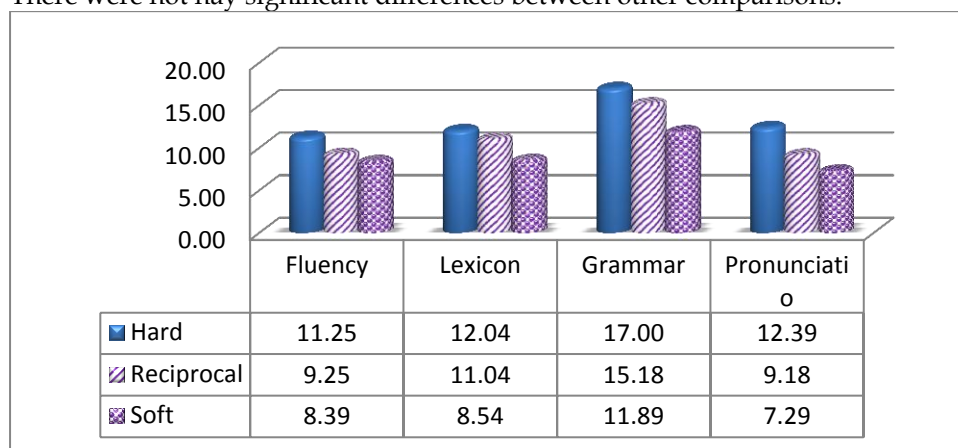
Figure 4.4: Posttests of Speaking Components by Groups

7. Discussion

This study focused on the role of scaffolding in improving the subskills of speaking referred to as fluency, lexicon, grammar accuracy, and pronunciation. Based on the above results the following findings were reported:

It was shown that there were significant differences between hard, reciprocal, and soft groups' means on posttest of speaking fluency proving that the scaffolding contexts had statistically significant effects on the fluency of the Iranian EFL learners. The results also indicated that the hard group significantly outperformed the soft group on the posttest of fluency. There were not any significant differences between other comparisons though.

In terms of lexicon, the study showed significant differences between the lexical abilities of the three scaffolding groups on the posttest. The results revealed that the hard and the reciprocal groups significantly outperformed the soft one. No other significant differences were found as a result of other comparisons between groups.

A significant effect on the grammatical accuracy of the EFL learners was also observed. All the three scaffolded groups significantly improved their grammatical accuracy as a result of being exposed to the three scaffolds. More specifically, the hard group outperformed the soft group; the reciprocal group also outperformed the soft group. Other comparisons did not reveal any significant differences.

There were also significant differences between the pronunciation improvements of the learners in this study. The results of the posttest showed that the pronunciation of the learners exposed to any one of the three scaffolding treatments significantly improved. A further analysis of the data revealed that the hard group outperformed the other groups in their pronunciation improvement.

This research project yielded results compatible with some other researches in the field. To investigate the effect of peer or teacher correction on the pronunciation improvement of the Iranian EFL learners, Ahangary (2014) set up a study to explore the role of teacher and peer correction as scaffolding strategies on the improvement of the Iranian EFL learners. Upon accomplishing the project, the researcher reported a significant effect of both scaffolds on the pronunciation of the learners talking about an outperformance of the peer-correction group over the teacher-correction group.

The findings of the present study are also consistent with Lyster and Ranta (1997) findings that student repair and correction leads to better language learning. They concluded that active engagement happens when there is a negotiation of form and focus on the form. The noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990) claims that second language learners could not begin to acquire a language feature until they had become aware of it in the input and also they should notice the grammatical form of their input in order to acquire grammar.

In a study conducted by Diaz (2014) regarding the effect of scaffolding on the phonological competence through the integration of pronunciation techniques, results confirm that the inclusion of collaborative learning tasks encourages students to express their opinions, discuss and negotiate ideas with others. Data also confirmed that competent learners benefit from more skillful peers.

8. Conclusion

The research question focused on the effect of the scaffolding treatments on the speaking sub-skills of fluency, lexicon, grammar, and pronunciation of the learners. A multivariate ANOVA was run to compare the means of the posttests of the four sub-skills. As shown, it was made clear that as a result of the scaffolding treatments, the learners showed a significant improvement in their fluency, grammar, lexicon, and pronunciation.

All in all, through implementing a number of instruments and scaffolding techniques, the study came to conclusion that not only did the learners showed a significant improvement in their overall speaking ability, but they also performed significantly better on the four sub-skills or components of their speaking ability known as Fluency, Lexicon, Grammar, and Pronunciation.

The outcomes of the study have implications for both research and practice in the field of scaffolding pedagogy in EFL learning contexts. Based on the findings of the research, a number of guidelines could be set for the Iranian EFL learners in general and more specifically the nautical students who study at the IAU-Kharg Island. Implications could also be drawn that can be beneficial to teachers engaged in the teaching of English as a foreign language in general and teaching speaking in particular.

References

Barnard, R. (2002). Peer tutoring in the primary classroom: A sociocultural interpretation of classroom interaction. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 37*(1), 57-72.

de Guerrero, M., & Villamil, O. S. (2000). Activating the ZPD mutual scaffolding in L2 peer revision. *The Modern Language Journal, 84*, 51-68.

Donato, R., (1994). Collective scaffolding in second language learning. In Lantolf, J. P. (Ed), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research* (pp. 33-56). London: Ablex Publishing.

Ellis, R., (2000). Task-based research and language pedagogy. *Language Teaching Research, 4*(3), 193-220.

Ferris, D. & Tagg, T. (1996a). Academic listening/speaking tasks for ESL students: Problems, suggestions, and implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 30(2): 297-320.

Ferris, D. (1998). Students' views of academic aural/oral skills: a comparative needs analysis. *TESOL Quarterly* (32): 289-318.

Gibbons, P. (2002). *Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning: Teaching second language learners in the mainstream classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Holton, D., & Clarke, D. (2006). Scaffolding and metacognition. *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology, 37*(2), 127-143.

Iwashita, N., Brown, A., McNamara, T. & O'Hagan S. (2008). Assessed levels of second language speaking proficiency: How distinct? *Applied Linguistics,* (29)1: 24-49.

Kasper, G. (2001). Four perspectives on L2 pragmatic development. *Applied Linguistics, 22*, 502–30.

Kim, S. (2006). Academic oral communication needs of East Asian international graduate students in non-science and non-engineering fields. *English for Specific Purposes,* (25), 479-489.

Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Introducing sociocultural theory. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 1-26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Le, P. H. H. (2006). Mediation through the first language: A sociocultural study of

group work in Vietnam. *RELC Journal, 37*(1), 105-121.

Le, P. H. H. (2007). The more knowledgeable peer, target language use, and group participation. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 64*(2), 333-354.

McDonough, K. (2004). Learner-learner interaction during pair and small group activities in a Thai EFL context. *System, 32*(2), 207-224.

Mitropoulos, E. (2005). International shipping carrier of world trade: A message from the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization. Available at http://www.imo.org.

Nguyen, M. H. (2013). EFL students' reflections on peer scaffolding in making a collaborative oral presentation. *English Language Teaching, 6*(4), 64-73.

Ostler, S. E. (1980). A survey of academic needs for advanced ESL. *TESOL Quarterly, 14*(4), 489-502.

Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (Eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Saye, J. W., & Brush, T. (2002). Scaffolding critical reasoning about social issues in a multimedia-supported learning environment. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 50*(3).

Shadish, W., Cook, T., & Campbell, D. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Shehadeh, A. (2011). Effects and student perceptions of collaborative writing in L2. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 20*, 286-305.

Storch, N. (2002). Patterns of interaction in L2 pair work. *Language Learning, 52*(1), 119-158.

Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 14*, 153-173.

Turuk, M. C. (2008). The relevance and implications of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory in the second language classroom. *ARECLS, 5*, 244-262.

Van Lier, L. (2000). From input to affordance: Social interactive learning from an ecological perspective. In James P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (245–60). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vygotsky. L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, M.A.: Havard University Press.

Williams, M., & Burden, R. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers: A social constructivist approach.* UK: Cambridge University Press.

Winbow, A. (2002). *The importance of effective communication.* Istanbul: Istanbul Technical University.

Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1978). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 17*, 89-100.

Ziarati, M., Ziarati, R., Bigland, O. & Acar, U. (2012). *Communication and practical training applied in nautical studies*. Coventry: Coventry University Technology Park.

Ziarati R. (2009). Improving safety at sea and ports by developing standards for Maritime English. In Bridge conference, Finland. Retrieved on August 23, 2014 from web.deu.edu.tr/maritime/imla2008/Papers/20.pdf

AN EVALUATION OF ELT TEACHER EDUCATION IN IRAN: A STUDY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS

Hannaneye Peyman
Ph.D candidate, Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
Email: hpeyman73@yahoo.com

Firooz sadighi
Full Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
Email: Firoozsadighi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
THE QUALITY OF UNIVERSITY BASED LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN EMPHASIZED BY EXPERTS AS IT CAN DETERMINE, TO A LARGE EXTENT, THE STUDENT TEACHERS' FUTURE PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS. THIS STUDY, THEREFORE, INTENDS TO INVESTIGATE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF ELT TEACHER EDUCATION BASED ON IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES. TO DO SO, 89 IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS WERE REQUESTED TO ANSWER THE ADAPTED VERSION OF PEACOCK'S (2009) QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS. THE CONTENT VALIDITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE WAS ENSURED THROUGH EXPERT JUDGMENTS. THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE CONTENT OF ELT TEACHER EDUCATION IN IRAN AS AN EFL CONTEXT IS IN A BIG NEED OF REVISIONS AND MODIFICATIONS AS PERCEIVED BY IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS.

KEW WORDS: ELT- TEACHER EDUCATION- EFL TEACHERS

1. INTRODUCTION

Although there are plenty of research studies to indicate that foreign language teacher education programs are frequently ineffective, they do have the potential to be a vital part of helping teachers to cope with the seemingly never-ending stream of educational innovations, thus it is important for them to be as effective as possible. One way of attempting to reach this objective is to identify what tends to go wrong in such programs at present, and then to try to re-design it in such a way as to reduce or prevent the problems from occurring. Some recent research shows that there are usually two main problems with university- based teacher education: 1. the content tends to compromise top-down teaching ideas, which are often impracticable at the classroom level; 2. lack of support for post-training, classroom implementation efforts.

Research on teachers' ways of knowing (learning how to teach) and the effectiveness of teacher education programs is a relatively new field of inquiry. Moreover, such research mostly comes from a small and possibly unrepresentative number of practitioners, and does not necessarily represent the reality in many foreign language teacher education (FLTE) programs. Subsequently, we generally learn little about the circumstances in which teachers locally innovate and experiment, or the

institutional and contextual difficulties they may have faced, with notable exceptions (Matei 2002).Therefore, there is evidence to suggest that, in many contexts, change in FLTE pedagogy has been either very slow or negligible. This apparent failure at reform suggests the need for more research inside innovative FLTE practitioners' training room contexts, and research in the wider institutional and professional contexts in which they work and in particular the classrooms in which graduates eventually teach. This way, we may understand better the obstacles and processes of change, and thus gauge more realistically the true impact of the context-specific institutional, social, cultural, and ideological factors on practice, and ultimately teacher learning. Thus, given the fact that our knowledge of what actually happens in FLTE is only partial, and, given the large number of contexts in which FLTE happens, we need to learn more about the effects of our practice in FLTE. Research and accounts of practice provide us with inspiration for our own teacher education practice and lead us to question universal assumptions underlying most teacher education programs. This way we can develop a new perspective for the purpose of designing a context-specific teacher education program uniquely relevant to educational and social context in Iran as an EFL context.

2. Teacher Education in Iran

There are three branches of English related majors in Iran among whom ELT teachers are recruited: literature, translation, and teaching, the most relevant branch to English teaching being the last one! The available programs are divided into two categories: general English courses and special major courses. The aim of the first module is to enhance general English proficiency and that of the second one is to enhance students' knowledge of their specific major. A third module which is just found in teaching major (and, of course, constitutes a small portion of the total program) is practical considerations of teaching manifested in the courses such as practicum.

 In the pre-technology English education in Iran, the teacher is still the sender and the student is the receiver of the educational information. As Safi (1992) states, the early teachers in Iran were selected from studious students without receiving any education. Then we see developments in teacher education in the 1940s in Iran. Dehghan (1950) emphasized the education of qualified teachers. Different teacher training centers were established. New educational policies and many institutes came into existence but still no teacher educating was done. Iran's teaching atmosphere is dominated by modernism ideas. There is no vestige of postmodernism in various educational levels. Decisions are taken by the authorities and the educational system is a conservative centralized one. A one-size-fits-all policy is predominant without considering the individual differences. As Freire (1970) mentioned, students are "empty accounts to be charged by teachers. Teachers are the mere conveyers" of authorities and no allowance to air their own opinions. They have to "teach to the test" entailing negative washback. According to Noora (2008) the nature of teaching in Iran is mainly teacher-centered and they have no opportunities to say about their own expectations of an effective teacher. Therefore studying the characteristics of a good English teacher from the learners' perspective is of great value and the needs analysis helps them improve their teaching quality to fulfill the students' needs.

There are no official statistics showing how much these general English courses have been successful to enhance teachers' proficiency. But what can be inferred from observing classroom practices is that unfortunately many of our English teachers suffer from lack of enough proficiency to handle their own duties perfectly. Many English classes are conducted in Farsi (though teachers' proficiency is not the only influential factor in this regard).

Theoretically speaking, teacher education programs have been successful in enhancing student teachers' theoretical knowledge; that is, they know about the theoretical underpinnings, history of language teaching, and various methodologies and their principles. However, the problem arises when this knowledge is going to be practiced in action. In other words, there is little, if any, opportunity for student teachers to practice what they have been told in books. Therefore, they do not know the potential of each methodology and come across a reality shock as they enter the real world of teaching. Moreover, university professors are considered as the sole source of information for student teachers. This kind of knowledge is provided through a traditional process-product procedure. Practical courses are so scarce that little opportunity is provided for student teachers to practice the real atmosphere of the classroom. Furthermore, usually they do not enjoy the

feedback of experienced teachers with respect to their teaching. Also, the process of their socialization into the teaching world usually is accompanied by no support from academic communities. That is why the teaching profession in Iran is a matter of sink or swim.

Moghaddas and Zakeri (2012),in a study, evaluated teacher education in Iran to explore the weak and strong points from the post-method era's point of view. Conducting the study at three levels of National Educational Program, Five-year Developmental Programs, and National Document of Educational Development, they concluded that:

1. In order to measure improvements in teacher education, the creation of quality control measures is doubtless an important step (Farhady et al 2010, Kiany et al 2011).
2. First and foremost we need to accept that education starts with teachers and they are the most significant ring in the educational chain. Therefore, people in charge should give more attention to teachers.
3. General statements in official documents lead to confusion. Available documents must be revised in a way to clarify, first, the educational ideologies behind each practice and, second the influence of these ideologies on teachers' practice.
4. Centralization in the decision making should perhaps be balanced with localization. In other words, many of the decisions about teacher recruitment and education may be left to provinces and regions.
5. Right now, it seems that at least three different departments within the ministry of education are responsible for teacher recruitment and training. This leads to confusion in duties and practices. Even if different organizations are going to be responsible in this regard, their duties and responsibilities must be clarified and distinct.
6. One of the aspects of teaching profession which needs serious attention is economic well-being; if teachers' financial problems are not solved, they cannot think of improvement, development, and reflective teaching. So, teachers' financial problems must be solved.
7. Today technology is a crucial parameter in teaching and learning. Therefore, teacher education centers must utilize these instruments to enhance teacher learning.
8. Opportunities must be provided for student teachers to practice their theories in real classroom situations. They must also get in touch with seasoned teachers to get their feedback on teaching and use their experiences.
9. Instructors of teacher education programs must bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing opportunities for reflective teaching.
10. There seems to be a rather long distance between latest findings in teacher education programs and what is going on in Iran. While in the academic domain dialogic approach is the dominant one, our teacher education programs is following traditional approaches. So, a change in this regard must be made with providing some opportunities for teachers to talk about their ideas and problems with their peers and professors (pp.28-29).

3. Research question

What are the strengths and weaknesses of ELT teacher education based on Iranian EFL practicing teachers?

4. Methodology
4.1 participants

89 Iranian male and female teachers busy teaching in private language institutes were conveniently sampled to cooperate in this study. They all were M.A holders of either ELT or translation studies.

4.2 Instrument

Peacock's (2009) questions for evaluating pre-service teacher education programs were adapted to develop an open-ended Teacher Education Evaluation Questionnaire to check the strengths and weaknesses of pre-service teacher education in Iran. The participants were requested to answer the questionnaires either in Farsi or English. The questions were mostly of short answer question type for them not to be completely open but to contain some guidelines

4.3 Data Collection and Analysis Plan

Group, one to one, and E-mail administrations were used to collect the data respectively. Care was taken to give clear written instructions in the questionnaires.To examine the content validity of the questionnaires, ten experts were asked to review each item of the questionnaire closely. The items which were rejected by more than three of the judges were eliminated from the pool of items. Nine EFL teachers were then asked to respond the questionnaire. They were asked to comment on the items by indicating the questions which were somehow ambiguous. Qualitative content analysis was finally employed to classify and code the respondents' ideas.

5. Results

To check the inter-coder reliability of the idea units coded, another investigator was requested to code the idea units. The investigator was an expert who had 10 year experience at university and language institutes. The results showed 78% agreement between the investigators. The controversial idea units were then negotiated to come up with the most objective analysis possible. The results are separately presented for each question:

1. What is your overall evaluation of the quality of pre-service teacher education programs (BA and MA) in Iran?
2. To what extent the courses you passed in these programs have been useful in your practical teaching?
3. Do the programs promote trainee flexibility in using different teaching approaches for different situations?
4. Do the programs promote the ability to use, and to adapt, foreign-language-teaching materials?
5. Do the programs promote the skill of reflection and self-evaluation as a teacher?
6. Do the programs promote future reflective practice?
7. Do the programs have good linkage among courses, avoiding overlaps?
8. Do the programs prepare EFL teachers to function in the sociocultural context in which they will work?
9. Do the programs incorporate and balance linguistic, pedagogic, and managerial competence to an appropriate degree? Linguistic competence here means L2 proficiency. Pedagogic competence refers to teaching skills plus knowledge of language and second language acquisition.
10. Is the program up-to-date?
11. Do students believe the program meets their needs, is relevant to their needs, and adequately prepares them for classroom teaching?
12. What are the weaknesses and the strengths of these programs?

The results of the qualitative content analysis and the 20 idea units extracted from the responses are summarized in Table 4.30. Those with 50% percentage and above are referred to as high group and others below 50% are considered as low group. The results are quite consistent with the ones obtained from the administration of the 3 quantitative questionnaires.

Table 4.30 Descriptive statistics for idea units

Idea units	Frequency	Percentage
1. The pre-service teacher education was useful for my practical teaching	23	19.49%
2.The pre-service teacher education was not useful for my practical teaching	52	44.06%
3.The pre-service teacher education was to some extent useful for my practical teaching	43	36.44%
4.The focus should be more focus on practical rather than theoretical courses	109	**92.37**%
5.My reflection and self -evaluation techniques are not promoted in PSTE	98	**83.05**%

6.The content of PSTE has to some extent enhanced my reflection and self- evaluation abilities	20	16.94%
7.Overlapping between the courses is high	73	**61.86**%
8.PSTE has been to some extent helpful in using and adapting teaching and learning materials	92	**77.96**%
9. I learned how to function in particular sociocultural context from my own experience rather than the content covered in PSTE	87	**73.72**%
10.PSTE can prepare EFL teachers for particular sociocultural context	29	24.57%
11.PSTE does not offer appropriate balance between the knowledge areas required for practical teaching	103	**87.28**%
12.PSTE is up-to-date	68	**57.62**%
13.PSTE should be more up-to-date	42	35.59%
14.Some courses are not relevant to teachers' needs	88	**74.57**%
15.The relevance of the courses in PSTE depends on the abilities of the teacher educators	21	17.79%
16. L2 proficiency should receive more attention in PSTE	112	**94.91**%
17.Students are not active as a result of traditional transmission system in PSTE	31	26.27
18.The linkage between the courses is satisfactory	27	22.81
19. Classroom management skills are not sufficiently dealt with.	25	21.18
20. PSTE does not train critical thinker teachers	57	49.

The idea units for high and low groups are as follows:

High percentage: idea units 16, 4, 11, 5, 8, 14, 9, 7, 12, 2 (arranged in descending order)

1. 94% percent of the respondents believe that L2 proficiency should receive more attention in PSTE which is in line with their reports about the usefulness of language concepts. Without high communicative proficiency, teachers are not expected to effectively apply whatever knowledge base they have about language teaching and learning.
2. 92% hold the belief that, the focus should be more on practical rather than theoretical courses. This is in harmony with other high percentage idea units such as idea units 14, 11, and 18 and predictably with what the respondents report from TEKB and KBE questionnaires in that they believe although theory is highly covered in pre-service teacher education in Iran, it is not found to be that useful for language teaching.
3. 87% think that PSTE does not offer appropriate balance between the knowledge areas required for practical teaching. At least, practical courses and L2 proficiency should receive more attention on the part of the curriculum and syllabus designers.
4. 83% assert their reflection and self -evaluation techniques are not promoted in PSTE. Reflection and self-evaluation are related to factor 4 (post-method pedagogy) in TEKB which has the lowest means for its perceived coverage and usefulness. What can be inferred from qualitative and quantitative findings is the EFL teachers' limited familiarity with the principles of post-method pedagogy.

5. 77% insist on the crucial need for establishing appropriate balance between the courses by postulating that PSTE has been to some extent helpful in using and adapting teaching and learning materials.

6. 73% think that some courses are not relevant to their needs. What teachers need to know, however, has always been controversial among the practitioners.

7. 73% report that they learned how to function in particular sociocultural context from their own experience rather than the content covered in PSTE. Learning how to function effectively in particular sociocultural context is one of the major objectives behind critical pedagogic frameworks which has received little attention in PSTE.

8. 61% believe that overlapping between the courses is high and 57% assert PSTE is up-to-date.

 Low percentage: idea units 1, 2, 3, 6, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20

1. The pre-service teacher education was useful for my practical teaching

2. The pre-service teacher education was not useful for my practical teaching

3. The pre-service teacher education was to some extent useful for my practical teaching

6. The content of PSTE has to some extent enhanced my reflection and self- evaluation abilities.

10. PSTE can prepare EFL teachers for particular sociocultural context.

13. PSTE should be more up-to-date.

15. The relevance of the courses in PSTE depends on the abilities of the teacher educators.

17. Students are not active as a result of traditional transmission system in PSTE.

18. The linkage between the courses is satisfactory.

19. Classroom management skills are not sufficiently dealt with.

20. PSTE does not train critical thinker teachers.

6. Conclusion

The first 3 idea units relate to the respondents' overall evaluation of PSTE programs in Iran. The percentages confirm the inevitability of applying some modifications in the syllabus of teacher education programs as only 19.49 believe that the content of PSTE is helpful for their practical teaching. 44% believe in the unhelpfulness of pre-service teacher education for their practice. Other idea units in this group naturally support the idea units in the high percentage group .For example, idea units 18 and 19 which are more related to practice rather than theory can be considered as complementary to idea unit 4. Most respondents rightly advocate the practical side of the continuum.

 References

Dehghan, A. (1950). *Teacher Education: In France, Engl& & Iran*. Tehran: University Press.

Farhady, H., Hezaveh, F. S., & Hedayati, H. (2010). Reflections on foreign language education in Iran, TESL-EJ, University of California, Berkeley; Reterived From http://www.teslej.org/wordpress/issues/volume13/ej52/ej52a1

Freire, P. (1970*). Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.

Kiany, Gh. R., Mahdavy, B., & Ghafar Samar, R. (2011). Towards a harmonized foreign language education program in Iran: national policies & English achievement. *Literacy Information & Computer Education Journal*, 2(3), 87-113.

Matei, M. (2002). Tracking shifts in pre-service EFL teacher beliefs in Greece: A longitudinal study. *Teaching & Teacher Education,* 23, 1272-1288.

Moghaddas, B. & Zakeri, J. (2012). English Teacher Education in Iran. *ELT Voices – India* , 2 (4), 18-32.

Noora, A. (2008). Iranian undergraduate non-English majors' language learning preferences. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 8(2), 33-44.

Safi, A. (1992). Teacher education in Iran, Pakistan, & India. Tehran: Madrase Publication.

E-LEARNING IN EFL CLASSES: A FACILITATOR FOR THE LEARNER OR THE TEACHER?

Ramin Rahmani, PhD in TEFL, Islamic Azad university, Takestan Branch
Bahador Sadeghi, PhD in TEFL, Islamic Azad university, Takestan Branch
Fateme Bagheri, MA in TEFL, Islamic Azad university, Takestan Branch

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY AIMED AT BRINGING INTO LIGHT THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE IMPACT OF E-LEARNING ON THE EFL LEARNERS AND TEACHERS AND THE LEVEL OF THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME OF THEIR IMPLEMENTATION OF E-LEARNING IN THEIR CLASSES. THE PARTICIPANTS CONSISTED OF EFL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS THAT THEY SELECTED RANDOMLY FROM ELT TEACHERS AND LEARNERS OF SHOKOH INSTITUTE IN ZANJAN. 100 STUDENTS AND 20 TEACHERS WERE SELECTED RANDOMLY. 60 STUDENTS WERE FEMALE AND 40 MALE AND 12 TEACHERS WERE FEMALE AND 8 OF THEM WERE MALE. THE RANGE OF THE STUDENTS' AGE WAS 19-21 YEARS OLD AND TEACHERS' WAS 27-45 YEARS OLD. IN ORDER TO MEET THE CRITERIA OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH ACCORDING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION, TWO INSTRUMENTS WERE USED, QUESTIONNAIRE AND WRITTEN PROTOCOL. HAVING DONE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND WRITTEN PROTOCOL IN FORM OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW, THE RESEARCHER GATHERED THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND TRANSCRIBED THE INTERVIEWS AND THEN THE DATA WAS ANALYZED. THE RESULTS SHOW THAT THE TEACHERS HAVE A MORE POSITIVE PERCEPTION TOWARD E-LEARNING. SO, E-LEARNING IS MORE FACILITATOR FOR EFL TEACHERS THAN STUDENTS. ACCORDING TO THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY AND PREVIOUS STUDIES REPORTED IN LITERATURE, IT CAN BE SAID THAT E-LEARNING IS ACCEPTED BY STUDENTS AND THE TEACHERS IN ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.

KEY WORDS: E-LEARNING, TECHNOLOGY, PERCEPTION, FACILITATOR

1. Introduction
In the age of communications and technology, it is no wonder to see teachers make use of computers and the Internet to enhance their students' learning. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the use of computers connected to the Web in language learning has increased explosively. The birth of the World Wide Web and its growing applications has made Web-based learning feasible and its distinctive features attainable (Wu & Hiltz, 2004). The first reason behind the application of Web-based instruction is that it creates both independent and collaborative learners who try to acquire and practice a new language. Using the net, the learners can enjoy hypermedia, multimedia, and drill and practice programs to foster their knowledge of language. The Web gives the chance to teachers to take adaptive strategies based on their learners' personal needs, and its collaborative use helps learners receive more feedback than they would get in class (Arroyo, 2008).

The Web provides immense opportunities for both language teachers and learners to make use of a variety of sources available to them (Mirzaeian, 2009). It also makes different kinds of computer-assisted language learning tools available (Cushion, 2005; Galloway & Peterson-Bidoshi, 2008) and helps language learning take place in an appropriate environment (Stockwell, 2007).

Meeting the needs of today's learners requires instructors and administrators to rethink delivery strategies and instructional methods. Many organizations are turning to distance education, because of its effectiveness, to help learners develop and improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities. E-learning and E-teaching continue to grow at the tremendous rate.

E-learning is an opportunity emerged recently to improve the learning process by using more modern, efficient and effective teaching and learning based information technology (Selim, 2003). The main objective of the present study was to bring into light the various aspects of the impact of e-learning on the EFL learners and Teachers and the level of their satisfaction with the outcome of their implementation of e-learning in their classes.

2. Review of the related literature
2.1. Definition of e-learning
The origins of the term e-Learning is not certain, although it is suggested that the term most likely originated during the 1980's, within the similar time frame of another delivery mode online learning. While some authors explicitly define e-Learning, others imply a specific definition or view of e-Learning in their article. These definitions materialize, some through conflicting views of other definitions, and some just by simply comparing defining characteristics with other existing terms. In particular, Ellis (2004) disagrees with authors like Nichols (2003) who define e-Learning as strictly being accessible using technological tools that are web-based, web-distributed, or web-capable. The belief that e-Learning not only covers content and instructional methods delivered via CD-ROM, the Internet or an Intranet (Benson et al., 2002; Clark, 2002) but also includes audio- and videotape, satellite broadcast and interactive TV is the one held by Ellis. E-Learning is a term that means something different to almost everyone who uses it. Some use the term to refer to packaged content pieces and others to technical infrastructures. Some think only of web-based self-study while others realize eLearning can encompass real-time learning and collaboration.

2.2. Types of E-Learning
Falch (2004) classifies e-learning into four types: e-learning without presence and without communication, e-learning without presence but with communication, e-learning combined with occasional presence, and e-learning used as a tool in classroom teaching (Negash and Wilcox, 2008:4). Negash and Wilcox (2008) have extended the classification to six:

E-learning with presence and without e-communication (face to face) E-learning without presence and without e-communication

E-learning without presence and with e-communication: 'asynchronous'

E-learning with virtual presence and with e-communication: 'synchronous' E-learning with occasional presence and with e-communication: 'blended/hybrid asynchronous'

E-learning with presence and with e-communication: 'blended/hybrid synchronous'

* Presence is defined as real-time presence where both instructor and learner are present at the time of content delivery; it includes physical and virtual presence.

This role that e-learning has attained is considered as a means to respond to society's educational needs, which have shifted from traditional training of full-time on campus learners to more unconventional forms of education.

2.3. The E-learning Classroom Environment
Technology advances have provided, and still do, many tools for e-learning. New technology enhanced learning environments (online environment) are created instead of the traditional ones. The environment, the learning theory and the way in which technology is used dictate a change in activities, techniques, roles and learning experiences.

Hence for creating a successful e-learning environment within e-learning decisions need to be done about the use of specific technology.

2.4. Developing E-learning Courses
Developing e-learning courses is not an easy task; it takes too much time in terms of research, design, development and learner support (MacDonald & al: 2009). According to MacDonald & Thompson (2005) cited in (ibid), the most important incentives for online courses creation are the professor's determination, his aptitude and capacity to organize and mobilize the necessary resources as well as his willingness to take risks.

Bates (2005) identifies three key areas of interest in e-learning: quality standards, teacher and student work load and costs.

The common aims behind e-learning integration into schools and universities fall into three Categories: improving the efficiency of instruction, reaching new students, and making programmes more effective Rayburn & Ramaprasad (2002). In order to achieve these goals, Rayburn & Ramaprasad (2002) proposed three strategies which are:

1. Guest Lecture Strategy for improving the efficiency of instruction

2. Automated correspondence course strategy for reaching new students and

3. Large Lecture Hall strategy for making programmes more effective.

Adrian (2002) has established a three step course development and implementation process. The first step is determining the course objectives and also the principal objectives concerning course design. The second step is designing the course structure which depends primarily upon an adequate incorporation of synchronous and asynchronous teaching. The last step is transferring the quality philosophy to the classroom.

One essential ingredient in course design is the provision of four kinds of support for learning: guidance, coaching/training, teaching and mentoring Diltz & Delzier (2000) cited in Kenning (2007). In terms of language learning, the place of the four forms of support will depend on the objectives of language learning and the relative importance of the individual aspects (grammar, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation …) (ibid). Furthermore the designed course should mirror the pedagogical orientations and philosophies of the faculty.

3. Method

3.1. Research method

The present study is a mixture of qualitative and quantitative. This mixed method approach is employed in which both qualitative and quantitative analyses are used to gain the individualized standpoints and views of EFL learners about e-learning.

3.2. Participants

The participants consisted of EFL students and teachers that they selected randomly from ELT teachers and learners of Shokoh institute in Zanjan. 100 students and 20 teachers were selected randomly. 60 students were female and 40 male and 12 teachers were female and 8 of them were male. The range of the students' age was 19-21years old and teachers' was 27-45 years old.

3.3. Instrumentation

In order to meet the criteria of the present research according to the research questions, two instruments were used.

3.3.1. Questionnaire

The research was done a board study on e-learning issues of Iran in order to comprehend the noticeable factors which have influence on the Iranian EFL classes.

The questionnaire was designed from the current E-learning questionnaires and it is a Likert scale questionnaire and consisted of 19 questions.

The questionnaire was given to both selected EFL learners and teachers of Shokoh institute in order to find out their behavior, attitude and communication toward e-learning.

3.3.2. Written protocol

Many researchers use questionnaires to collect data; while they overlook other data collection tools such as secondary sources, observation, semi-structured interviews and profound interviews (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The protocol was consisted of open-ended questions conducted individually. Both groups were encouraged to express their ideas to a set of open ended question on the programs.

The protocol was composed of a number of items enjoying the highest frequency among the items of the questionnaire. The advantages of using the written protocol lies in the fact that triangulation of data gets to be possible since the participants can express their ideas freely and the data can be approached from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives.

3.4. Procedure

   The following phases have been taken for this study in order to meet the objectives of this study:

Phase 1: sample selection as explained in 3.2.

Phase 2: instrument construction

Since no prefabricated questionnaire already exists for this study, the researcher studied the literature, extracted major e-learning themes, and listed them, conducted a number of experts. Then, the themes were converted into a number of Likert-based items that is consisted of five items ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was piloted to the similar participant, and the reliability and validity of the questionnaire was assured (see pilot study). Then, it was administered for the actual purpose with the actual participants.

Phase 3: written protocol in the form of interview

In order to triangulate the data, a number of general items from the questionnaire were selected such that they can relatively cover majority of the points of the questionnaire. The items were given to the participants in order to get their explanatory ideas on e-learning factors.

Phase 4: questionnaire administration

Administrating the questionnaire was done through two ways: the first way was giving the questionnaire to the students and teachers in institute and the second way was sending the questionnaire to their email.

Phase 5: protocol administration

Interviews usually took 45 minutes to an hour. They were audio-taped and transcribed in further detail as in-process notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Casual discussions were employed as a less-structured type of interview as well. These discussions were documented in the form of sketches and were also considered in-process notes.

Phase 5: data collection

 Having done the administration of the questionnaire and interview, the researcher gathered the questionnaires and put the information in Excel program in order to be ready for data analysis and transcribed the interviews in further detail as in-process notes in order to support the results of the questionnaire analysis.

Phase 6: data analysis

Having gathered the necessary data (responses to two sets of questionnaire and answers to the semi-structures interview), the researcher analyzed the data by SPSS 21.0 (Statistics Package for the Social Science). The survey data were analyzed using an independent-samples t-test for comparing teachers and students' perspectives with each other. SPSS 21.0 was used to support with the data analysis. This software program was chosen on the basis that it is among the most widely used programs for statistical analysis in the social sciences, its simplicity and ease of use for educational research.

4. Results

4.1. The results of questionnaire

The research question and hypothesis of the study were as follows:

RQ1: Is there any statistically significant difference between students and teachers' perception of e-learning?

$H_0$1: There is not any statistically significant difference between students and teachers' perception of e-learning.

In order to test the hypothesis an independent-samples t-test was implemented and the effect size was calculated using the following formula. The following tables depict the results of data analysis.

- Eta Squared: $t^2 / t^2 + (N1+N2-2)$

The guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988, pp. 284–247)[4] for interpreting this value are:

.01=small effect

.06=moderate effect

.14=large effect

Table 4-1

Cohen, J.W. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd edn). Hillsdale, NJ: [4] Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Frequency of the students' raw scores on the questionnaire

Score	Frequency	Percent
62.00	7	7.0
63.00	1	1.0
64.00	3	3.0
65.00	5	5.0
67.00	1	1.0
68.00	9	9.0
69.00	6	6.0
71.00	4	4.0
72.00	2	2.0
73.00	3	3.0
74.00	13	13.0
75.00	8	8.0
76.00	3	3.0
77.00	2	2.0
78.00	8	8.0
79.00	5	5.0
84.00	4	4.0
85.00	5	5.0
86.00	2	2.0
87.00	5	5.0
89.00	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0

Table 4-2

Frequency of the teachers' raw scores on the questionnaire

Score	Frequency	Percent
82.00	1	5.0
83.00	1	5.0
84.00	2	10.0
86.00	4	20.0
87.00	2	10.0
88.00	1	5.0
89.00	1	5.0
90.00	3	15.0
91.00	1	5.0
92.00	1	5.0
93.00	1	5.0
94.00	1	5.0
95.00	1	5.0
Total	20	100.0

Table 4-3

Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Teachers	20	88.1500	3.68889	.82486
Students	100	74.4100	7.59864	.75986

Table 4-4

Results of Independent-Samples T-test

t-test for Equality of Means

t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
12.251	57.046	.000	13.74000	1.12151	11.49425	15.98575

- Eta Squared: $(12.251)^2 / (12.251)^2 + (100+20-2) = .55$

Results: As seen in Tables 4-3 and 4-4, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the perception of e-learning for the teachers and the students. There was a statistically significant difference in scores for the teacher (*M* = 88.15, *SD* = 3.68) and students (*M* = 74.41, *SD* = 7.59; *t* (57.046) = 12.251, *p* = .000, two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = 13.74, 95% *CI*: 11.49 to 15.98) was very large (eta squared = .55). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis stating "there is a statistically significant difference between students and teachers' perception of e-learning." is confirmed. This indicates that the teachers have a more positive perception toward e-learning. So, e-learning is more facilitator for EFL teachers than students.

4.2. The results of the written protocol in the form of semi-structure interview

In order to triangulate the data, a semi-structured interview was conducted among teachers. The interview was held in 2 sessions. They were audio-taped and transcribed in further detail as in-process notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Casual discussions were employed as a less-structured type of interview as well. These discussions were documented in the form of sketches and were also considered in-process notes.

To investigate the effects of the use of this technology on students' perceived motivation towards educational activities, firstly teachers were asked that "How did the use of this technology effect the motivation of the students towards their educational activities? Positively, negatively or not effected?" Answers of all teachers were positive. The following is one of the teachers' responses to the question:

"First of all, for the reason that the students use computer too much, we have to use the tool in our educational activities too. This may create diversity and may increase our learning tools. When we use this technology in education I can say that the students are being motivated more than classical ways."

To investigate perceptions of the teachers about the usefulness of E-Learning, firstly teachers were asked that "What do you think about the usefulness of this technology in educational activities? Was it useful or not?"

Answers of the teachers were positive. To get detailed indicators of their observations, they were asked to explain the indicators which they observed to support their positive opinion. The following is one of the teachers' responses to the question:

"I find it helpful for students to do their work by using technology. They like to use computers; it does not matter whether it is for playing games or for studying lessons. They can observe their work better if it is in a visual environment. For many reasons I think that this system is very useful. The students not only take notes, they also do research, be in touch with their teachers on the same learning portal, take feedbacks in a very short amount of time, they can improve their work at home. When a teacher sees an incomplete work or mistakes he/she can want her/his students to complete and save it at home. It is easier for teachers to follow the course of a project."

All of the teachers stated the E-Learning as useful tool for their courses in terms of different advantages they have observed.

To investigate the teachers' perceptions about the ease of use of E-Learning, they were asked "Was learning to use E- Learning easy for your students?" As it is seen from the statements of the teachers, they define E-Learning as an easy-to-use tool and their perceptions are quite positive about this tool in terms of its easy-to-use aspect. The following is one of the teachers' responses to the question:

"Sure. I can even say that they learn better than me, you know they are all students of technology time."

To investigate the teachers' perceptions about skillful usage, they were asked that "Was becoming skillful at using E-Learning easy for your students?". Some teacher stated that not for all the students but for the ones who can use computers efficiently it was easy to become skillful. The rest of the teachers reported their positive observations and perceptions.

"Not for all the students but for the ones who can use computer efficiently it was easy. It is not difficult to understand; it does not have a complicated language, so if a student uses it regularly he/she can easily be an expert."

5. Discussion

In an era of rapid developing educational technologies, the e-learning has become a powerful tool to provide learners with an alternative learning environment worldwide. The e-learning and distance education have notably affected the ways in which we communicate and learn (Leh, 1995). E-learning fosters learning and teaching in a variety of ways. One of the many advantages of e-learning is that it offers instructors and students a flexible learning setting in terms of time and location. Learning does not require students to being physically present in the same place with the instructor (Walker, 2005) nor at the same time. E-learning might be used for different purposes such as supported learning, blended learning (combination of face-to-face and online learning), and entirely online learning (Pearson & Trinidad, 2005). However, sometimes all those discovered opportunities are being insufficient to solve problems of some circumstances in providing some facilities in online environments. One of these problem areas is teachers' and students' interacting in a professionally designed sharing platform. Although, e-learning provides highly efficient, effective and widely used communication tool for users' interacting with each other, the number of special technology which provides effective e-learning environment for educational activities are limited.

The object of this study is to investigate the effects of the integration of E-Learning as a new technology in learning environments of students. To obtain information about effects of the use e-learning, perceptions of students and the teachers were investigated in terms of its perceived effects on students' perceived motivation towards educational activities, its usefulness and its ease of use.

The results indicate that the teachers have a more positive perception toward e-learning. So, e-learning is more facilitator for EFL teachers than students. The results correspond to the results of the study conducted by Bennett & Monds (2008) in which they reported positive effects of the online learning applications on students' perceived motivation in their findings from teachers' point of view.

The results of this study are also supported by results of the investigation made by Liu et al. (2008). Parallel with this study, the researchers supported in their study that there is a significant positive relationship between perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and intention to adopt e-learning applications. (Liu, Chen, Sun, Wible, & Kuo, 2008).

According to the results of this study and previous studies reported in literature, it can be said that e-learning is accepted by students and the teachers in online learning environment. Also, the high number of indecisive students can be minimized by providing longer usage period in future researches.

6. Conclusions

In this study, the researcher investigated perceptions of the e-learning in teachers' and students' educational activities in terms of its effects on students' perceived motivation towards the educational activities, the usefulness and the ease of use of the e-learning, the advantages and disadvantages of the technology and the suggestions for the usage of e-learning system.

The results show that e-learning provides highly efficient, effective and widely used communication tool that teacher had a more positive view regarding using this tool in their classes than the students and according to this, it was proved that e-learning is more facilitator for EFL teachers than students. The findings tend to suggest that students are, on the whole, open to innovation. While most of the students use computers for a variety of purposes, they use them extensively for social networking and communication. Students have a limited experience of e-learning strategies but the expected usefulness of using these strategies is high. Students mildly relate e-learning strategies to many different kinds of learning benefits. They appear to be more able to relate e-learning to benefits in the

learning   process,   such   as   the   use   of
e-communication strategies.

Lastly, more experiences with e-learning lead to higher perceptions of e-learning benefits. In other words, students who used e-learning tend to like them and find them useful.

To a certain extent, this is evidence that eLearning on the whole are positive experiences for students. Once students have a good first e-learning experience, there is a high likelihood that they will appreciate and seek similar engaging experiences.

References

Adrian, C.M.(2002). Developing E-Learning environment: applying technology & TQM to distance learning. In Khosrow-Pour, M.(Eds.),*Web-Based Instructional Learning*(PP.43-58).Hershey: IRM Press;

Bates, A.W.(2005). *Technology, E-Learning and Distance Education*. London & New York: Routledge.

Bennett, C., F., & Monds, K., E. (2008). Online Courses The Real Challenge Is "Motivation". College Teaching Methods & Styles Journal, 6 (4), 1-6.

Dilts, R.B. (1999). *Sleight of Mouth: The Magic of Conversational Belief Change*. Capitola, C.A: Meta Publication

Ellis, Rod (2004). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kenning, M.M.(2007). ICT & *Language Learning From Print to the Mobile Phone*, Palgrave: Macmillan.

Leh, A.S.(1995). The Information in foreign language instruction. Paper submitted at the annual national convention of the Association for Educational Reproduction

Liu, I., F., Chen, M., C., Sun, Y., Wible, D., & Kuo, C., H. (2008). Assessment of an online learning community from Technology Acceptance Model in Education. Eighth IEEE International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies, 8, 222- 224.

MacDonald & al.(2009). Adressing the e-learning contradiction. In P.Rogers, G.Berg,   J.Boettcher, C.Howard, L.Justice, K.Schenk(Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Distance Learning*(PP.33-39). Hershey & New York: IGI Global

  Negash, S., & Wilcox, M.(2005). E-Learning classifications: differences & similarities. In S.Negasg, M.E.Whitman, A.B.Wos-zczynski, K.Hoganson, & H.Mattord(Eds.), *Handbook of Distance Learning for Real Time & Asynchronous Information Technology Education*(PP.1-23).Hershey: Information Science Reference.

Pearson, J., & Trinidad, S. (2005). OLES: An instrument for refining the design of e-learning environments. Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 21, 396-404.

Rayburn, W.E., & Ramceprasad, A.(2002). Three generations for the use of distance learning technology in higher education. In M.Khosrow-Pour (Ed.), *Web-Based Instructional Learning* (PP.27-42). IRM Press

Selim, M. H. (2003). An empirical investigation of student acceptance of course websites. Computers and Education, 40(4), 343–360

Walker, S. L. (2005). Development of the Distance Education Learning Environments Survey (DELES) for higher education. The Texas Journal of Distance Learning, 2 (1), 1-16.

Wu, D., & Hiltz, S. R. (2004). Predicting learning from asynchronous online discussions. Journal of Asynchronous Learning Network, 8(2), 139–152.

EXPLICIT VS IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION OF LEXICAL LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING L2 LEXICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADULTS AND YOUNG ADULTS IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

Reza Biria

Assistant professor, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch,Isfahan,Iran

r_biria@yahoo.com

Naser khodaeian

Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch,Isfahan,Iran

Khodaeian1346@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT PAPER AIMED AT INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT VOCABULARY TEACHING STRATEGIES ON L2 LEXICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS. TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE FROM THE POPULATION OF ADULTS AND YOUNG ADULTS LEARNING ENGLISH AT NAHID LANGUAGE INSTITUTE, DEHAGHAN CITY AND ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY, DEHAGHN BRANCH, FIFTY ADULTS AND FIFTY YOUNG ADULTS WERE RANDOMLY SELECTED BASED ON A QPT TEST AND A LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE TEST. SUBSEQUENTLY, THEY WERE DIVIDED INTO FOUR GROUPS, 25 EACH; NAMELY, EXPLICIT ADULT GROUP (EAG), IMPLICIT ADULT GROUP (IAG), EXPLICIT YOUNG ADULT (EYA) AND IMPLICIT YOUNG ADULT (IYA). DURING THE TREATMENT, TWO SESSIONS, THE FIRST ADULT GROUP RECEIVED EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION WHILE THE SECOND WAS TAUGHT BY IMPLICIT LEXICAL STRATEGIES. SIMILARLY, THE SAME WAS ACCOMPLISHED FOR THE YOUNG SAMPLES. THE FINDINGS REVEALED THAT BOTH ADULTS AND YOUNG ADULTS THAT RECEIVED EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION OUTPERFORMED OTHER GROUPS TAUGHT BY IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION. THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY HAVE SEVERAL IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM PRACTICE CONCERNING THE VOCABULARY TEACHINGS.

KEY WORDS: IMPLICIT, EXPLICIT, INSTRUCTION, LEXICAL STRATEGY. EFL STUDENTS

1-Introduction:

In old days vocabulary in the area of language learning had little importance (Alemi and Tayebi, 2011). However, today everything has been changed and all instructors have emphasized the role of vocabualry in language learning and teaching. Actually, even language learners confirmed this and believe many of their difficulties in both receptive and productive language use result from inadequate vocabulary (Nation, 1990). The important role that the knowledge of vocabulary plays in language competence has continually acknowledged, particularly since the 1990s. Laufer (1998) believes that the most important difference between foreign learners and native speakers is the amount of vocabulary each group possesses. Similarly, Lewis (2000) argued that the single most important task facing language learners is acquiring a sufficiently large vocabulary

Numerous studies have been carried out in this area and the results have showed a great deal of coloration between language proficiency and the knowledge of vocabulary (Kojic-Sabo & Lightbown, 1999). Therefore, learning a language to a great extent means learning the vocabulary (Gass, 1999).

There are a lot of language methods in language teaching that have proposed different techniques for learning the vocabularies (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As a result, researches in language acquisition will be helpful in giving insight into language instruction especially teaching and learning vocabularies.

Explicit/implicit distinction

The review of the literature in the field of vocabulary learning and teaching has revealed that there might be two basic approaches in teaching the vocabulary. The first one is explicit and the second one is implicit teaching. There are a lot of controversial debates over the issue that which one is more effective and efficient. Explicit vocabulary teaching focuses on the vocabulary itself while implicit vocabulary teaching concentrates on something else e.g. understanding a spoken martial or comprehending a written text. The goal of *explicit teaching* is to lead learner's attention, whereas the aim of *an implicit* focus on form is to draw learner's attention. In implicit learning, the assumption is that new lexis will be grasped "incidentally", through exposure to various contexts, reading passage and other material without deliberate memorization being involved. Unplanned vocabulary learning is learning through exposure when one's attention is focused on the use of language, rather than on learning itself.

Ellis (1994) states that implicit learning is typically defined as acquisition of knowledge by a process which takes place naturally, simply and without conscious operation, while explicit learning is said to be characterized by more conscious operation where the individual makes and tests hypotheses in a search for structure.

Another view concerning dichotomous distinction has been expressed by Doughty and Williams' (1998) they believe that knowledge can be acquired *either* implicitly *or* explicitly and that both contribute to language learning. It is obvious that pedagogically-oriented position of explicit teaching is to direct learner attention, whereas the aim of an implicit focus on form is to attract learner attention while minimizing any interruption to the communication of meaning" (Doughty and Williams, 1998).

In vocabulary acquisition studies, one key research direction is to explore the points at which implicit vocabulary learning is more efficient than explicit vocabulary learning, to ask what are the most effective strategies of implicit learning, and to consider the implications of research results for classroom vocabulary teaching (Carter & Nunan, 2002).

2. Literature review

This section discusses various dimensions of teaching vocabulary implicitly and explicitly in line with reading comprehension.

Ellis (1994) makes a distinction between implicit/explicit dimensions and puts emphasis on the importance of conscious operations. He specifies implicit learning as the "acquisition of knowledge about the underlying structure of a complex stimulus environment by a process which takes place naturally, simply and without conscious operations" (p. 1). Explicit learning, on the contrary, refers to a more conscious operation where the individual makes and tests hypotheses in a search for structure. That is, knowledge attainment may be achieved either by abstraction of the structural nature of the stimulus via exposure to instances or by searching for information then forming and testing hypotheses or via assimilation of given rules.

Berry (1994) explains these two modes of learning not in terms of consciousness but of the recourse to deliberate strategies: Learning is implicit when people learn to employ the structure of an environment without using such analytic strategies as generating and testing hypotheses; learning may be explicit when such deliberate strategies are used. Given that, Berry (1994) provides little elaboration on the relationship between deliberate strategies and consciousness, it remains to be seen whether these two terms are co-referent from her standpoint, but it has almost become conventional

wisdom that consciousness has some role to play in the discussion of the implicit – explicit dimension.

According to Celce-Murcia (2001), knowledge can be gained and represented either implicitly or explicitly and both contribute to language learning. There exists a central debate emerging from the studies dealt with whether effective vocabulary learning should give attention to explicit or implicit vocabulary learning. In implicit vocabulary learning, students engage in activities that focus attention on vocabulary. Incidental vocabulary is learning that occurs when the mind is focused elsewhere, i.e. learning without conscious attention or awareness; such as on understanding a text or using language for communicative purposes. From a pedagogically-oriented perspective, the goal of *explicit teaching* is 'to lead learner's attention', whereas the aim of *an implicit* focus on form is 'to draw learner's attention'. Moreover, individual tasks can be located along an explicit or implicit continuum, and complex tasks may combine both explicit and implicit subtasks. Most researchers recognized that a well-structured vocabulary program needs a balanced approach that includes explicit teaching together with activities providing appropriate contexts for incidental learning.

In implicit learning, the assumption is that new lexis will be grasped "incidentally", through exposure to various contexts, reading passage and other material without deliberate memorization being involved. Unplanned vocabulary learning is learning through exposure when one's attention is focused on the use of language, rather than on learning itself.

Various researchers have concluded that learners should be given explicit instruction and practice in the first two to three thousand high frequency words, while beyond this level, most low frequency words will be learned incidentally while listening or reading.

There are various methods of teaching words explicitly to learners. Duin and Graves (1987) mention that explicit vocabulary instruction can be given through providing word definitions, synonym pairs, word lists, word associations, the keyword method, semantic mapping and semantic feature analysis. Harmer (1991) states that the introduction of new vocabulary can be carried out through the use of realia, pictures, mimicry, contrast, enumeration, explanation and translation. All these vocabulary teaching techniques involve direct teaching.

However, Nagy (1997) believes that teaching vocabulary directly is time wasting. His major argument is that there are a large number of words in English and therefore a large amount of time is needed to deliberately and explicitly teach vocabulary. He concludes that direct teaching can only account for a very small proportion of native speakers' vocabulary growth.

Nation (2001) points out that in SLA, there is the distinction between high frequency and low frequency words. For non-native speakers, they need to learn the high frequency words first, which make up a relatively small group of words, which deserve time and attention.

Nation (2001) also points out that direct teaching of second language vocabulary can raise students' awareness of particular words so that they notice them when they meet them while reading. He also believes that direct vocabulary instruction has a place in SLA and he puts forward several points supporting the notion.

First, he notes that non-native speakers beginning their study of English generally know very few English words. Because the high frequency words of the language are so important for language use and consist of a relatively small number of words (about 2,000), it is practical and feasible to directly teach a substantial number of them. Second, direct vocabulary learning is a way of trying to bridge the gap between second language learners' present proficiency level and the proficiency level needed to learn from unsimplified input. Third, direct vocabulary study is a way to speed up the second language learning process (p.157). However, he maintains that direct vocabulary instruction should be directed towards the high frequency words of the language and warns that direct instruction can deal effectively with only some aspects of word knowledge and not effectively with others, which rely on quantity of experience and implicit rather than explicit knowledge (p.97). For example, when teachers explicitly teach students to analyze word parts, students may be able to remember the spelling and also the pronunciation of the words (productive knowledge) more easily but regarding collocational and grammatical behavior of words, it may be better for learners to read in context.

Schmitt (2000) points out that learners are capable of learning large quantities of vocabulary, for example by means of word lists and the 'depth of processing' hypothesis suggests that the more a

piece of information is manipulated, the more likely it is to be retained in memory (p.121). Oxford and Scarcella (1994) take the position that explicit vocabulary instruction is necessary to guide learners to learn specific strategies for acquiring words, and show students how to learn words outside of their L2 classes (p.235). In a study on Asian ESL learners, Wintergerst and DeCapua (2003) find that Asian students are more used to teacher-centered classrooms, which implies that they are more used to being given instruction by teachers although it is generally agreed that learners may become less autonomous if they are always provided with explicit instruction.

This study aims to investigate answers to the following questions:

1- What mode of instruction, explicit or implicit mode, is more effective for EFL Iranian adults?
2. What mode of instruction, explicit or implicit mode, is more effective for EFL Iranian young adults?

3. Are there any differences between adults and young adults in learning vocabulary either explicitly or implicitly?

3. Methodology and design
3.1 Design of the study
50 students studying English at Nahid English institute at Dehaghan city as well as 50 students at Islamic Azad University, Dehaghan branch participated in this study. They were both adults and young adult students. This research used four groups, namely explicit adult group (EAG), implicit adult group (IAG), explicit young adult (EYA) and implicit young adult (IYA). They were passed a 40-item proficiency test which was used to measure their proficiency level and a lexical knowledge test. The students who included in the study got scores between 15 to 25 points.

3-2 instrument
The material used in this study included a 40-item proficiency test, four reading comprehension passages, and four 10- item vocabulary tests used for the final examination. The proficiency test (Fowler & Cor, 1998) consisted of 40-items vocabulary, structure, and reading comprehension questions. For the final examination in order to measure the effect of implicit versus explicit instruction on the students, eight reading passages were selected from select Readings, pre-intermediate (Linda Lee+ Eric Gundersen 2011). Each passage included a one page text and 5 multiple-choice comprehension questions. Four 10-item multiple-choice vocabulary tests were selected from select readings pre.Int-Quiz& Answers book to test students' vocabulary knowledge.

3-3 procedures
This study was conducted in two sessions at Nahid English institute as well as Islamic Azad University, Dehaghan branch. The students who scored between 15 to 25 were included in the study (100 participants). Students then were divided into four groups 25 each, that is, explicit adult group (EAG), implicit adult group (IAG), explicit young adult (EYA) and implicit young adult (IYA). There were two different modes of instructions. In one mode of instruction, implicit instruction, the teacher utilized inferred method for teaching vocabularies. Moreover, students were supposed to guess the words from the passages by using context clues. In other mode of instruction, explicit instruction, the teacher utilized specific strategies such as mind mapping, Persian equivalents, and English synonyms as well as definitions. After teaching explicitly, in the second session of the treatment, the subjects were given a reading passage with some multiple-choice reading comprehension questions. Then they were asked to read the passage and answer the comprehension questions. Following that the passages were collected and a ten-item vocabulary posttest was distributed among the students to check their knowledge gain of words. The purpose was to find out how much the students would learn through explicit exposure which involved more cognitive load, in the sense used by Laufer (2001). After teaching implicitly, in the second session the same procedure was repeated. The purpose was to find out how much the students would learn through implicit exposure to words in a text.The independence variable for this study was the mode of instruction implicit classroom instruction versus explicit vocabulary. These modes were applied to the different groups of students,

namely explicit adult group (EAG), implicit adult group (IAG), explicit young adult (EYA) and implicit young adult (IYA).The dependent variables for this study were the scores of final examination on vocabulary and reading comprehension. For the vocabulary scores, the lowest possible score was 0 and the highest possible score was 20.

A comparison of the mean scores of test obtained by the four groups showed that, very obviously, performance was a bit higher for both adults and young adults when the words were taught through an explicit instruction associated with mid-mapping technique and synonyms and definitions in the passages than implicit vocabulary instruction technique of inferred passage.

4. Results and Discussions
4.1 Descriptive statistics
Results of the pre-tests and post-test on vocabulary knowledge of the participants (Table 4.1) show that the participants in young adult groups had similar performances on the two vocabulary and comprehension pre-tests. This also confirms that the subjects chosen based on their performance on the proficiency test were rather homogeneous.

Table 4-1 mean and standard deviations for the pre-test and post-test
For young adults n=25

			Mean	Standard Deviation
Group	1 implicit	Young adult_ pre	10.22	1.98
		Young adults _post	13.33	2.96
	2 explicit	Young adults_ pre	9.93	2.28
		Young adults _post	16.25	2.75

Results of the pre-tests and post-test on vocabulary knowledge of the participants (Table 4.1) show that the participants in adult groups had similar performances on the two vocabulary and comprehension pre-tests. This also confirms that the subjects chosen based on their performance on the proficiency test were rather homogeneous.

Table 4-2mean and standard deviations for the pre-test and post-test
For young adults n=25

			Mean	Standard Deviation
group	1 implicit	Adult_ pre	1010	1.78
		Adult_ post	14.05	1.99
	2 explicit	Adult_ pre	10.55	2.03
		Adult_ post	16.80	1.97

Analysis of Kolmogorov-Sminov test was used to measure normality.
H0 and H1 stated as following
H0: Data distribution is normal
H1: Data distribution is not normal
The results presented in table 4-3 show that significance levels for K-S test for research variables is more than 5% error so H0 does not reject and data are normal.

Table 4-3 Kolmogorov-Sminov test

variable		group	K-S test	P value
Vocabulary instruction in young adults	Implicit mode	Pre-test	0/628	0/825
		Post-test	0/492	0/969
	Explicit mode	Pre-test	0/780	0/577
		Post-test	1/156	0/138
Vocabulary instruction in adults	Implicit mode	Pre-test	1.122	0/161
		Post-test	0.916	0/371
	Explicit mode	Pre-test	1/043	0/277
		Post-test	0/936	0/345

4-3 inferential statistics

In order to test research hypotheses, the co-variance analysis has been used. Scores of implicit instruction considered as helping variable and they used in the models.

The first hypothesis: explicit mode of instruction is more effective than implicit mode of instruction.in other words, there is significant difference between mean scores of instruction in explicit mode and implicit mode. H0 and H1 hypothesis has stated as following:

H0: explicit mode of instruction has no effect on vocabulary acquisition in comparison with implicit mode of instruction for adults.

H1: explicit mode of instruction is more effective than implicit mode of instruction for adults.

Levene's test results to check default variance equality of scores of adults in two groups of explicit versus implicit are presented in table 4-4 instruction.

Table 4-4
Dependent Variable:OMID_PAS

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.061	1	28	.806

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

In table 4-4 with regard to significance level of Levene's test that is not less than %5 the variance of teaching vocabulary to the adults in the post-test are accepted. Therefore, the covariance analysis can be used for confirming the above hypothesis.

In table 4-5 the scores of pre-test of explicit instruction versus implicit instruction in adult groups are considered as helping variables. In the test of difference between the scores of explicit mode of instruction versus implicit instruction in adult groups the level of significance calculated (0/000). It is less than %1 so that the H0 is rejected and the H1 is confirmed. As a result, the explicit mode of instruction is more effective than implicit instruction. With regard to ETA squared the rate of effectiveness or difference is equal to 0/735. That is, 73/5 percent of total variance of vocabulary instruction is based on group membership.

The second hypothesis namely, explicit mode of instruction is more effective than Implicit mode for young adults. In other words, there are significant differences between mean scores of instruction in explicit mode and implicit mode. H0 and H1 hypothesis has stated as following:

H0: explicit mode of instruction has no effect on vocabulary acquisition in comparison with implicit mode of instruction for young adults.

H1: explicit mode of instruction is more effective than implicit mode of instruction for young adults.

Levene's test results to check default variance equality of scores of young adults in two groups of explicit versus implicit are presented in table 4-5 instruction.

Table 4-5
Dependent: Variable Train 2 post -

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.072	1	28	.791

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

In table 4-5 with regard to significance level of Levene's test that is not less than %5 the variance of teaching vocabulary to the young adults in the post-test are accepted. Therefore, the covariance analysis can be used for confirming the above hypothesis. The results of covariance have been presented in table 4-6
The results of covariance instruction of explicit versus implicit instruction on young adult groups

Table 4-6 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
Dependent: Variable Train 2 post

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	62.984[a]	2	31.492	24.850	.000	.648	49.700	1.000
Intercept	54.504	1	54.504	43.009	.000	.614	43.009	1.000
train 2 pre	14.850	1	14.850	11.718	.002	.303	11.718	.910
group	45.212	1	45.212	35.677	.000	.569	35.677	0.999
Error	34.216	27	1.267					
Total	3996.000	30						
Corrected Total	97.200	29						

a. R Squared = .648 (Adjusted R Squared = .622)
b. Computed using alpha = .05
In table 4-6 the scores of pre-test of explicit instruction versus implicit instruction in adult groups are considered as helping variables. In the test of difference between the scores of explicit mode of instruction versus implicit instruction in young adult groups the level of significance calculated (0/000). It is less than %1 so that the H0 is rejected and the H1 is confirmed. As a result, the explicit mode of instruction is more effective than implicit instruction. With regard to ETA squared the rate of effectiveness or difference is equal to 0/569. That is, 56/9 percent of total variance of vocabulary instruction is based on group membership.

The third hypothesis there is significance difference between explicit versus implicit instruction in adults and young adults. In other word, two different mode of instructions have differential effect on vocabulary acquisition. The H0 and H1 hypotheses are as the following.

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2 \\ H_1: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \end{cases}$$

In order to investigate the third hypothesis the t –test has been used based on two independent samples along with significance levels.

Table 4-7 of t-test for determining the differences between vocabulary learning in two modes of instruction in adults and young adults
Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Learning through explicit instruction	Equal variances assumed	.471	.498	-.082	38	.935	-.20000	2.44079	-5.19973	4.79973
	Equal variances not assumed			-.082	27.48 3	.935	-.20000	2.44079	-5.20397	4.80397
Learning through implicit instruction	Equal variances assumed	.468	.499	-1.0 38	38	.363	-4.53333	2.33918	-9.32492	.25825
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.038	27.42 5	.363	-4.53333	2.33918	-9.32945	.26278

The results in table 4-7 shows that the level of significance of t for the variables of teaching vocabulary in both explicit and implicit form is not less than %5 so the H0 hypothesis isn't rejected and the amount learning vocabulary in adults and young adults either explicitly or implicitly is the same.

5. Conclusions and Implications
Results of the present study have shown that explicit instruction of vocabulary better influenced vocabulary learning among Iranian adults and young adults pre-intermediate learners. Furthermore, there are many levels of explicit learning/knowledge which are not grasped by the implicit vs. explicit distinction. It is worthy of notice that as a result of this research, we can argue that incidental vocabulary acquisition occurs through operation of input hypothesis: that reading provides comprehensible and necessary input that eventually leads to acquisition. As Krashen (1989) states, the acquisition of vocabulary and spelling is achieved through exposure to comprehensible input. Wode (1999) in a study of incidental vocabulary acquisition in a foreign language classroom, found that it is important to investigate in detail which properties of teaching are best suited to trigger the incidental learning with respect to vocabulary (and other linguistic elements). Ellis and He (1999) investigated the roles of modified input and output in the incidental acquisition of word meaning. Their study proved that interactional output which provides opportunities for learners to use new vocabularies contributes to better incidental vocabulary acquisition.

We may conclude that implicit learning is not entirely implicit, as learners must pay at least some attention to individual words. Students generally benefit from explicit vocabulary instruction in conjunction with extensive reading. To the extent that vocabulary learning is an implicit skill acquisition, it is also an explicit knowledge acquisition process (Ellis, 1994). The tunings of the implicit learning can be guided and governed by explicit learning and explicit learning can be consolidated and reinforced by implicit learning. Thus, implicit learning and explicit learning are, as it were, two sides of a coin in vocabulary acquisition.

With respect to the importance of vocabulary instruction, findings of the present research are useful for language teachers in planning a wide variety of contextualized vocabulary activities for EFL learners. The findings can also be of significance for material developers in preparing reading and vocabulary materials for language learners. Moreover, EFL learners may find the results useful in planning strategies to grow their vocabulary knowledge.

References

[1]Alemi, M. & Tayebi, A. (2011). The influence of incidental and intentional vocabulary acquisition and vocabulary strategy use on learning L2 vocabularies. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2(1)*.

[2]Carter, R. and Nunan, D. (2001) Vocabulary. In The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other

[3] DeCarrico, J. S. (2001). Vocabulary learning and teaching. In M. Celce-Murcia,(Ed.), *Teaching English as a second and foreign language* (3rd ed.). (pp. 285-300).

[4]Doughty, C. & Williams, J. (1998). Pedagogical choices in focus on form. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 197-261). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[5] Ellis, N. (1994). Vocabulary acquisition: the implicit ins and outs of explicit cognitive mediation. In N. C. Ellis (ed), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages*. London: Academic Press.

[6] Ellis, R,. & he, X. (1999). The roles of modified input and output in the incidental acquisition of word meanings. *Studies of second Language Acquisition,* 21, 285-301.

[7] Gass, S. (1999). Incidental vocabulary learning: Discussion. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 21* (3), 19-333

Harmer, J (1991). The Practice of English Language Teaching. London: Longman.

[8] Hunt, A., Beglar, D. (1998). Current research and practice in teaching vocabulary. *The Language Teacher, 22*, (1).

[9] Kojic-Sabo, I., & Lightbown, P. M. (1999). Students' approaches to vocabulary learning and their relationship to success. *The Modern Language Journal, 83*, 176-192.

[10] Krashen, S. (1989). We acquire vocabulary and spelling by reading: Additional evidence for the input hypothesis. *The Modern Language Journal, 24*, 237-270.

[11] Laufer, B. (2001). Reading, word-focused activities and incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language. *Prospect, 16* (3), 44-54.

[12] Linda Lee+ Eric Gunderson (2011). Select Readings, pre-intermediate level, Oxford University press

[13]Nagy, W. E. & Herman, P. (1987). Breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge: Implications for acquisition and instruction. In M. McKeown & M. Curtis (Eds.), *The nature of vocabulary acquisition* (pp. 19-35). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

[14]Nagy, W. E. (1997). On the role of context in first-and second language vocabulary learning. In N. Schmitt & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description*, *acquisition*, *and pedagogy* (pp. 64-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[15]Nation, I. S. P. (1990). Teaching and learning vocabulary. New York: Newbury House.

[16] Nation, P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language.* Cambridge: C.U.P.

[17]Oxford, R. & Crookall, D. (1990). Vocabulary learning: A critical analysis of techniques. *TESL Canada, Journal, 7,* 9-30.

[18] Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001).*Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Second Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[19] Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[20]Wintergerst, A.C., DeCapua, A., Verna, M.A., 2003. Conceptualizing learning style modalities for ESL/EFL students. System 31 (1), 85e106.

[21] Winter, B., & Reber, A. S. (1994). Implicit learning and the acquisition of natural languages. In N. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages* (pp.115-145). London: Academic Press.

[22] Wode, H. (1999). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in the foreign language classroom. *Studies of Second Language Acquisition, 21*, 243-258.

AN INVESTIGATION OF IRANIAN UNIVERSITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS' TECHNOLOGICAL PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Masoumeh Ghavidel Atashgahi
Department of English Language, Rasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran
masoum.ghavidel@yahoo.com

Ghasem Aghajanzadeh Kiasi
Department of English Language, Rasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran
aghajanzadeh@iaurasht.ac.ir

ABSTRACT
TECHNOLOGICAL PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE ENTAILS AN INTERACTION OF ALL COMPONENTS OF CONTENT, PEDAGOGY, AND TECHNOLOGY IN CONSTRUCTIVE WAYS TO TEACH CONTENT. THE PRESENT RESEARCH AIMED AT INVESTIGATING IRANIAN UNIVERSITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS' TECHNOLOGICAL PEDAGOGICAL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE IN GUILAN AZAD AND STATE UNIVERSITIES. IN SO DOING, A RESEARCHER-DEVELOPED QUESTIONNAIRE WAS UTILIZED. THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE WERE ACHIEVED THROUGH EXPERT OPINION AND CRONBACH ALPHA, RESPECTIVELY. A SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WAS ALSO CONDUCTED. HAVING COLLECTED THE DATA, A DETAILED DESCRIPTIVE AND INFERENTIAL STATISTICS OF THE FINDINGS WERE PRESENTED. THE FOUR CONSTRUCTS OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS, NAMELY TECHNOLOGY, PEDAGOGY, CONTENT, AND KNOWLEDGE WERE SEPARATELY ANALYZED THROUGH A ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR THE PURPOSE OF HYPOTHESES TESTING THAT GENERALLY REVEALED A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INSTRUCTORS' USE OF THE CONSTRUCTS REGARDING THEIR AGE, GENDER, MAJOR, AND FIELD OF STUDY. HOWEVER, IT WAS FOUND THAT THE INSTRUCTORS' USE OF THE FOUR CONSTRUCTS WAS THE SAME IN SOME CASES.

KEY WORDS: TECHNOLOGY, PEDAGOGY, CONTENT, KNOWLEDGE, ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR

1.0. Introduction
The increased use of technology in higher education creates a challenge of how best to utilize the technology for different purposes to maximize learning. There are great expectations that technology will change education, particularly by its greater accessibility and, therefore, increase the quality of teaching and learning in higher education. For teachers to be successful in their career, they need to develop themselves in pedagogy, technology, and their content areas. By using information and communication technologies, teachers can follow developments in their areas, transfer the contemporary approaches and applications regarding teaching methods into their instruction, and keep themselves up-to-date. For these reasons, technology plays a critical role for teacher knowledge improvement.

In recent years, computer and instructional technologies have become an important part of our lives by affecting our learning and communication. Uses of these technologies in our daily lives become widespread since these technologies provide individuals with many benefits and opportunities. Computer and instructional technologies also bring significant novelties to teachers and their classroom instruction. (Miller, 2008). In addition, the use of computers and educational technologies may help increase student performance. Developing digital pedagogies as a way of reframing pedagogies to better meet the needs of current and future students is an imperative in a digital world (Kember, 2008).

The deliberate inclusion of educational technologies into the classroom to enhance 21st century teaching and learning experiences continues to be an integral aspect of teacher education (Luu & Freeman, 2011). Despite the emergence of this as a critical attribute of modern teachers, there exists a limited understanding of the applications and conceptual grounding of theoretical frameworks in the educational technology literature that aim to inform the pragmatics of teaching and learning with technology (Graham, 2011; Koehler & Mishra, 2008; Angeli, 2005; Niess, 2005). Through this realization, the development of conceptual understandings of various theoretical models are emerging towards informing teachers about appropriate technology integration, and increasing teacher cognition on purposeful technology use in the classroom (Bos, 2011; Angeli & Valanides, 2005; Margerum-Lays & Marx, 2003).

The TPCK framework is built on Shulman's (1986, 1987) descriptions of pedagogical content knowledge that describes how teachers' understanding of technologies and pedagogical content knowledge interact with one another to produce effective teaching with technology.
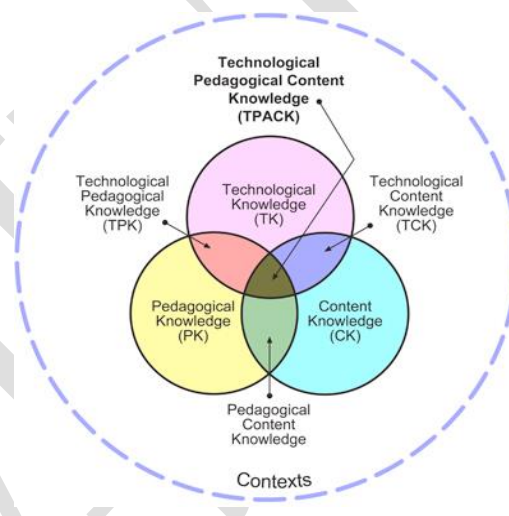
Figure 1.1 The TPACK framework and its knowledge components proposed by Shulman (1986, 1987)

In the model (see Figure 1.1), proposed by Shulman (1987), there are three main components of knowledge: content, pedagogy, and technology. Equally important to the model are the interactions among these bodies of knowledge, represented as pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), technological content knowledge (TCK), technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK), and technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK). Central to Shulman's conceptualization of PCK is the notion of the transformation of the subject matter for teaching. Specifically, according to Shulman (1986), this transformation occurs as the teacher interprets the subject matter, finds multiple ways to represent it, and adapts and tailors the instructional materials to alternative conceptions and students' prior knowledge. According to Koehler and Mishra (2008), technology and knowledge have a deep historical relationship. Progress in fields as diverse as medicine and history, or archeology and physics have coincided with the development of new technologies that afford the representation and manipulation of data in new and fruitful ways.

Understanding the impact of technology on the practices and knowledge of a given discipline is critical if we are to develop appropriate technological tools for educational purposes. The choice of technologies affords and constrains the types of content ideas that can be taught. Based on the issues mentioned, the present research intends to investigate technological knowledge of teachers and technological content the teachers make use of.

1.1. Statement of the Problem
The rapid rate of technology change leads to increasing pressure on teachers to keep up with these new tools and devise new ways to integrate them in their teaching. This means that teachers need to go beyond 'functional fixedness' and instead need to creatively repurpose these tools to make them pedagogically viable. This requires a deep understanding not just of the technology but also of the content to be covered, the pedagogical approaches to be supported and the contexts within which teaching/learning is to happen.

The belief that effective technology integration depends on content and pedagogy suggests that teachers' experiences with technology must be specific to different content areas. Teaching with technology is complicated further when the challenges newer technologies present to teachers are considered. In teaching, the word 'technology' applies equally to analog and digital, as well as new and old technologies. As a matter of practical significance, however, most of the technologies under consideration in current literature are newer and digital and have some inherent properties that make applying them in straightforward ways difficult.

1.2. Significance of the Study
Advanced technology plays an important role in helping teachers transfer teachings and information to students. There is no doubt that the expansion of new knowledge and technology eventually contributes to shifts in thinking and teaching accompanied with new practices and experiences in the field of language instruction. Technology use in educational context is contributing to a fundamental paradigm shift in educational philosophy. New technologies teachers are convinced to direct and run the learning path quite differently from their own quite traditional path teaching and learning.

The researcher is of the view that the present study will make teacher's technological pedagogical content knowledge clear, and with deep pedagogical knowledge teachers understand how students construct knowledge and acquire skills and how they develop habits of mind and positive dispositions toward learning. By simultaneously integrating knowledge of technology, pedagogy and content, expert teachers bring TPCK into play any time they teach.

The present research aims at understanding the overall situation in which the teachers use technology to teach content knowledge through the pedagogy geared to the classroom. The researcher is of the view that the present study will make teacher's technological pedagogical content knowledge clear, and with deep pedagogical knowledge teachers understand how students construct knowledge and acquire skills and how they develop habits of mind and positive dispositions toward learning. By simultaneously integrating knowledge of technology, pedagogy and content, expert teachers bring TPCK into play any time they teach. Each situation presented to teachers is a unique combination of these three factors, and accordingly, there is no single technological solution that applies for every teacher, every course, or every view of teaching.

1.3. Research Question
Based on the issues mentioned, the present study intends to determine the different degree the technological pedagogical content knowledge is utilized in teaching English at Guilan universities by exploring the university instructors' age, gender, field of study, and degree. Thus, following questions were proposed:

Is there any statistically significant difference among the components of technological pedagogical content knowledge with respect to EFL University English language instructors' age, fields of study, degree, gender?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

Based on the research question proposed above, the following null hypothesis are given:

H_0: There is no any statistically significant difference between technological pedagogical content knowledge components with respect to EFL University English language instructors' age, fields of study, degree, gender?

2.0. Review of literature

The present researcher's emphasis on TPCK is consistent with the work of many other scholars and recent educational reform documents. Since its introduction in 1987, TPCK has become a widely useful and used notion. For instance, in the area of science education, scholars such as Anderson and Mitchner (1994); Hewson and Hewson (1988); Cochran, King, and DeRuiter (1993) have all emphasized the value of TPCK for teacher preparation and teacher professional development. An analysis of Teacher Educator's Handbook (Murray, 1996) shows Shulman as the fourth most cited author of the close to 1,500 authors in the book's author index, with an overwhelming majority of those references made to this concpt of TPCK (Segall, 2004). The notion of TPCK since its introduction in 1987 has permeated the scholarship that deals with teacher education and the subject matter of education (see, for example, Ball, 1996; Cochran, King, & De-Ruiter, 1993; Grossman, 1990; Shulman, 1987; Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987). It is valued as an epistemological concept that usefully blends the traditionally separated knowledge bases of content and pedagogy.

The TPCK framework has been used in hundreds of studies examining teachers' professional knowledge (Graham, 2011), with the majority of these using surveys to measure the extent of teachers' TPCK (Jordan & Dinh, 2012). The introduction of the TPCK model by Mishra and Koehler (2006) has had "a profound impact on the field of educational technology" (Cox, 2008, p. 60) yet it is not without its limitations or critics. Although much of the current TPCK research focuses on the TPCK framework as described by Koehler and Mishra (Koehler & Mishra, 2009; Koehler, Mishra, & Yahya, 2004; Mishra & Koehler, 2005, 2006, 2007), the discussion of the relationship of technology to Shulman's (1986) concept of pedagogical content knowledge has been an evolving construct that is informed by ongoing design experiments and other research efforts. Many researchers have sought to integrate technology into the pedagogical content knowledge model in a manner that is derived from evidence of the knowledge and beliefs of pre-service and in-service teachers.

In recent years, the advent of the TPCK framework suggests one promising avenue toward realizing the 'new agenda'. TPCK is a framework that describes the technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge that underlies effective teaching with technology (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). TPCK can be applied theoretically, methodologically, and pedagogically. The framework scaffolds scholarly dialogue by providing a common language, and it enables new methodological moves by serving as an analytical lens and coding scheme for researchers. Moreover, it bridges the theory-to-practice divide by supplying the underlying rationale for "authentic design-based activities for teaching technology by allowing students to learn in contexts that honor the rich connection between technology, the subject matter (content), and the means of teaching it (the pedagogy)" (pp. 1046-1047).

Prior to the introduction of the TPCK framework in its current form, Keating and Evans (2001) used grounded theory methodology to examine interviews and survey data of a small group of pre-service teachers to "get a sense of how teaching with technology fits into student teachers' evolving pedagogical content knowledge" (p. 1672). In discussing the implications of the data collected, Keating and Evans arrived at a definition of the TPCK construct as knowledge that "extends beyond proficiency with technology for personal use to an understanding of how technology can be integrated with subject matter in ways that open new avenues for student understanding of the subject matter and the technology itself" (p. 1671). The study revealed that students were comfortable using technology for various purposes in their daily lives. This personal use of technology, however, did not easily translate into an integration of technology into teaching and learning, thus demonstrating that knowledge of technology is insufficient, by itself, to foster successful technology integration.

In a theoretical paper, Graham (2011) examined TPCK's development and outlined several 'weaknesses', including the foundation in PCK, but also imprecise definitions, confused perspective on knowledge formation, and a poorly articulated value. These and other flaws, Graham claimed, serve as the basis for continual elaboration of the model but also draw its viability into question. Cox and Graham (2009) conducted a "conceptual analysis" of the boundaries between the knowledge components so as to arrive at a "précising definition" that would facilitate future research of TPACK in practice (p. 60). Graham (2011) has asserted that TPCK needs "clear distinctions" between the subcategories of knowledge and the research community "risks generating mounds of research that ultimately do not cohere" (p. 1954). The review of literature provided the background, gave an overview of the efforts to assess the knowledge of teachers in the TPCK domains, and discussed the challenges and potential uses of the methods and instruments within this context. Through the literature review, the researcher also dealt with the genesis of TPCK with specific consideration given to TPCK contributions within the English language and literacy domains. In the following chapter, the method used in order to operationalize the present research is explained.

3.0. Method of Research
3.1. The Design of the Study
This study favors a mixed method design in that there is no cause-effect relationship. There is also no treatment. The researcher has no control over the selection and the manipulation of the variables in what has already occurred to the subjects of the study. Moreover, the design of the present study can be considered as descriptive, since the researcher presents descriptions concerning naturally occurring phenomena connected with language development and processing.

3.2. Participants
The participants were 40 university English language instructors out of total number of 55 instructors availably practicing teaching in Guilan State and Azad universities. The participants were chosen based on convenient sampling as one of the main types of non-probability sampling methods. It is made up of people who are easy to reach. The participants were of both genders with a 28-55 age range. The participant's fields of study consisted of translation, teaching, literature, and linguistics. The participants were of three different degrees, namely Masters of Arts, PhD candidates, and PhD holders.

3.3. Materials
In order to operationalize the present study and fulfill the purposes highlighted in chapter one, the following localized questionnaire and semi-structured interview were utilized as the instruments and materials of the present study.

3.3.1. Questionnaire
One of the most common techniques for undertaking a survey is the use of questionnaire. The purpose for which the researcher used the questionnaire was to know the degree of Guilan university English language instructors' knowledge of technology, pedagogy, content, and technological pedagogical content all together. The questionnaire used in this study was a Likert-scale type of 5 point scales, namely strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. It is a standardized one already developed and used by Schmidt, Baran, Thompson, Mishra, Koehler, Tae, and Shin (2009) for measuring teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge in all fields such as mathematics, sociology, science, and literature with seven constructs, namely Technology Knowledge (TK), Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), Technological Content Knowledge (PCK), Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK), Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) and 47 items. However, the questionnaire used for the present study is the localized version of the questionnaire developed by Schmidt et al. (2009) with 4 constructs and 33 items measuring English language instructors' Technology Knowledge (TK), Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), and

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK). Such a specific instrument allowed the researcher to have more confidence in measuring the contextualized TPCK constructs.

3.3.1.1. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

To collect data, a mixed method of a researcher-made questionnaire and interview was used. The present study was developed in three stages. Considering the fact that the questionnaire was already standardized and utilized in previous studies (e.g., Schmidt et al., 2009), its validity and reliability were estimated again for the purpose of the present study. In order to save the validity, the researcher first tried to gain experts' opinion through distributing the questionnaire among 6 instructors practicing TEFL at Islamic Azad University at Rasht and Lahijan Branches.

In the second stage, the questionnaire was administered to a group of long-standing experienced English instructors for piloting purpose as was mentioned. The reliability of the questionnaire was achieved through a pilot study that was conducted among a sample representatives (20 instructors) of the total population at Rasht Azad and state universities, and Lahijan Azad University due to the ease of access. Then, the final version of the research instrument was developed based on feedback on this draft. The researcher distributed and administered 55 questionnaires at teachers' gatherings at 5 universities in 4 cities including Rasht (Azad and State), Lahijan, Roudbar, and Astara in the educational year of 2015. The respondents completed the questionnaire voluntarily and anonymously. Most respondents completed the survey in less than 30 minutes. After the questionnaires were collected, the data were entered into spreadsheet program for analysis. The total number of questionnaire the researcher could collect finally and was able to run the study with was 40 since some questionnaires were not correctly answered by the participants. Some of them were submitted half-filled, and some others lacked complete demographic information

3.3.2. Interview

To add depth and detail to the qualitative portion of the present study, a semi-structured interview was conducted with volunteer participants. To cover all aspects of the issue in question, technology applications, and to answer the questions in researchers' mind not covered in questionnaire, an interview was carried out to collect more and precise information on technological pedagogical content knowledge. The interview was of semi-structured type and it was conducted with 10 instructors chosen randomly out of total number of instructors. The interview was transcribed, and analyzed by the researcher and a colleague in the field, and was finally verified and coded. The Cohen's Kappa was conducted to calculate the ratio of coding agreements.

4.0. Results

4.1. Descriptive analysis of the data

According to the data gathered in the demographic section of the TPCK instrument, the male (65%) participants outnumbered the female (35%) one. Regarding the age range of the participants, 5% of participants (2) comprised the smallest group, and 37.5% of the participants were over 46. The teaching field enjoyed the highest rank among others with 67.5%. However, translation enjoyed the least with 7.5%. With regard to degree, PhD candidates and PhD holders were competitively the same with 2 difference for PhD holders. The detailed information can be looked up in table 4.1.

Table 4.1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male		26	65.0	65.0	65.0
Female		14	35.0	35.0	35.0
Age range	25–30	2	5.0	5.0	5.0
	31–35	3	7.5	7.5	12.5
	36-40	12	30.0	30.0	42.5
	41- 45	8	20.0	20.0	62.5
	+46	15	37.5	37.5	100.0

Major	Teaching	27	67.5	67.5	67.5
	Linguistics	5	12.5	12.5	80.0
	Translation	3	7.5	7.5	87.5
	Literature	5	12.5	12.5	100.0
Degree	M A	4	10.0	10.0	10.0
	PhD can.	17	42.5	42.5	52.5
	PhD	19	47.5	47.5	100.0

The frequency table of participants

Before delving into inferential statistics, the results gained for validity and reliability of the questionnaire will be dealt with here. Based on their views gathered, the questionnaire proved to be qualified for the purpose since five out six instructors qualified it as having very good items supporting the factors, and the other one qualified the questionnaire as good supporting the factors and the items, generally. Regarding the reliability issue, the questionnaire reliability was achieved through a pilot study that was conducted among a sample representatives (20 instructors) of the total population at Rasht Azad and State universities, and Lahijan Azad University due to the ease of access. The reliability, the internal consistency of the questionnaire, was estimated by Cronbach's alpha that proved to be .92 indicating that the questionnaire was highly reliable for the conduct of the present study. It needs to be mentioned that for the purpose of the present study, the inter-rater agreement calculated by Kappa statistics was reached to be 0.88, and it indicated an almost perfect agreement as it was between 0.81-0.99.

4.2. Inferential analysis of the data
What follows is an illustration of the connection between the constructs or factors of the questionnaire and the elements of demographic characteristics of teachers, namely gender, age, major, and degree in the research questions. The analysis depicts the status of the factors in terms of the characteristics mentioned. In hypothesis testing, the most common way to determine whether there is enough evidence from the sample to reject H_0 or to fail to reject H_0 is to compare the p-value with a pre-specified value of α, where α is the probability of rejecting H_0 when H_0 is true.
The following are the calculations of the critical value. An Independent Sample *t* Test and a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to determine whether there were any significant differences between the means of different groups.

4.2.1. Technological pedagogical content knowledge and gender
There is no difference between men and women in TPCK factor. To investigate this hypothesis, we used variance analysis table. The results are as follows:

Table 4.2

Variance analysis of TPCK and gender

Source of Changes	Degrees of freedom	sum of squares	Mean of square	Statistics	Probability value
Gender	1	1.51	0.051		
Error	38	13.680	13.680	0.142	0.709
Total	39	13.731			

According to the table observed above, the F statistics is equal to 0.142. This statistics is not a great amount, and the probability value is 0.709. Since the probability is higher than the F, the hypothesis at a significant level of $\alpha = \%5$ is confirmed. It can be claimed that men and women do not use TPCK differently.
The Mean and the standard deviation of the groups can be observed in the following table:

Table 4.3

The mean and the standard deviation of the groups

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Men	4.23	0.12
Women	4.16	0.13

Figure 4.1.TPCK and gender

4.2.2. Technological pedagogical content knowledge and age

There is no difference between the age of instructors and the use of TPCK. To investigate this hypothesis, we used variance analysis table. The results are as follows:

Table 4.4
Variance analysis of TPCK and age

Source of Changes	Degrees of freedom	sum of squares	Mean of square	Statistics	Probability value
Age	4	4.359	1.090		
Error	35	9.372	0.268	4.070	*0.008
Total	39	13.731			

Age	Mean	Standard Deviation
25-30	3.25	0.0
31-35	4.66	0.57
36-40	4.16	0.41
41-45	4.64	0.35
+46	4.05	0.64

According to the table observed above, the F statistics is equal to 4.070, and the probability value is 0.008. Since the F statistics is greater than the probability value, our hypothesis at a significant level $\alpha = \%5$ is rejected. It means that teachers of different ages make use of TPCK in their different age ranges.

The Mean and the standard deviation of the groups can be observed in the following table:
Table 4.5

The mean and the standard deviation of the groups
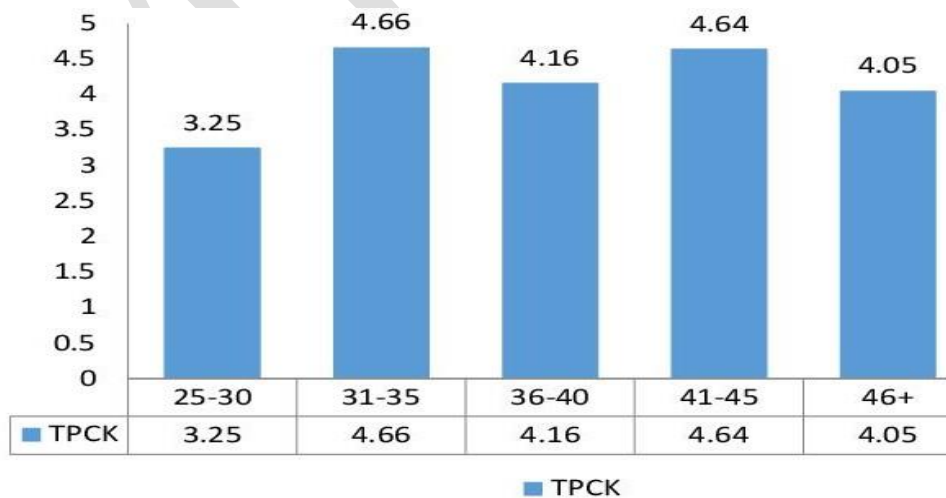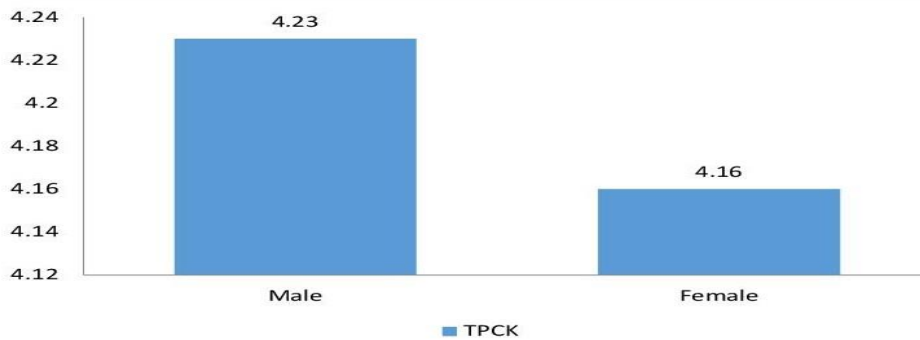
Figure 4.2.TPCK and age

4.2.3. Technological pedagogical content knowledge and major

There is no difference between instructors' majors and the use of TPCK. To investigate this hypothesis, we used variance analysis table. The results are as follows:

Table 4.6

Variance analysis of TPCK and major

Source of Changes	Degrees of freedom	sum of squares	Mean of square	Statistics	Probability value
Major	3	2.539	0.846	0.456	0.789
Error	36	11.192	0.311		
Total	39	13.731			

According to the table observed above, the F statistics is equal to 0.456 and the probability value is 0.789. Since the F statistics is smaller than the probability value, the hypothesis in a significant level $\alpha = \%5$ is confirmed. It can be claimed that TPCK factor is not different among different majors. It means that teachers of different majors do not make use of TPCK differently.

The Mean and the standard deviation of the groups can be observed in the following table:

Table 4.7

The mean and the standard deviation of the groups

Major	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teaching	4.26	0.12
Linguistics	4.60	0.12
Translation	4.00	0.00
Literature	3.65	0.61
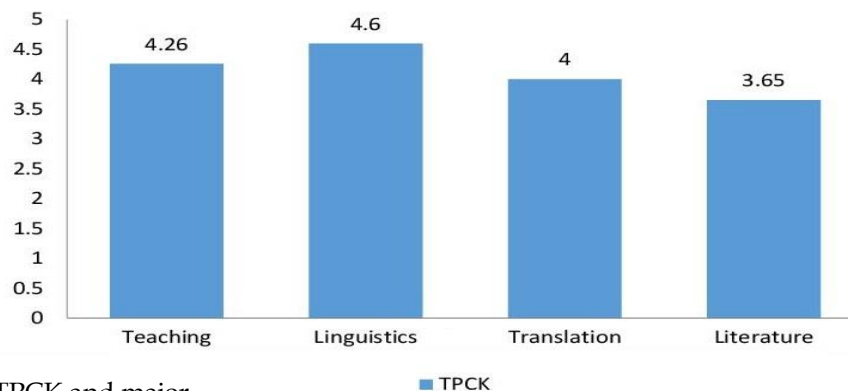
Figure 4.3.TPCK and major

4.2.4. Technological pedagogical content knowledge and degree

There is no difference between instructor's degrees and the use of TPCK. To investigate this hypothesis, we used variance analysis table. The results are as follows:

Table 4.8
Variance analysis of TPCK and degree

Source of changes	Degrees of freedom	Sum of squares	Mean of square	Statistics	Probability value
Degree	2	0.128	0.064	0.174	0.841
Error	37	13.603	0.368		
Total	39	13.731			

According to the table observed above, the F statistics is equal to 0.174. The F statistics is a smaller than the probability value of 0.841. Since the probability is higher, there is no reason that the hypothesis at a significant level $\alpha = \%5$ to be rejected. It can be claimed that TPCK factor is not different among different degree. It means that teachers of different degrees do not make use of TPCK differently.

 The Mean and the standard deviation of the groups can be observed in the following table:

Table 4.9
The mean and the standard deviation of the groups

Degree	Mean	Standard Deviation
MA	4.06	0.31
PhD Candidate	4.25	0.14
PhD	4.19	0.13
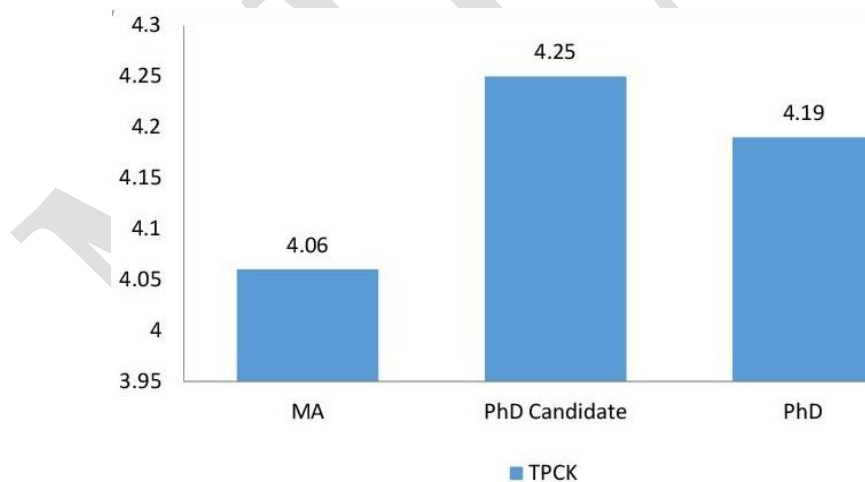
Figure 4.4.TPCK and degree

4.3. Results of Hypothesis Testing

In hypothesis testing, the most common way to determine whether there is enough evidence from the sample to reject H_0 or to fail to reject H_0 is to compare the p-value with a pre-specified value of α, where α is the probability of rejecting H_0 when H_0 is true. However, we can also compare the calculated value of the test statistics with the critical value. If the F-statistics is greater than this critical value, then the researcher can reject the null hypothesis, H_0, at the 0.05 level of significance. What

follows is testing the hypotheses in the four domains of TPCK, investigated in the present research through a reliable and valid researcher made questionnaire.

4.3.1. TPCK and gender, age, major, and degree

Regarding TPCK and gender, it can be claimed that men and women did not use TPCK differently since the probability value (0.709) was higher than the F (0.142), and the hypothesis at a significant level of $\alpha = \%5$ was confirmed. However, with regard to TPCK and age, the hypothesis at a significant level $\alpha = \%5$ was rejected meaning that teachers of different ages make use of TPCK in their different periods of their age since the F (4.070) was greater than the probability value (0.008). The third hypothesis was confirmed implying that TPCK factor was not different among different majors with the F statistics of 0.456 and probability value of 0.789. On the other hand, teachers of different degrees did not make use of TPCK in terms of their different degrees. Since the probability value was higher, the hypothesis at a significant level $\alpha = \%5$ was confirmed.

4.3.2. Interview

The interview conducted to cover the issues not covered through the developed questionnaire produced interesting results. The researcher has tried to categorize the results of the interview into some sections. Some instructors reported that the major use of technology was to prepare lesson notes and assessments instead of improving students' performances. The research also revealed that barriers to the use of technology include congested classes, insufficient training, inadequate technical and pedagogical support, inadequate motivation, lack of strong leadership and inadequate cooperation among teachers. Opportunities for training has an effect on instructors' use of TPCK in teaching and learning. The interview revealed that inadequate training, lack of access to computer laboratories, lack of technical support and inadequate technology resources were factors discouraging teachers from heightening TPCK into their teaching.

Throughout the interviews, the teachers reflected significantly on their TPCK. They discussed in detail how they believe the TPCK could influence their teaching practice. Yet, some of the teachers discussed the TPCK features are missing the context of the classroom. Furthermore, the teachers reflected on their assessments of themselves within the TPCK, the figure should be questioned.

Some teachers reported that they adopted traditional stance that made them not use technology in their teaching practice as expected. All teachers asserted that the act of self-assessment allowed them to evaluate their existing pedagogical methods and practices. Three teachers indicated an increase and three teachers indicated a decrease in their pedagogical knowledge. Based on the teachers' responses and interviews, teachers noted that the grading process enabled them to reflect on their teaching practices. Some teachers noted that

"They have been teaching for over ten years and have always thought they knew technology really well." However, some teachers acknowledged that "they have always had a difficult time with understanding how to teach with the technology."

Some of the participants stated that they felt more confident when using the technological content knowledge because all knowledge domains had been addressed in detail and there was 'easy access' to the knowledge domains. All of the teachers felt that the TPCK approach to professional development and learning environment design was vital because it would empower them in their teaching practice. A teacher stated that, "I love this experience because it gives me what I need to be successful and also increases my awareness of what I know and what I thought I knew!"

5. General Discussion

According to the results in the hypothesis testing, it was found that the hypotheses regarding the difference between TPCK and the instructors' gender, major, and degree were confirmed and the difference between TPCK and age was refuted. Regarding the TK factor, it was found that it is not different in gender, but it is different in age, major, and degree of the university instructors. With regard to CK factor, all four hypotheses were rejected implying that the gender, age, major and degree of the instructors were different. It was totally the same with the fourth factor, PK. The

hypothesis testing revealed that the university instructors were different PK in terms of their gender, age, major and degree.

As academic standards are usually set for education purpose, they may be designed with implicit pedagogical intentions. In such cases, the materials should properly be classified as TPCK. However, as the purpose of this study is oriented toward course effectiveness, the researcher believes it is clearer for them to be categorized as intervention studies. While technologies created for general purpose could be adapted for teaching and learning, these forms of technologies are demanding on teachers' design capacity to repurpose the tools.

Learning about technology (how to use email, word processing, or the latest version of a computer operating system) is different from learning what to do with it. Clearly, a solid understanding of knowledge in each individual domain would be the basis for developing TPCK. Developing these knowledge bases is necessary. For instance, teaching technology skills alone does little to help teachers develop knowledge about how to use digital tools to teach more effectively, navigate the relationships between technology and content representations, or how to use technology to help students learn a particular topic of TPCK.

6. Conclusion

The results of the present research can shed some light over the assessment mechanism of teacher recruitment and teacher on going profession of teaching. Moreover, Pragmatic issues like program accreditation and grant evaluation also highlight the need for TPCK assessment. Hence, the development of TPCK assessment mechanisms is vital for helping build the infrastructure for current and future teacher education efforts.

In the present century, the use of instructional technology in ELT contexts has been a center of attention for many organizations, educational institutions, major curriculum development projects, and educational policy makers. Majority of educational centers have tried or are trying to have easy access to technological resources and tools. In light of these findings, it seems even more important to conduct studies where all the relevant constructs determined in the current research are integrated simultaneously. This would enable us to specifically determine whether TPCK self-reports would discriminately explain the quality of instruction that tries to leverage the potential of new technologies.

References

Anderson, R. D., & Mitchner, C. P. (1994). Research on science teacher education. In D. L. Gabel (Ed.), *Handbook of science teaching and learning* (pp. 32-37). New York: Macmillan.

Angeli, C. (2005). Transforming a teacher education method course through technology:

Effects on pre-service teachers' technology competency. *Computers & Education, 45*(4), 383-398.

Angeli, C., & Valanides, N. (2005). Pre-service elementary teachers as information and communication technology designers: An instructional systems design model based on an expanded view of pedagogical content knowledge. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, *21*(4), 292-302.

Ball, D. (1996). Teacher learning and mathematics reforms: What we think we know and what we need to learn. *Phi Delta Kappan, 77*(7), 500-508.

Bos, B. (2011). Professional development for elementary teachers using TPACK. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *11*(2). Retrieved from http://www.citejournal.org/vol11/iss2/mathematics/article1.cfm

Cochran, K. F., King, R. A., & DeRuiter, J. A. (1993). Pedagogical content knowledge: An integrative model for teacher preparation. *Journal of Teacher Education, 44*(4), 263-272.

Cox, S. (2008). A conceptual analysis of technological pedagogical content knowledge. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University.

Graham, C. R. (2011). Theoretical considerations for understanding technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK). *Computers & Education*, *57*(3), 1953-1960.doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2011.04.010

Grossman, P. (1990). *The making of a teacher*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hewson, P. W., & Hewson, M. G. (1988). An appropriate conception of teaching science: A view from studies of science learning. *Science Education, 72*(5), 597-614.

Jordan, K., & Dinh, H. (2012, November). TPACK: Trends in current research. Paper presented at the Australian Computers in Education Conference (ACEC), Perth, Australia.

Keating, T., & Evans, E. (2001, April). Three computers in the back of the classroom:

Pre-service teachers' conceptions of technology integration. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.

Kember, D. (2008, October). Digital world, digital pedagogies: Reframing the learning landscape. Paper presented at the Australian Computers in Education Conference (ACEC), Canberra, Australia.

Koehler, M.J., & Mishra, P. (2008). Introducing TPCK. AACTE committee on innovation and technology (Ed.), *The handbook of technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK) for educators* (pp. 3-29). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Koehler, M., & Mishra, P. (2009). What is technological pedagogical content knowledge? *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 9*(1), 60-70.

Koehler, M., Mishra, P., & Yahya, K. (2004, August). Content, pedagogy, and technology: Testing a model of technology integration. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

Luu, K., & Freeman, J. G. (2011). An analysis of the relationship between information

and communication technology (ICT) and scientific literacy in Canada and Australia. *Computers and Education, 56*(4), 1072-1082.

Margerum-Lays, J., & Marx, R. W. (2003). Teacher knowledge of educational technology: A case study of student/mentor teacher pairs. In Y. Zhao (Ed.), *What should teachers know about technology? Perspectives and practices* (pp. 123-159). Greenwich, CO: Information Age Publishing.

Miller, S. M. (2008). Teacher learning for new times: Repurposing new multimodal literacies and digital video composing for schools. In J. Flood, S. B. Heath, & D. Lapp (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching literacy through the communicative and visual arts*. New York: International Reading Association/ Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. (2005). *Educational technology by design: Results from a survey assessing its effectiveness.* In C. Crawford, C. Roger, I. Gibson, K. McFerrin, J. Price, R. Weber,& D. A. Willis (Eds.), *Proceedings of the society for information technology & teacher education international conference* (pp. 1-7). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.

Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(6), 1017-1054. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9620.2006.00684.x

Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. (2007). *Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPCK): Confronting the wicked problems of teaching with technology*. In R. Carlsen, K. McFerrin, J. Price, R. Weber, & D. A. Willis (Eds.), *Proceedings of the society for information technology & teacher education international conference* (pp. 2214-2226). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.

Murray, F. B. (1996). *The teacher educator's handbook: Building a knowledge base for the preparation of teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Niess, M. L. (2005). Preparing teachers to teach science and mathematics with technology: Developing a technology pedagogical content knowledge. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(5), 509-523. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2005.03.006

Schmidt, D., Baran, E., Thompson, A., Mishra, P., Koehler, M., & Shin, T. (2009). *Examining pre-service teachers' development of technological pedagogical content knowledge in an introductory instructional technology course*. In G. Ian, W. Roberta, M. Karen, C. Roger, & W. D. Anna (Eds.), *Proceedings of the society for information technology & teacher education international conference 2009* (pp. 4145-4151). Chesapeake, VA: AACE.

Segall, A. (2004). Revisiting pedagogical content knowledge: The pedagogy of content/the content of pedagogy. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 20*(5), 489-504.

Shulman. L. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in leaching. *Educational Researcher, 15*(2), 4-14.

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*(1), 1-22.

Wilson, S., Shulman, L., & Richert, A. (1987). 150 different ways of knowing: Representations of knowledge in teaching. In J. Calderhead (Ed.), *Exploring teachers' thinking* (pp. 104-123). London: Cassell.

AN ANALYSIS OF CAMPAIGN SLOGANS OF DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS FROM THE STYLISTIC, LEXICAL AND SYNTACTIC PERSPECTIVES

Monireh Abolghasem
Allameh Tabataba'i University
Postal addresses: Number 59, Gonabad Street, Kokab street, Sattarkhan street, Tehran, Iran
monireh.abolghasem@gmail.com

Farideh Hosseinzadeh Nikouie
Allameh Tabataba'i University
Postal addresses: Number 2, Naser Alley, Patris street, Tehran, Iran
fhosseinzadeh20@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
POLITICAL DISCOURSE HAS UNIQUE PROPERTIES. ONE OF THESE PROPERTIES IS THE USE OF METAPHOR. METAPHOR IS A FIGURE OF SPEECH IN WHICH A WORD OR PHRASE THAT USUALLY MEANS SOMETHING IS USED TO MEAN ANOTHER THING. MANY STUDIES HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED ON THE USE OF METAPHOR IN POLITICAL DEBATES. HOWEVER, NO STUDY FOCUSED ON THE APPLICATION OF METAPHOR IN ELECTORAL SLOGANS. THE PRESENT STUDY INVESTIGATES THE USE OF METAPHOR IN CAMPAIGN SLOGANS OF BARACK OBAMA AND JOHN MCCAIN AS REPRESENTATIVES OF DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS IN 2008. THE MOST FREQUENTLY USED WORDS AND GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS ARE DEALT WITH, AS WELL. THE DATA ARE CORPUS BASED. THEY ARE PRESIDENTIAL SLOGANS OF THE TWO PARTIES OBTAINED FROM THE INTERNET, ELECTORAL POSTERS AND PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES. TO ANALYZE THE DATA, TWO MODELS OF METAPHORS ARE USED. THE FIRST ONE IS THE METAPHORICAL FRAMING MODEL DEVELOPED BY LAKOFF (1993); LAKOFF & JOHNSON (1980). THIS MODEL IS INSPIRED BY THEORY AND RESEARCH APPEARING IN PSYCHOLOGY, POLITICAL SCIENCE, AND COMMUNICATION. AND THE SECOND MODEL IS SF/NP MODEL DESIGNED BY LAKOFF (1996). THIS MODEL IS BASED ON THE MORAL PRINCIPLES AND CONSEQUENTLY, POLITICAL STANDS OF POLITICIANS. THE FREQUENCY ACCOUNT IS UTILIZED IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE MOST FREQUENT WORDS AND GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS IN THE SLOGANS. THE DESIGN OF STUDY IS QUALITATIVE. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY REVEALED THAT ACCORDING TO THE FIRST MODEL DEMOCRATS USED MORE METAPHORIC SLOGANS THAN REPUBLICANS. AND ACCORDING TO THE SF/NP MODEL DEMOCRATS USE NURTURING MODEL AND REPUBLICANS USE STRICT FATHER MODEL. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY HELPS THE POLITICAL AUDIENCE TO FOCUS MORE ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE POLITICIANS AND ALSO CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE STUDENTS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND MOTIVATE THEM TO INVESTIGATE MORE ON THE ISSUE AT HAND.
KEY WORDS: POLITICAL DISCOURSE, SLOGAN, FIGURATIVE SPEECH, METAPHOR.

1. Introduction

Political discourse deals with the discourse which is used in politicians' speech and texts. An outstanding example of political discourse is slogans. Slogans play a crucial role in the society. They can create a new viewpoint or even change the public perspectives. They may vary from the written to the chanted and the vulgar. They are short, in-depth and influential phrases which affect the audiences' views. They give direction to the public thoughts. Presidential slogans are the most controversial political slogans. Political slogans are the key elements of a campaign. They link the politician words to social or individual action (Denton and Robert, 1980). Political slogans are communicative devices that politicians use to transfer their standpoints. A campaign slogan describes what a campaign is all about and what it intends to do.

Individuals make use of language to inform others and express them. However, language is not always applied directly and it is not always comprehended literally. Figurative speech, as a universal device employed in all languages, refers to "the use of language in a way which transcends its literal interpretation". One type of figurative speech is metaphor. As Johansen (2007: 4) states metaphors are "fundamental structures of reasoning that the mind utilizes in order to make sense of the more complicated aspects of our existence". People use metaphors to state their intentions indirectly. Politicians apply metaphors as well. Metaphor is used in their speech, debates and campaign slogans. Many studies have been conducted with respect to the use of metaphor in political debates. However, the number of researches about the application of metaphor in campaign slogans is handful. The present study examines metaphors used by democrats and republicans in 2008 presidential election in US. It also deals with the pattern of grammatical structures which are utilized by Obama and McCain. The study also intends to see whether there is a difference between the two parties regarding the use of keywords in their slogans. The study has a significant role in making the election voter familiar with the real meaning of words and concepts in the slogans stated by candidates.

2. Literature Review

Political discourse represents different types of figurative speech. One influential type of such figures is metaphor. Metaphor is "a language which doesn't mean what it says" (Hawkes, 1980 as cited in Allaha & Allaha, 2010: 43). On the other hand, the candidates who want to run for presidential office compete with each other. They make use of different strategies to win the contest. One of these strategies is to play with words and manifest their views and perspectives through the words. To do so, politicians employ metaphor to refer to what they intend, however, at first glance the intention is not clear.

2.1. Previous Studies

Many studies have been done regarding the use of metaphor in political discourse. Some of them focused on the analysis of campaign manifestos. Johansen (2007) conducted a study on the use of metaphor in 1997 electoral manifestos of the Labor and Conservative parties. He analyzed some words which are considered as a metaphor in political context. One of the words he focused on was "Britain". Some examples of sentences including the word are as follow: (C stands for Conservatives and L for Liberals).

1. C. Britain <u>helped</u> to secure it.

2. C. Britain is now <u>enjoying</u> the longest period of stable prices for almost fifty years.

3. C. The only way Britain will be able to <u>compete</u> and <u>win</u> in world markets is by sticking to the Conservative policies that are delivering success.

4. C. But if Britain <u>signed up</u> to the Social Chapter it would be used to impose that model on us - destroying British jobs.

5. L. Britain <u>can do better.</u>

6. L. The country <u>takes pride</u> in their professionalism and courage.

7. L. Labor wants Britain to be <u>respected</u> in the world for the <u>integrity</u> with which it <u>conducts</u> its foreign relations.

8. L. With a new Labor government, Britain will be <u>strong</u> in defense; <u>resolute</u> in <u>standing up</u> for its <u>own interests</u>; an <u>advocate</u> of human rights and democracy over the world; a <u>reliable</u> and <u>powerfully</u> in the international institutions of which we are a member; and will be a <u>leader</u> in Europe.

Johansen figured out that some human qualities are attributed to Britain. The qualities are both physical and emotional such as help, stand up and write for physical qualities and enjoy, interest and take pride for emotional ones. He found that both parties utilized personification when referring to Britain. The difference between the two was that the Conservatives applied the personification 18 times, while the number for Labor was15 times. He also analyzed the use of the word "government" in the manifestos of the two parties. Some examples include:

1. C. Although governments <u>cannot create jobs</u>, they can <u>help people</u> train and find work.
2. C. The next Conservative government <u>intends</u> to reform the tax system so that it gives substantially more help to families.
3. L. But by spending wisely and taxing fairly, government can <u>help tackle the problem.</u>
4. L. A new Labor government will <u>build</u> a strong defense against these threats.

Here the concept government is considered as a person. It manifests a group of individuals who act as one person. Twenty six instances were obtained from the two parties. The parties used an equal number of conceptual metaphors for government.

Some studies have dealt with the application of metaphorical expressions in the speech of presidential candidates after they get elected for presidential office. In his study, Allaha & Allaha (2010) elaborated on the use of metaphor in Barrack Obama's inaugural speech in 2009. After examining all sentences, he analyzes 23 sentences which contain metaphor in Barrack Obama's inaugural speech text. These sentences had been analyzed by using George Lakoff's theory of conceptual Metaphor. In his analysis eight most outstanding conceptual mapping of metaphor can be found:

1. Change are movement
2. States are locations
3. States is a motion over a landscape
4. Politics is fight/war
5. Actions are transfer
6. Politics is a journey
7. More is up; less is down
8. Achieving a purpose is agriculture

He analyzed all of them, but because of the length of his work the present study cannot deal with all of them. Therefore, the data related to the first conceptual mapping of metaphor is given as an example.

Change are movement: In general there are two metaphorical data in Obama's inaugural speech which shows the pattern of *Change are movement*: First, 44 Americans have now taken the presidential oath. The words have been spoken during rising tides of prosperity and the still waters of peace. Second, the question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works – whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end.

In the metaphorical expression (1) the part which acts as source domain is the phrase "rising tides" and "still waters" whereas the target domain is the words "prosperity" and "peace". As it can be seen on the phrases of "rising tides of prosperity" and "the still waters of peace" that in here, movement-either self-propelled or otherwise-can involve a change of location or stationary (e.g. shaking). If it involves a change of location, it can be associated with the words like: forward, backward, upward, or downward directions. So, the rising tide of prosperity can be constructed as the state of prosperity has become more than before, while peace has not undergone change (still). Besides, the movements here can also be specified as *flow of natural force* ("the rising tides") and *substance* ("still waters"). In the metaphorical expression (2) the part which acts as source domain is the phrase "We intend to move forward" and "programs will end" whereas the target domain is the ideas of US government plan to provide job for jobseekers and better social warranty. In both metaphorical expressions, Obama wants to tell us that all presidents of America since George

Washington until his period had taken the presidential oath and strived hard to develop America. All of their effort has the aim of raising economic development and prosperity. All of these can be achieved if there is a good political support from his people. In conclusion, Allaha & Allaha discovered that Obama has effectively used metaphorical expressions in order to convince the people about his future plans. He addressed the issue of economic crisis and as a result loss of national self-confidence. He has used the domain of "Movement" in explaining "Change", the domain of "Location" over "States", the domain of "Motion Over a Landscape" used to elaborate "States", the domain of "War/Fight" had been used to describe "Politics", the domain of "Transfer" in explaining "Actions", the domain of "Journey" in describing "Politics" and the domain of "Agriculture" had been used in describing "Achieving a Purpose".

Many studies accentuated on the use of metaphor in political debates. In his study, Cienki (2004) investigated the use of metaphorical expressions in the language of American politicians. The 2000 pre-election debates between George W Bush as the Republican candidate and Al Gore as the Democratic candidate was examined by him. He made use of Lakoff's year SF/NP Model to analyze the data. "SF or Strict Father Model manifests a family with a hierarchical power structure such as the father that is the main authority figure whom the wife and children obey. NP or Nurturant Parent Model involves a shared, horizontal power structure in which the members of the family work together as a group" (Lakoff, 1996/2002, as cited in Cienki 2005: 3). Since the present study applies the model, it will be explained more in section 2.1. In 100 pages of transcripts, Cienki found 48expressions of metaphorical language that reflected the conceptual metaphors of the SF and NP models (Cienki 2004: 414). As Cienki expected, Bush used more SF metaphorical expression (22 to Gore's 5) and Gore's utilized more direct expressions of NP (14 to Bush's 7). Cienki explained the cause of such results referring to Lakoff's (2002: 31) perspective that indicates Conservatives possess a deeper worldview than Liberals, Conservatives connect more relationship between their politics and their view of family life and morality and are more aware of that, but Liberals are less aware of this. This is suggested as an explanation of Bush' higher ratio (3:2) of SF expressions compared to Gore's use of NP expressions (2004: 411, as cited in Cienki, 2005)

Few studies investigated the use of most frequent words and grammatical patters in political discourse. In a study conducted by Horváth (2010), the inaugural address of Obama was analyzed. Horváth, in his article, examined the persuasive strategies of President Obama's public speaking in 2008. In fact, he analyzed the oral discourse of the president. Horváth analyzed both frequently used words and connotations in Obama's speech. His work yielded the following results.

Keyword Density Report For President Obama's Inaugural Address

Words

Keyword	Repeats	Density
Nation	12	0.50%
New	11	0.46%
America	9	0.37%
Today	7	0.29%
People	7	0.29%
Less	7	0.29%
World	7	0.29%
Let	7	0.29%
Time	6	0.25%
Work	6	0.25%

Phrases

Keyword	Repeats	Density
a new	7	0.58%
our nation	5	0.42%
the world	5	0.42%
no less	4	0.33%

men and	4	0.33%
and women	4	0.33%
our common	4	0.33%
of peace	3	0.25%
the people	3	0.25%
that America	3	0.25%

The results of the keyword analysis represented that the words "nation", "new" and "America", and the phrases "a new", "our nation", and "the world" are the most frequent words used in Obama's speech.

In some studies the political discourse was analyzed in terms of type of the sentences. The complexity and length of sentences were the issues dealt with in such studies. Wang (2010) based on critical discourse analysis theory and Systematic Functional Linguistics, analyzed Barack Obama's presidential speeches. Wang analyzed Obama's victory Speech on November 4, 2008 and his inaugural address on January 20, 2009. The total words of first speech were 2057, including 110 sentences. The average length of words was 4.247 and sentence mean length was 18.7. The second speech was as the same, the total words were 2396, with an average length of 4.458. And the number of sentences was 112 with an average length of 21.39. Therefore, the two sample speeches mainly used simple words and short sentences. The language was easy and colloquial. He analyzed modal verbs used in his speech. Modal verbs were used to convey the addresser's attitudes and judgment, with an average of 0.8% in the whole speeches. Regarding the tense, simple present was most frequently used in the speeches, the average percentage being 64.45%. Simple past ranked second with an average percentage of 14.9% and was followed by simple future with an average percentage of 10.8%. Personal pronouns were analyzed, too. The first person was used the most. For example, the use of the first person plural pronoun "we" was to shorten the distance between the speaker and the audience. According to statistics, the pronoun we (us) was used in Obama's victory speech and inaugural Address, 60 and 85 times, respectively and the pronoun I (me) was used 35 and 3 times.

2.2. Theoretical Model

The present study makes use of two models in order to analyze the slogans of Democrats and Republicans in 2008. The first model is The Metaphorical Framing Model. This Model is inspired by theory and research appearing in psychology, communication and political science.

To be comprehensive, The Metaphorical Framing Model integrates the implications of these various theoretical approaches.

Below, each stage of the Metaphorical Framing Model is described in more detail.

"In accordance with the implications of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the Metaphorical Framing Model presumes that verbal statements (e.g., "the allied force included special teams") activate an underlying metaphor in the mind of the message recipient (e.g., "war is a football game"). The underlying conceptual metaphor can be activated by a diverse set of surface metaphorical utterances, and functions as the root origin of a diverse set of cognitive entailments (e.g., "civilians are merely spectators," "remain loyal to your team!"). For these reasons, the Metaphorical Framing Model uses the term "root metaphor" to identify the underlying conceptual metaphor that is activated. The root metaphor contains a target, source, and a linkage that implies the target is the source. For example, the root metaphor "Operation Desert Storm is a football game" contains "Operation Desert Storm" as the target (topic), "football game" as the source (vehicle), and "is a" as the linkage between the target and source. According to the Metaphorical Framing Model, activation of the root metaphor can occur in at least five different ways. First, it is possible that the root metaphor is directly and explicitly stated in a communication. For example, a political commentator might argue that "The presidential campaign is a beauty contest" and provide specific examples of campaign events that support this cynical construal of a presidential contest. Explicit metaphorical expressions of this nature significantly influence the message recipient's reasoning regarding social and political issues.

Often, however, a root metaphor is activated in the listener's mind even when the communication fails to contain any direct or explicit mention of the root metaphor. This more implicit avenue of

activation emerges when a communication contains "surface utterances" that imply (but do not directly state) the root metaphor. For example, a description of Operation Desert Storm might indicate that the allied attack featured a "ground game" as well as the employment of "special teams" to execute a successful "end sweep" strategy (Beer & de Landtsheer, 2004). Although not explicitly stated, the root metaphor "Operation Desert Storm is a football game" is clearly implied by this description.

A third avenue of activation is even more subtle (or implicit) than the one just described. In this case, a root metaphor is activated by incidental, surface metaphorical utterances that are not even part of a communication regarding the specific target of evaluation. Evidence for this process is provided by, Sullivan, Greenberg and Landau (2009). Specifically, American participants were initially exposed to information that increased or decreased motivation to avoid bodily contamination. Next, some participants read an essay description of the United States containing surface metaphorical expressions that compared the United States to a physical body. Importantly, none of this information specifically pertained to immigration (the target of valuation). Nevertheless, this information influenced attitudes toward immigration. Namely, increased motivation to avoid bodily contamination predicted more negative attitudes toward immigration and immigrants. For these participants, the root metaphor "my country is a body" was incidentally activated by the essay.

A fourth avenue of activation is potentially the most subtle of all. In this case, the context incidentally primes the metaphor vehicle (source), without implying or mentioning a link between the source and target. When subsequently considering the target, however, the individual spontaneously links the target to the recently activated source, thereby producing activation of the metaphor. Effects of this nature can emerge when the metaphor source is activated by a physical cue. For example, when holding a warm (as opposed to cold) cup of coffee, participants are more likely to rate a target person as "warm" (Williams & Bargh, 2008). In this case, the physical cue does not state or imply the root metaphor (i.e., "interpersonal warmth is physical warmth"). Nevertheless, this root metaphor is spontaneously activated when participants rate the target person.

The previously described avenues of metaphor activation involve situational cues (e.g., physical cues, surface metaphorical utterances) that prime a metaphor when an individual thinks about the target. A fifth avenue of metaphor activation involves individual differences in chronic accessibility. From this perspective, the accessibility of a metaphor is significantly influenced by chronic predispositions (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). For example, some individuals might chronically construe public policy regarding drug abuse in terms of a "war on drugs." Other individuals might chronically construe this public policy in terms of a "medical epidemic." Individual differences of this nature are presumably associated with a variety of political predispositions (e.g., ideology, partisanship), worldviews (e.g., social dominance orientation), personality characteristics (e.g. authoritarianism), values (e.g., egalitarianism, freedom), and cultural orientations (e.g., individualism, collectivism, modernity). In general, all these categories should be dealt with in order to analyze political discourse" (Ottati et al., 2013).
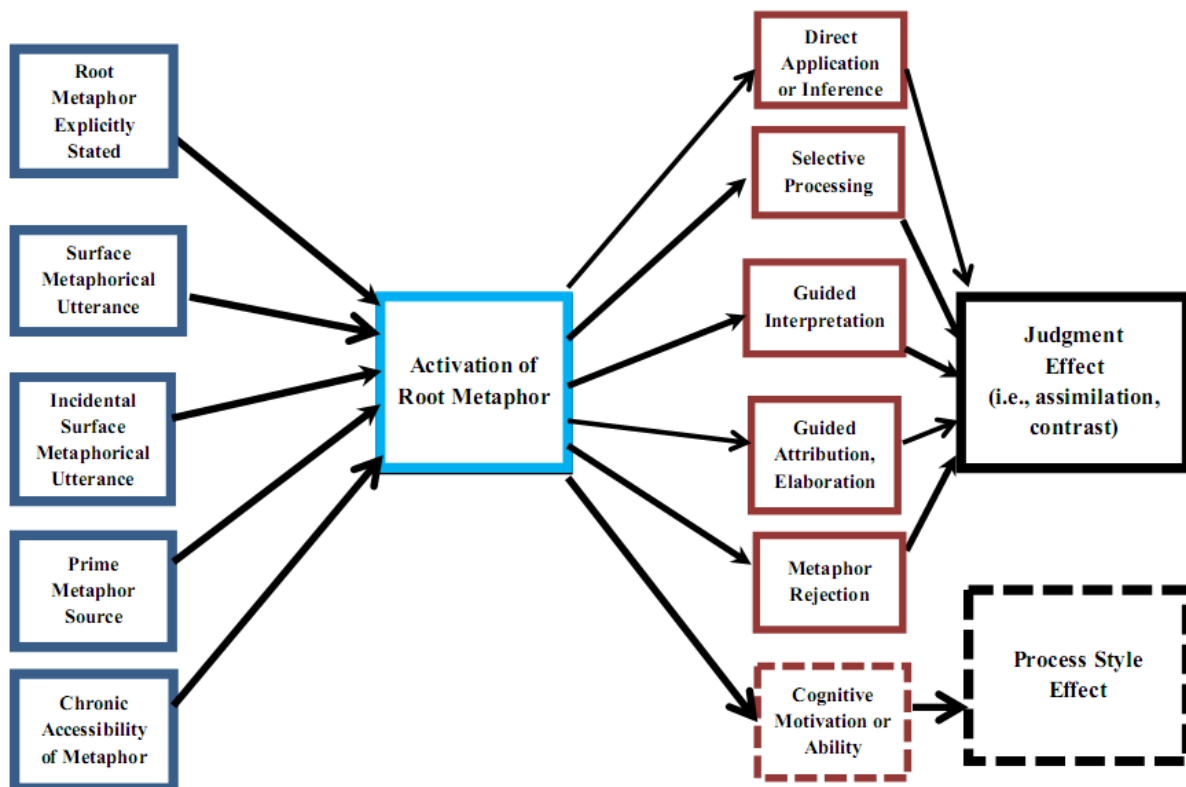
Figure 1 The Metaphorical Framing Model

The second model of metaphor is SF/NP model or Strict Father/Nurturant Parent model which is developed by Lakoff (2002). This model is based on the moral principles and consequently, political stands of politicians. Lakoff's explains these two models as the following.

The Strict Father Model:

This model posits a traditional nuclear family, with the father having primary responsibility for supporting and protecting the family as well as the authority to set overall policy, to set strict rules for the behavior of children, and to enforce the rules. The mother has the day-to-day responsibility for the care of the house, raising the children, and upholding the father's authority. Children must respect and obey their parents; by doing so they build character, that is, self-discipline and self-reliance. Once children are mature, they are on their own and must depend on their acquired self-discipline to survive. Their self-reliance gives them authority over their own destinies, and parents are not to meddle in their lives.

The Nurturant Parent Model:

Love, empathy, and nurturance are primary, and children become responsible, self-disciplined and self-reliant through being cared for and respected, both in their family and in their community. Support and protection are part of nurturance, and they require strength and courage on the part of their parents. The obedience of children comes out of their love and respect for their parents and their community, not out of fear of punishment. The principal goal of nurturance is for children to be fulfilled and happy in their lives and caring with their parents (Lakoff, 2002 as cited in Johansen, 2007).

The political discourse used by different politicians has different qualities. These qualities may distinguish various parties. One of such qualities is metaphor. This study intends to examine the use of metaphor in campaign slogans of Democrats and Republicans in 2008. It also investigates the most frequent keywords and grammatical patterns utilized by Barack Obama and John McCain who are representative of Democrats and Republicans, respectively.

Research questions are as follow:

1. Is there any specific metaphorical model in the slogans used by Democrats and Republicans in 2008?
2. If so, what is the significant difference between the metaphorical models used by them?
3. What is the difference between the pattern of grammatical structure used in campaign slogans of Democrats and Republicans in 2008?
4. What is the difference between the keywords used in campaign slogans of Democrats and Republicans in 2008?

The study provides a better knowledge of metaphors used by Democrats and Republicans. On one hand, it helps the political audience to focus more on the language of the politicians. Having some information about metaphor and its analysis provides them with the opportunity to figure out the real meaning of words which are utilized in politicians' slogans and makes them transcend the surface interpretation of concepts. On the other hand, the results of the study can contribute the students of political science and motivate them to investigate more on the issue at hand.

3. Method

3.1. Corpus

The corpus of this study is based on the presidential slogans of Democrats and Republicans in 2008. These slogans were collected from internet, electoral posters and presidential speeches. They are available in Lee, 2012; Dockterman, 2012; Rozina & Karapetjana, 2009; Windt JR, 1984; Deželan & Maksuti, 2009; Van Dijk, 1997, 2006; Van Leeuwen, 2012; Wan, 2010) and in *www.ithaca.edu/.../posters...election.../obama_and...McCain*

3.2. Data analysis

In order to analyze the data, two models of metaphor have been used. The first model was The Metaphorical Framing Model developed by Lakoff et al. (1993), and the second model is SF/NP model designed by Lakoff (1996). All the slogans were read carefully by the researchers through the lens of first and second model. Also the frequency count was utilized as to the most frequent words and grammatical patterns be obtained.

4. Results

Regarding the first model of metaphor, Activation of the Root Metaphor, almost 28 percent of Obama's slogans have metaphor while almost 15 percent of the other party's slogans, Republicans, have metaphor. Obama's slogans which have metaphor are:

"*Stand for change*"

"*A leader who can deliver change*"

"*Organize for change*"

"*Obama momma*"

"*My president is black*"

"*Eight [years] is enough*"

In contrast only one of the slogans of McCain has metaphor:

"*Time for a real hero*"

In respect with the second model of metaphor that is, Strict Father Model and Nurturant Parent Model, all the slogans were analyzed. Among those, one of Obama's slogans deals with the model. The slogan ''*Obama momma*'' represents the Nurturant Parent Model. In this metaphor Obama is seen as a parent and American people are seen as the children. In other words, Obama plays the role a mother. He like a mother takes care of his children, supports them and when needed protects them. Therefore, it can be said that democrats make use of Nurturant Model. In his slogans, McCain mainly makes use of phrases than full sentences. The phrases are not explicitly imperative, but they seem imperative implicitly and indirectly. These include: ''*Ready from day one*'' and ''*time for a real hero*''. In these slogans, McCain is somehow ordering some tasks. In other words, he is applying his power and as a result playing the role of an authority. In comparison, Obama asks for the peoples' help and in some cases, he utilizes the pronoun ''*we*'' to reduce his authority. Therefore, Republicans use the Strict Father Model.

Regarding the third question, the most frequently used grammatical pattern in the democrats in 2008 was full sentence, while the republicans only made use of phrases. Democrats applied 14 full

sentences and 8 phrases out of 22 slogans. In other words, they used full sentences 64% and phrases 36%. Democrats used phrases for 100%.

Regarding the fourth question, that is the most frequently used words in Democrats and Republicans' slogans in 2008, the keywords used in Obama's campaign slogan in 2008 included ''*change*'', ''*hope*'', ''*America*'', ''*women*'', ''*black*'', ''*future*'' and ''*believe*''. Obama utilized ''*change*'' in 50% of his slogans. In other words, he applied ''*change*'' 11 times out 22 slogans. This represents the significance of this word to democrats. In the case of McCain campaign slogans, the keywords were ''*reform*'', ''*prosperity*'', ''*peace*'', ''*country*'' and *"believe"*.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

For answering the first question, the researchers use the Activation of the Root Metaphor model to analyze the slogans of Democrats and Republicans. According to this model some slogans of Obama have made use of metaphor to attract the people's attention.

The slogan *"Stand for change"* could be under the second branch of the model. Here, change is like a revolution that to be achieved, people should stand and be determined. The slogan invites others to insist on their great goal.

The next slogan "*Organize for change*" is the same as the previous one but it invites people to unity and solidarity to accomplish the change and the better situation in the country.

In the slogan "*A leader who can deliver change*" again *"change"* is considered as a revolution which needs a leader to guide and organize others for reaching their goal.

The slogan *"Obama momma"* could be under the first branch of the mentioned model because the metaphor is explicitly stated in the slogan. Here, Obama is seen as a mother for people and America. Sympathy is used impliedly as a common feature of the Obama and mother to get the attention of the people and make them trust him.

Other slogan "*My president is black*" could be included in the fifth branch of mentioned model. The word *"black"* goes back to the history of segregation of black and white. The slogan wants to remind people Obama is black and he wants to foster justice and equality.

The last slogan of Obama that has metaphor is "*Eight [years] is enough*". This slogan, the same as the previous slogan is under the last branch of the model. It mentions to the eight years of Bush presidency time and its difficulties. He wants people to vote him to make change in the country.

According to this model only one slogan of McCain has metaphor. The slogan *"Time for a real hero"* is under the second branch of the model. McCain sees himself as a hero who can save the country and people and create better conditions.

The slogans of democrats and republicans in 2008 were examines by the use of Strict Father /Nurturant Parent Model. The slogan "Obama momma" was utilizes by Obama. In this metaphor, Obama plays the role of a parent and American community plays the role of his children. Obama is considered as a mother in particular. He is the mother of all American people. He likes his children, takes care of them, and expresses his empathy with them when they are in trouble. Like a mother, he looks at all his children the same. To a mother, a wrongdoer makes no difference with an obedient child. Obama pays attention to all people including his antagonists and protagonists equally. In fact, he is inviting them to the competition to vote for him. As a result, Obama used Nurturant Parent Model in his slogan. The slogans ''*Ready from day one*'' and ''*Time for a real hero*'' are applied by McCain. In these slogans McCain is commanding some sort of actions. He is treating as an authority that can order others and monitor them. He as a strict parent expects his children to obey him. Therefore, the republicans made use of Strict Father Model. Regarding the use of most frequent grammatical pattern, democrats applied 14 full sentences and 8 phrases out of 22 slogans. In other words, they used full sentences 64% and phrases 36%. Republicans used phrases for 100%. Regarding the most frequently used words in democrats and republicans in 2008, Obama utilized ''*change*'' in 50% of his slogans. In other words, he applied ''*change*'' 11 times out 22 slogans. This represents the importance of this word to democrats. He applied the word ''*change*'' to inform people about his future plans, which are change in politics, policy, economy and social community issues. McCain campaign used the keywords ''*reform*'', ''*prosperity*'', ''*peace*'', ''*believe*'' and ''*country*''. He makes use of ''*believe*''. This slogan is used by Obama referring to a change, while McCain applies that

referring to himself. In fact, he is pushing people to trust him. In another slogan he utilizes the keyword ''*country*'' followed by ''*first*''. Here, he considers country that is America in the first priority. He intends to represent his devotion to America. On the other hand, he is referring to the Iraq war and America presence in Iraq. In order to save his country and keep it in power priority, McCain does his best. He ignores a country like Iraq to focus on his country first.

As a whole Democrat party uses more metaphorical language and Nurturant model for their slogans but Republicans use less metaphor in their slogans and use strict father model.

The study focuses on the use of metaphor, the most frequent words and grammatical patterns in electoral slogans of Barack Obama and John McCain as representatives of Democrats and Republicans in 2008. Therefore, the campaign slogans of these two parties in 2008 are dealt with. The results of the study cannot be generalized to other parties, other years or any other variable. More studies should be conducted on the use of metaphor in political discourse. However, the future studies should look for the more data, because the more data is collected, the better results can be achieved.

Reference

Allaha, H. and Allaha, D. B. (2010). The use of metaphor in Barack Obama's inauguration speech. Available: http://abudira.wordpress.com/2010/03/03/the-use-of-metaphor-in barackobama%E2%80%99s-inauguration-speech/

Beer, F.A, & De Landtsheer, C. (Eds.). (2004). *Metaphorical world politics. rhetorics of democracy, war and globalisation.* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Cienki, A. (2004). Bush's and Gore's language and gestures in the 2000 US presidential debates: A test case for two models of metaphors. *Journal of language and politics* 3: 409-440

Cienki, A. (2005). Researching conceptual metaphors that underlie political discourse. ECPR Workshop on Metaphor in Political Science. http: // eis. bris. ac. uk/ ~potfc/ Greneda/ Papers/ Cienki.pdf

Denton, JR. and Robert, E. (1980). The rhetorical functions of slogans: Classifications and characteristics. *Communication Quarterly*: 28 (2), 10-18.

Deželan, T. and Maksuti, A. (2009). Slovenian election posters as a medium of political communication: An informative or persuasive campaign tool?. *Communication, Politics & Culture*, 45: 140-159.

Dockterman, E. (2012). Grammar Geeks throw a fit over Obama's 'forward.' http://www.presidentmash.com

Horváth, J. (2010). Critical discourse analysis of Obama's political discourse, [PDF] Available online at www.pulib.sk/elpub2/FF/Ferencik2/pdf_doc/6.pdf (Accessed 27/04/2012).

Johansen, T. A. B. (2007). The use of political metaphors in the conservative and labor parties. Available: http://munin.uit.no/handle/10037/1262

Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought* (pp. 202-251). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lee, C. E. (2012). Punctuation nerds stopped by Obama slogan, 'forward'. *The Wall Street Journal,* Updated July 30, 2012 11:16 p.m. ET

Ottati, V. C., Renstrom, R. A., and Price, E. (2013). The metaphorical framing model: Political communication and public opinion. In M. Landau, M. Robinson, & B. Meier (Eds.), The power of metaphor: Examining its influence on social life. Washington, DC: APA Press

Political Slogan and Campaign Slogan *Ideas - SignOutfitters.com*

Risdianto, F. (2013). The use of metaphor in Barack Obama's inauguration speech. *Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature,* 9 (1), 43-57

Rozina, G. and Karapetjana, I. (2009). The use of language in political rhetoric: linguistic manipulation. *SDÜ Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 19, 111-122

Sullivan, D., Greenberg, J. and Landau, M. J. (2009). Toward understanding of two films from the dark side: Utilizing terror management theory to analyze rosemary's baby and straw dogs. *Journal of Popular Film and Television,*189-198

van Dijk, T. A. (1997). What is political discourse analysis? In J. Blommaert and C. Bulcaen (eds.), *Political Linguistics*. Amsterdam, Benjamins: 11-52

van Dijk, T. A. (2006). Politics, ideology, and discourse. *Journal of Elsevier.*

Van Leeuwen, M. (2012). Rhetorical effects of grammar. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines,* 5 (2): 88–101

Wan, J. (2010). A critical discourse analysis of Barack Obama's speeches. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research,* 1 (3): 254-261

Williams, L. E. and Bargh, J. A (2008). Keeping one's distance the influence of spatial distance cues on affect and evaluation. *Psychological Science,* 19 (3): 302-308

Windt JR, T.O. (1984). Presidential rhetoric: Definition of a field of study. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 16 (1), 102-116

Appendix
Campaign Slogans of Barack Obama (2008)
1."Yes We Can"
2. "Hope"
3. "Change" versus "More of the same"
4. "Vote for change"
5. "Change we can believe in"
6. "Our time for change "
7. "It's about time. It's about change"
8. "Stand for change"
9. "Organize for change"
10. "We are the change we've been looking for. Change can't happen without you. "
11. "I'm asking you to believe. Not just in my ability to bring about real change in Washington. I'm asking you to believe in yours."
12. "A leader who can deliver change"
13. "Change in America doesn't start from the top down. It starts from the bottom up."
14. "Obama momma"
15. "Women for obama"
16. "Obama for America"
17. "A new beginning"
18. "Help me take back America "
19. "My president is black"
20. "Eight [years] is enough"
21. "America, we cannot turn back. We cannot walk alone."
22. "We must pledge once more to walk into the future."
Campaign Slogans of McCain Slogans (2008)
1. "Reform, prosperity, peace"
2. "A cause greater than self"
3. "Country first"
4. "A leader you can believe in"
5. "Straight talker"
6. "Ready from day one"
7. "Time for a real hero"

COMPARING THE EFFECTS OF INPUT-BASED AND OUTPUT-BASED INSTRUCTION ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' FLUENCY IN EXPOSITORY WRITING

Marjan Ahanian
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

Ali Gholami Mehrdad
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

Lotfollah Karimi
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT STUDY WAS AN ATTEMPT TO COMPARE THE EFFECTS OF INPUT-BASED AND OUTPUT-BASED INSTRUCTION ON IRANIAN EFL (ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE) LEARNER'S FLUENCY IN EXPOSITORY WRITING. THE SAMPLE OF THE PRESENT STUDY CONSISTED OF 40 FEMALE EFL LEARNERS IN TWO CLASSES. EACH CLASS HAD 20 LEARNERS AND THE AVERAGE AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS WAS 19 THAT ALL OF WHOM AT AN INTERMEDIATE LEVEL. THE PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST (PET) WAS USED AS PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST. AFTER A PRE-TEST WAS DONE IN THE FIRST SESSION, LEARNERS WENT THROUGH 12 SESSIONS OF INSTRUCTION ON INPUT AND OUTPUT PRACTICE. THIS WAY FOLLOWED BY A POST-TEST IN WHICH THEY HAD BEEN ASKED IN THE LAST SESSION. IN THE INPUT-BASED INSTRUCTION, THE STUDENTS WERE NOT REQUIRED TO WRITE ANYTHING WHEREAS IN OUTPUT-BASED APPROACH, THE STUDENTS WERE REQUIRED TO WRITE EXPOSITORY TEXT (WERE REQUIRED TO PRODUCE OUTPUT). AFTER THE TREATMENT, TO CHECK THE MEANINGFULNESS OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS, ANCOVA WAS RUN. THE ANALYSIS OF THE COLLECTED DATA WAS INDICATOR OF THIS POINT THAT THE MEAN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GROUPS (MD= 29.78) WAS SIGNIFICANT AT P< .05, WHICH POINTED TO A BETTER PERFORMANCE OF THE OUTPUT GROUP ON THE POST TEST, IMPLYING THAT OUTPUT INSTRUCTION AND WRITING MORE AND MORE CAN HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON FLUENCY IN WRITING.

KEYWORDS: INPUT-BASED, OUTPUT-BASED, FLUENCY, EXPOSITORY WRITING.

Introduction

As Ellis (2008) maintains, the model of language acquisition that informs mainstream Second Language Acquisition (SLA) identifies three main processes: intake, acquisition, and language production. One of the most important theories about SLA was proposed by Krashen (1985). Krashen's Input Hypothesis is a comparatively comprehensive theory in the field of SLA research, which derives from its earlier version, the Monitor Model. According to Krashen's input hypothesis, SLA takes place when the learner understands input that contains grammatical forms that are at 'i+1' (it is a little more advanced than the current state of the learner's inter-language). Similarly, if the

input is too advanced (highly beyond the learner's current level) for the learner to understand, acquisition will not take place either. For example, if there are more than one hundred new words in a thousand-word passage the learner cannot understand it at all (Krashen, 1985). Krashen (1985) also maintains that comprehensible input is central to all of acquisition, i.e. Second Language (L2) acquisition depends on comprehensible input. He purports that English Language Learners (ELLs) acquire language by hearing and understanding messages that are slightly above their current English language level. In the classroom, then, the teacher's main role is to ensure that learners receive comprehensible input by providing them with listening and reading materials (comprehensible input).

Nobody denies the essential role that input plays in L2 acquisition. Meanwhile, it is widely acknowledged that exposure to input alone, though necessary, may not be enough for learners to reach advanced levels of L2 development. In addition to the role of input, output has also been recognized to play a crucial role in the process of L2 acquisition. In criticism to input hypothesis Swain (1985) proposed output hypothesis. According to Swain, output is the language a learner produces and output hypothesis to increase learner's English proficiency. They need to generate output via speech or writing and receive feedback on the comprehensibility of their output. Swain believed that emphasis on producing output would result in communicating with other students. However, VanPatten and Cadierno (2002) argue that instead of trying to change how learners produce language output, instruction should focus on altering how learners' process input. They claim that instruction that changes the way input is perceived and processed by the learner is more likely to become intake and thus to have an impact on the developing language system. In fact, VanPatten emphasized that "processing instruction cannot be reduced to input comprehension and that traditional instruction cannot be reduced to output production, although these issues have often been conflated" (p 87).

There are conflicting views regarding the primacy of input or output for L2 acquisition. More specifically, there are studies that suggest that the role of output is secondary to the role of input and output merely facilitates access to an already developed L2 system (e.g., Benati, 2001; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; VanPatten & Wong, 2004). These studies provided evidence that learners who received instruction which excludes any kind of output practice performed as well on comprehension and even production tasks as those who had output-based instruction. One form of output–based instruction is the one practiced in traditional audiolingual classrooms in which target structures were practiced devoid of any communicative context through different types of mechanical drills. VanPatten (1993) criticized such traditional practice-oriented instructions not only because of the use of mechanical drills, but also on the ground that they put "the cart before the horse" by asking learners "to produce when the developing system has not yet had the relevant intake data" (p. 436). The debate over the primary role of input and output in L2 development led researchers to compare the effects of different types of input-based and output-based instruction on L2 development. This controversy is on going now and this argument is about which methods are better in SLA (input or output).

Statement of the Problem

The important roles of input and output in second language acquisition and despite the fact that numerous studies have compared the effects of the two instructional options on the acquisition of grammatical features, little research has dealt with writing skill (Collentine 1998; Dekeyser & Sokalski 1996; Erlam 2003 and Nagata 1998). Often, when people think of writing, they think of texts (finished pieces of writing). Understanding what writers do, however, involves thinking not just about what texts look like when they are finished but also about what strategies writers might employ to produce those texts. Knowledge about writing is only complete with understanding the complex of actions in which writers engage as they produce texts. Then how to write and fluent writing is so vital in this topic.

One of the most difficult works teachers deal with, is how to make writing and make it an easy activity for student. Giving students opportunities to produce language leads to greater gains in automaticity and fluency but it is the other hard work in teaching. Many researchers such as

Vanpatten (1993) stated that developing students' fluency in writing in a foreign language is hard because students do not have much chance to use it in their daily lives and it is so difficult to achieve native-like fluency in second language writing. Writing should not be viewed as an activity that happens only within a classroom's walls. Teachers need to support students in the development of writing skills in outside school that is a hard work to do! Levine (1998) maintained that students with writing learning problems, even those who read well, frequently submit written work which is brief and difficult to read. Such students can be victims of misunderstandings, a problem which becomes much more pronounced at the secondary level. Wolf (2002) explained students starting out in the world of academia seemed to be having problems with basic spelling and grammar in writing. Many lack the ability to form a sentence and lack the ability to formulate ideas and to write cohesive texts. Part of the problem was an ever decreasing vocabulary, he suggested, which limited the ability to formulate logical arguments. It is common for students in today's educational system to dislike or avoid the writing process. Many students feel writing takes too long and it seems be a boring work.

So, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' fluency in writing is one of the important issues and this paper tries to investigate its improvement under the effects of different input and output based instruction or which method is better to make students for fluent writing (Input-based or output-based method).

Related Studies

Although not exactly the same studies, there are some specific related experimental findings in this area about comparing between input and output instruction; for instance Izumi (2002) in her paper stated about whether output and input enhancement, in isolation or in combination, can promote noticing and learning of English by adult ESL learners. The results found in favor of output and the lack of any significant impact of visual input enhancement suggested these advantages of output may not be shared by the superficial external manipulation of the target form in the input, which without any additional instructional assistance, may help only with detection of the highlighted form items but does not necessarily engage the learner in future cognitive processing. Without denying the essential role of input in SLA, this experiment provided empirical evidence for a motivated role of output in L2 development. Also Toth (2005) in his article said "CO (communicative output) can better than those of PI (processing instruction), as well as transcript data from each treatment" (p.88). This study has questioned an account of output's role in L2 acquisition that is limited to accuracy and fluency in accessing the implicit system, as well as assertions that system development occurs only via input processing.

Renandya (2005) maintained that "both input- and output- based types of language practice are equally important in language learning. Input-based practice develops learners underlying linguistic system, while output-based practice enables learners to develop skilful use of the language. It should also be clear that a huge amount of practice is needed to develop automaticity in both comprehension (through input- based practice) and production (through output-based practice)"(p.125). After that Morgan-Short (2006) explained in her article about the effects of meaningful input and output on SLA. As pointed out by many researchers (e.g. Gass 1997 & Vanpatten 2002) it is clear that input is essential to SLA. In her study, the MOBI (meaningful output-based instruction) group performed at least as well as PI group (processing instruction). She thus concluded that MOBI can like PI, lead to linguistic development at least when practice is meaningful and leads learners to make form-meaning connections. Her results seem to support the use of meaningful output practice as well as meaningful input-based practice in the L2 classroom environment as a means for building fluency and accuracy.

Erlam (2009) in her article said "There is a value of input-based instruction as an instructional method and there is no greater advantage for structured- input instruction over meaning-oriented, output-based instruction. The overall greater gains made by the output-based group in her study suggest that the meaning-oriented nature of instruction may play a key role in SLA. Recently, Fotheringham (2012) in his article wrote about input vs. output and the importance of language input (listening & reading) vs. language output (speaking & writing). He explained the problem with the whole argument is that input and output are not mutually exclusive components of

language learning and you need both and balanced of them. He said listen first then speak because it is important to get as much listening input as possible. "It is essential that take equal work for your input and output." Start mixing in equal amount of output activities (speaking with friends or writing a blog in the foreign language). And he explained "to become fluent in a language, just consume a balanced diet, rich in listening and speaking with plenty of reading and writing" (p.88).

Moreover, Ehsan rassaei (2012) in his study suggests that both input and output can give rise to the development of L2 knowledge. His results suggest that output-based instruction can be more effective than input-based instruction. "With regards to input-based instruction, the results indicate that exposure to input alone is not enough to promote the development of L2 knowledgTe" (p.15). His findings are compatible with Norris & Ortega (2000) that obtrusive and explicit instruction is more effective than unobtrusive and implicit instruction. "Also with regards to output-based instruction it should be noted that, because producing output as a variable cannot be completely isolated from other variables such as interlocutor's feedback and input, we can't confidently claim that output in and of itself lead to L2 development." The best he can say is that instruction that capitalizes on meaningful output practice is as or even more effective than input-based instruction.

Methodology
Participants
The sample of the present study consisted of 40 female EFL learners in two classes conveniently sampled from among 260 students studying English at Hermes English language institute in Tehran, Iran. The average age of the participants was 19 and all of them were at an intermediate level. They were selected based on the administration of a PET (Preliminary English Test) exam to 40 intermediate EFL learners. They were divided in two groups of 20 and were randomly assigned to two experimental groups.

Instruments
For the purpose of the present study, two different samples of the writing section of Preliminary English Test (PET) were used as pre-test and post-test. The first of these required the participants to write on the topic "I felt nervous when the phone rang." in 20 minutes. The second one asked them to write on "The most important day of my life…" in 20 minutes. The reliability of these tests had been ensured in a pilot study involving 15 EFL students with the same proficiency level. The reliability indexes were 0.79 for the pre-test and 0.82 for the post-test.

Procedure
The study was carried out in the autumn of 2014 in Hermes Language Institute in Tehran for 12 sessions during 4 weeks. All the classes were conducted by the same instructor. After the participants were selected, they were assigned to two experimental groups 20 people each. The actual phase of the study began by the instructor teaching all the participants the structure of a five-paragraph essay to make sure that they all were familiar with the organization of this type of writing. The content used for this introductory phase of the study, was adopted from "Practical Writer with Readings" (Bailey & Powell, 1997). Students in the 2 groups all joined 3 one-and-a-half-hour class sessions during which the instructor introduced the elements of a five paragraph essay by giving them samples of such essays and asking them to write a sample.

In Input-based group teacher used input enhancement and extra texts which some points were bolded and special words were lighted in the whole of text for better learning. Every session students were forced to search a topic on the web or the other sources to find a good example of topic. After that they brought texts in the class and shared with other students to check what it is a usual writing. In the class we didn't have feedbacks to their paragraph or correct their text. In totally input-oriented do not try to produce text of writing. But in output-based group teacher after explained the basic concepts, she asked to students bring a good writing for next session. She completely corrected their tasks and students were obliged to write more and more. In totally this class didn't have extra texts and student were required just produce own sentences and paragraphs.

For measuring fluency in writing, fluency has been examined in different studies by different fluency measures. For example Chandler (2003) measured the time it took for the subjects of his study to write 100 words while Chenowith and Hays (2001) this writing fluency was measured through dividing the number both the pretest and the posttest, which in this case was 20 minutes.

Design

The present work reflects a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test, in which the subjects were conveniently sampled and assigned into two experimental groups.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, the result of pretest and posttest was compared to see whether observation task had any effect on EFL student's fluency in expository writing through output-based instruction or not. The ANCOVA was utilized for measuring the participants' answers statistically.

The data collected from the pre and posttests were checked for their normality at a descriptive and an inferential level as described in table 1.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Pre.Input	20	58.00	164.00	112.3000	30.00193	.095	.512	-.923	.992
Pre.Output	20	60.00	167.00	110.6500	30.65646	.111	.512	-.881	.992
Post.Input	20	83.00	189.00	131.0000	32.21801	.393	.512	-.917	.992
Post.Output	20	100.00	229.00	158.8500	41.57716	.239	.512	-1.478	.992
Valid N (listwise)	20								

Table .1 Descriptive Statistics for the Groups on the Pretest and Posttest

Descriptively the skewness and Kortusis values were checked. As the descriptive statistics in table 4.1 indicate, the values obtained were both within the acceptable range of ± 2 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007) implying that the scores were descriptively normal. However, to further ensure the normality of the data, data screening through the use of inferential statistics was done. These included checking the normal distribution of test scores, homogeneity of error variances, homogeneity of regression slopes, and linearity of slope of regression lines.

Normality of Distribution of Test Scores

Table .2 Kolmogrov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Statistics

Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Statistics

	Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
pretest	Input Group	.097	20	.200*	.971	20	.780
	Output Group	.086	20	.200*	.977	20	.892
posttest	Input Group	.110	20	.200*	.948	20	.333
	Output Group	.157	20	.200*	.916	20	.083

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

As the data in Table 2 show, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-wilk values obtained were all larger than the significance level of 0.05, which pointed to a normal distribution of scores. This normal distribution of test scores is also reflected in the normal distribution curves and box plots for outlier and extreme scores below.

Linearity of Slope of Regression Lines

To check this assumption a grouped scatterplot of the covariate, post-test scores of the dependent variable and independent variable was plotted. As Figure 1 below shows, there was a linear relationship between the dependent variable (scores of post-test) and the covariate (scores of pre-test) for our groups.
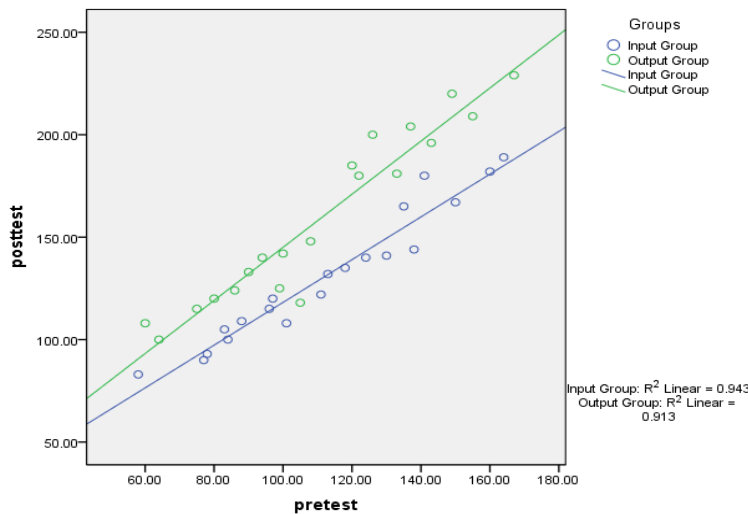
Figure 1 Linearity of slope of regression lines

Homogeneity of Regression Slopes

This assumption investigated the relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable for each of our groups to check if there was no interaction between the covariate and the treatment.

Table 3 *Tests of Between-Subjects Effects*

Dependent Variable:posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	56348.285a	3	18782.762	170.130	.000
Intercept	564.788	1	564.788	5.116	.030
Groups	1.665	1	1.665	.015	.903
pretest	47787.951	1	47787.951	432.852	.000
Groups * pretest	558.524	1	558.524	5.059	.061
Error	3974.490	36	110.402		
Total	900453.000	40			
Corrected Total	60322.775	39			

a. R Squared = .934 (Adjusted R Squared = .929)

In the output obtained in Table 3 the level of significance for interaction term (shown above as Group*Pre-test) was greater than .05 (Sig= .061) showing that the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes was not violated.

As the data summarized in Table 5 show, the value obtained [$F_{(1,36)}$= 2.515, P= .122] was found to be larger than .05, which indicated that interaction between the independent variable and covariate was not significant and the assumption of the homogeneity of the slope of regression lines was met.

Homogeneity of Variance

This assumption implies that the variance of the dependent variables for each combination of independent variables must be equal. In other words, it refers to equality of variances of internal variables for different levels of external variables. To test the assumption, Levene's test was used the results of which are reflected in Table 4.

Table 4 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.904	1	38	.348

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Groups.Pretest + Groups

As it is clear from Table 4, the significance value obtained for Levene's test [$F(1,38)$=904, Sig= .348, Sig>.05], is higher than 0.05 which indicates the homogeneity of error variances.

Testing the Research Hypotheses

The main ANCOVA results were presented in Table 5

Table 5

Analysis of Covariance

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
Dependent Variable:posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	55789.761a	2	27894.881	227.688	.000	.925
Intercept	534.186	1	534.186	4.360	.044	.105
Pretest	48033.536	1	48033.536	392.066	.000	.914
Groups	8864.021	1	8864.021	72.351	.000	.662
Error	4533.014	37	122.514			
Total	900453.000	40				
Corrected Total	60322.775	39				

a. R Squared = .925 (Adjusted R Squared = .921)

Here we wanted to know whether the groups were significantly different in terms of their scores on the dependent variable (post-test) while controlling for possible effects of the covariate (pretest). As the table shows, the value corresponding to independent variable (Group) was $F(1,37)$= .392.06, P= 0.00 P<.05, partial η^2 = .662) which implies that groups differed significantly. Therefore, the results *were* significant. That is, there was a significant difference between the performances of the group as far as fluency was concerned. Now, to decide about the direction of this difference marginal means were estimated.

Table 6 Estimated Marginal Means

Table 6 shows the mean differences between the performances of the groups

Pairwise Comparisons
Dependent Variable:posttest

(I) Groups	(J) Groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.ᵃ	95% Confidence Interval for Differenceᵃ	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Input Group	Output Group	-29.784*	3.502	.000	-36.879	-22.689
Output Group	Input Group	29.784*	3.502	.000	22.689	36.879

Based on estimated marginal means

 *. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

 a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

As the table reflects, the mean differences between the groups (MD= + 29.78) was significant at P= 0.00, P< .05 which points to a better performance of the output group. This observation is also backed up by the profile plot in figure 4.15 below.

Discussion

This study compared the effects of input instruction versus output instruction on writing fluency of EFL learners. Our findings in this thesis showed two instructions (input & output) were so important to improve L2 learning, but for fluency and accuracy, output-based instruction had a more significant role than input-based instruction practice did in English learning as a foreign language.

This finding is in line with VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) who concluded that the use of output activities in instruction is effective for the development of fluent and accurate production. They also stated that "the value of grammatical instruction as output practice is questionable if the attempt of the instruction is to alter the nature of the developing system" (p.56)

The findings of this study are also in line with what Swain (1995) claimed. She believed that input is necessary, but not sufficient for language learning. Output is seen to be essential as it promotes fluency, pushes students to engage in syntactic processing of language (rather than only attending to meaning). It gives students opportunities to test their hypotheses about what works and is acceptable in a particular language and affords students opportunities to receive feedback from others.

Furthermore, Salaberry (1997) reported that both input-based and output-based practices were equally effective for comprehension tasks, but that output-based practice was superior for production tasks. In another strand of research, Allen and Nagata (2000) focused on the exploration of any differential effects of input-based as compared to output-based instructional conditions. This research has shown the output had a better performance on language learning. The findings of the present study are in line with Erlam (2003), who found that an output-based group outperformed a structured-input group on a listening comprehension test and on form placement in a written production test, and significant differences were found between groups.

One of the recent studies such as Toth's study also compared the effects of some type of input practice (often Within VanPatten's PI framework) to output-based instruction requiring learners to

produce meaningful output. The study found that meaningful output had a notable dominance as compared with input practice. (Toth, 2006)

However, we had some studies that they were about comparing two methods and said teachers need these instructions synchronously. John Fotheringham in his article in 2010 wrote about input vs. output and the importance of language input (listening & reading) vs. language output (speaking & writing). He said listen first then speak because it is important to get as much listening input as possible. And he explained "to become fluent in a language, just consume a balanced diet, rich in listening and speaking with plenty of reading and writing" (p.8).

This finding is also line with Rassaei in his paper in 2012 mentioned that both input and output can give rise to development of L2 knowledge. However, his results suggest that output-based instruction can be more effective than input-based instruction. His findings are that explicit instructions are more effective than implicit instructions. And with regards to output-based instruction it should be noted that output cannot be isolated from other variables such as student's feedbacks, inputs, moods and the other factors" (p.10).

Conclusion
The present study was designed to explore answer to the following question:
Is there any difference between Input-based versus Output-based Instruction on EFL students' fluency in Expository writing?

The results of the data analysis supported the view that instruction dominated by output practice can lead to development even more efficiently than an input-based instruction. The results suggested that both input and output can give rise to the development of L2 knowledge. However, it shows that output-based instruction can be more effective than input-based instruction. With regards to input-based instruction, the results indicated that exposure to input alone is not enough to promote the development of L2 knowledge is needed to make input more salient to learners.

Therefore, it can be argued that output-based instruction can be more effective than input-based instruction alone. With regards to input-based instruction, exposure to input alone is not enough to promote the development of L2 knowledge. Also for fluency and automaticity output is so important, because input alone cannot make a fluent person. The best we can say is that instruction that capitalizes on meaningful output practice is as effective as or even more effective than input-based instruction. It is better to say that the use of output-based instruction may help students to improve their fluency in expository writing.

References
Alanen, R. (1995). Input enhancement and rule presentation in second language acquisition. *Attention and Awareness in Foreign Language Learning*, 259–302.
Ballator, N., Farnum, M., & Kaplan, B. (1999). 1996 Trends in Writing. *National Center for Education Statistics*, *1*(2), 28.
Benati, A. (2004). The effects of structured input activities and explicit information on the acquisition of the Italian future tense. *Processing Instruction: Theory, Research, and Commentary*, 207–225.
Brown, H. D. (1987). Principles of language learning and teaching. *White Plains, NY: Longman*.
Buck, M. (2006). The effects of processing instruction on the acquisition of English progressive aspect. *Estudios de Lingüística Aplicada*, *24*(43), 77–95.
Cadierno, T. (1995). Formal instruction from a processing perspective: An investigation into the Spanish past tense. *The Modern Language Journal*, *79*(2), 179–193.
Carroll, S. E. (1999). Putting "input"in its proper place. *Second Language Research*, *15*(4), 337–388.
Collentine, J. (2013). Cognitive principles and CALL grammar instruction: A mind-centered, input approach. *CALICO Journal*, *15*(1-3), 1–18.
Cook, V. J., & Cook, V. J. (1993). *Linguistics and second language acquisition*. Macmillan London.

DeKeyser, R. M., & Sokalski, K. J. (1996). The differential role of comprehension and production practice. *Language Learning*, *46*(4), 613–642.

Doughty, C. (1991). Second language instruction does make a difference. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *13*(04), 431–469.

Ellis, R. (2009). *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching* (Vol. 42). Multilingual Matters.

Erlam, R. (2003). Evaluating the relative effectiveness of structured-input and output-based instruction in foreign language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *25*(04), 559–582.

Farley, A. (2004). Processing instruction and the Spanish subjunctive: Is explicit information needed. *Processing Instruction: Theory, Research, and Commentary*, 227–239.

Gass, S. M., & Mackey, A. (2007). Input, interaction, and output in second language acquisition. *Theories in Second Language Acquisition: An Introduction*, 175–199.

Harley, B., & Hart, D. (1997). Language aptitude and second language proficiency in classroom learners of different starting ages. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *19*(03), 379–400.

Izumi, S. (2002). Output, input enhancement, and the noticing hypothesis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *24*(04), 541–577.

Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. Addison-Wesley Longman Ltd.

Lee, J. F., & VanPatten, B. (1995). *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen. Volume 1: Directions for Language Learning and Teaching.* ERIC.

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. *Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*, *2*(2), 413–468.

Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *19*(01), 37–66.

Morgan-Short, K., & Bowden, H. W. (2006). PROCESSING INSTRUCTION AND MEANINGFUL OUTPUT-BASED INSTRUCTION:: Effects on Second Language Development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *28*(01), 31–65.

Nagata, H., Aline, D., & Ellis, R. (1999). Modified input, language aptitude and the acquisition of word meanings. *Learning a Second Language through Interaction*, 133–149.

Norris, J. M., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, *50*(3), 417–528.

Pienemann, M. (1998). *Language processing and second language development: Processability theory* (Vol. 15). John Benjamins Publishing.

Price, M. Lou. (1991). The subjective experience of foreign language anxiety: Interviews with highly anxious students. *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*, 101–108.

Robinson, P. (1997). Generalizability and automaticity of second language learning under implicit, incidental, enhanced, and instructed conditions. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *19*(02), 223–247.

Schmidt, R. (1995). Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning. *Attention and Awareness in Foreign Language Learning*, 1–63.

Schwartz, B. D. (1993). On explicit and negative data effecting and affecting competence and linguistic behavior. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *15*(02), 147–163.

Skehan, P. (1998). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford University Press.

Smith, S. (1993). MA Input Enhancement in Instructed SLA: Theoretical Bases. *SSLA*, *15*, 2.

Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. *Principle and Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in Honour of HG Widdowson*, *2*(3), 125–144.

Toth, P. D. (2006). Processing instruction and a role for output in second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, *56*(2), 319–385.

Trahey, M., & White, L. (1993). Positive evidence and preemption in the second language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *15*(02), 181–204.

VanPatten, B. (2003). *From input to output: A teacher's guide to second language acquisition*. McGraw-Hill.

VanPatten, B. (2004). *Processing instruction: Theory, research, and commentary*. Routledge.

VanPatten, B., & Cadierno, T. (1993). Explicit instruction and input processing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *15*(02), 225–243.

Wong, W. (2005). *Input enhancement: From theory and research to the classroom*. McGraw-Hill.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' BURNOUT: TEACHERS' PERCEIVED SOLUTIONS TO OVERCOME THIS PROBLEM

Zahra Alimorad
Department of Foreign languages and Linguistics
Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran
Email: zahra.alimorad@shirazu.ac.ir

Mostafa Tajgozari
Department of Foreign languages and Linguistics
Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran
s.mtajgozari@rose.shirazu.ac.ir

ABSTRACT
TEACHERS CONSTANTLY EXPERIENCE HIGH LEVELS OF JOB STRESS AND ARE, THEREFORE, IN DANGER OF BURNOUT SYNDROME. SINCE BURNOUT IS A DESTRUCTIVE CONDITION WHICH CAN CAUSE TEACHERS SERIOUS HARM, IT SEEMS VITAL TO IDENTIFY AND ELIMINATE MAJOR FACTORS LEADING TO TEACHERS' BURNOUT ALL OVER THE WORLD INCLUDING IN THE CONTEXT OF IRAN. TO THIS AIM, THE PRESENT MIXED METHODS STUDY IS AN ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY THESE FACTORS FROM THE TEACHERS' POINT OF VIEW. FOR THE FIRST PHASE OF THE STUDY, A CONVENIENT SAMPLE OF 105 (MALE=50, FEMALE=55) PUBLIC SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS WERE RECRUITED FROM DIFFERENT CITIES OF FARS PROVINCE, IRAN. ALL OF THESE PARTICIPANTS FILLED IN THE MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY. THEN, IN THE SECOND PHASE, THE PARTICIPANTS DISPLAYING BURNOUT SYNDROME (N=13) WHO WERE IDENTIFIED BASED ON THEIR RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE WERE CONTACTED AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE INTERVIEW SESSIONS WERE MADE WITH THEM. RESULTS OF THESE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS DEMONSTRATED THAT LOW INCOME, OVERWORK, UNFRIENDLY WORK PLACE ATMOSPHERE, LACK OF PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES, STUDENTS' HIGH FAILURE RATES AND TEACHERS' LOW SELF-EFFICACY CONSTITUTED THE MAJOR FACTORS LEADING TO BURNOUT IN TEACHERS. ADDITIONALLY, THE MAJORITY OF THE TEACHERS DID NOT SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF THEIR OWN BURNOUT BY CONSIDERING THE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING AND, THEREFORE, SOLVING THIS PROBLEM. THEY ALSO BELIEVED THAT THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS CAN BE OF HELP IN THIS REGARD. NEVERTHELESS, SOME OF THEM ACCEPTED THEIR OWN SHARE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY TOO.

KEYWORDS: BURNOUT SYNDROME, EFL TEACHERS, FACTORS, IRAN, SOLUTIONS.

1. Introduction
The term burnout was first coined by Freudenberger (1974), an American psychiatrist, to refer to emotional depletion, motivational loss, and commitment reduction human service workers experience after a period of prolonged and extensive stress conditions (Soderfelt & Soderfelt, 1995). Later, Maslach, an American social psychologist, further elaborated on the concept and defined it as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, p. 99). Following these leads, Maslach and

Jackson (1984) defined burnout as a syndrome consisting of three dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. To put it more clearly, emotional exhaustion is defined as feelings of being emotionally drained because of one's contact with other people and depersonalization refers to an unfeeling response to the same people, who are usually the recipients of one's service. Personal accomplishment, on the other hand, is a decline or decrease in one's feelings of successful achievement in one's work with people (Maslach & Jackson, 1984).

Burnout is neither wearing down (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) nor work dissatisfaction (Sayil, Seda, Senay & Halise, 1993); it is more serious than these and can "cause severe individual and corporate problems" (Erturgut & Soysekerci, 2010, p. 1400). Even "an intense burnout condition may cause psychosomatic disorders, problems in marriage and family life, lack of sleep, and consumption of alcohol and substances in individuals" (Erturgut & Soysekerci, 2010, p. 1400). High levels of burnout may lead to problems such as employees coming late to work, leaving work early, quitting work, and lack of innovation and creativity in work (Arslan, Ünal, Aslan, Gürkan, & Alpaslan 1996; Sayil et. al., 1993). Therefore, it is a condition which should be prevented (Erturgut & Soysekerci, 2010).

Considering the fact that teaching is one of the occupations with the highest levels of job stress (Chaplain, 2008; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008), teachers are more in danger of burnout symptoms as compared to other workers (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). This finding was corroborated in different studies conducted in different parts of the world (e.g., Byrne, 1999; Cephe, 2010; Chaplain, 2008; Erturgut & Soysekerci, 2010; Gold, 1985, to name a few) including in the context of Iran (e.g., Alavinia & Ahmadzadeh, 2012; Ghonsooly & Raeesi, 2012; Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2014; Soleimani & Abbaszadeh, 2010; Tabatabaee Yazdi, Motallebzadeh, & Ashraf, 2013, to name some). Owing to the fact that burnout is "destructive" (Knepper, 2013, p. 1) and can cause teachers serious harm, an urgent need is felt to identify and eliminate major factors which lead to teachers' burnout all over the world including in the Iranian context. To the best of the present researchers' knowledge, even though several Iranian researchers have tried to investigate teachers' burnout from different perspectives, few of them have attempted to detect the most important factors contributing to public school English language teachers' potential problems leading them to burnout as well as the solutions which may help them overcome those problems. To fill this lacuna, the present study makes an attempt to identify the factors which contribute to Iranian EFL teachers' burnout and potential solutions to overcome those factors from the teachers' viewpoint.

2. Literature review

Investigating teachers' burnout merits serious attention since as Wright, Hom, and Sanders (1997, p. 63) rightly put it, "more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor" and if teachers cannot function effectively due to burnout syndrome, the consequences of this problem "may be frustrating for both teachers and learners in the teaching and learning process" (Cephe, 2010, p. 25). Lots of studies have so far been conducted on teachers' burnout from different perspectives all over the world including in the Iranian context; nevertheless, the majority of studies done in Iran examined the possible relationships between burnout and different factors such as emotional intelligence (e.g., Alavinia & Ahmadzadeh, 2012; Jabbari & Homayoun, 2014; Vaezi & Fallah, 2011), emotional intelligence and reflectivity (Mahmoodi & Ghaslani 2014), autonomy (Javadi, 2014), creativity (Ghonsooly & Raeesi, 2012), biographical variables (Mehrabi & Radi, 2015), personality types (Sadeghi, Ofoghi, Niyafar, & Dadashi, 2015), age and years of teaching experience (Rostami, Ghanizadeh, & Ghapanchi, 2015), instruction procedures (Soleimani & Abbaszadeh, 2010), critical thinking (Yaghoubi & Habibinejad, 2015), teacher efficacy, teaching style, and emotional intelligence (Akbari & Tavassoli, 2011), personality and emotional intelligence (Pishghadam & Sahebjam, 2012), and self-efficacy (Marandi, Baghelani, & Azizi, 2015; Mashhady, Fallah, & Lotfi Gaskaree, 2012; Motallebzadeh, Ashraf, & Tabatabaee Yazdi, 2014).

What is worthy of notice is that first, we need to know teacher burnout and to identify the factors which contribute to this problem and then, to investigate its relationship with other factors and variables. Nevertheless, this line of inquiry seems to be missing in the context of Iran. Furthermore, all of the above-mentioned studies have utilized quantitative methodologies and employed

measurement techniques and statistical procedures (i.e., mostly correlational analyses) which make certain assumptions about the normal distribution of specific traits in a given population. Therefore, they are reductionist in their approach; that is, they "reduce the multitude of potential determinants of human behavior by identifying a relatively small number of key variables to explain a significant proportion of the variance in people's action" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 16). Additionally, such studies are based on the assumption of linear relationships existing among burnout and other constructs of interest to researchers. The problem is that linear models of burnout, in fact, reduce teachers' behavior to some general commonalities by overlooking the idiosyncrasies of teachers' individual meaning-making in the social and educational contexts.

The studies mentioned above investigated the relationship between burnout and other constructs with no assumption of cause-and-effect relations. However, having the same linearity assumption, some other studies went further considering the relationship among burnout and other variables with burnout being viewed as the result. As an example, Bayani, Bagheri, and Bayani (2013) investigated the effects of age, gender, and years of teaching experience on Iranian teachers' burnout. 290 (143=male, 147=female) teachers from secondary schools participated in their study. Results of ANOVA showed no significant differences in burnout with respect to the teachers' age and years of teaching experience. However, male teachers tended to show greater burnout levels in comparison to their female counterparts. In the same line of inquiry, Asgari (2012) examined the effects of gender and marital status on English language teachers' burnout while Soltanabadi Farshi and Omranzadeh (2014), in addition to gender and marital status, took the role of educational level into account too.

Some other researchers, on the other hand, took burnout further by examining possible differences between different groups of teachers regarding their burnout level. For instance, Hosseini Fatemi and Raoufi (2014) tried to uncover the differences between Iranian public school and private institute teachers regarding their level of burnout and their teaching styles. 110 English language teachers from both sectors took part in their study. To collect the necessary data, they made use of Maslach Burnout and Grasha Teaching Style inventories. Running independent-sample t-tests, they found a significant difference between burnout level and adoption of teaching styles by those two groups of teachers. Also, regarding the teaching style, a significant difference was found between experienced and less-experienced teachers.

As another study, Khezerlou (2013) examined the perceived burnout levels of Iranian (N=230) and Turkish (N=156) EFL teachers while aiming at determining the role of four administrational factors of Teacher Autonomy, Reward Adequacy, Fairness, and Fringe Benefits in predicting different subscales of burnout in these two groups of teachers. Based on the results of t-test analyses, he came to the conclusion that there was a slight significant difference between Iranian and Turkish groups only in EE burnout processes. Additionally, regression analysis results indicated that EE, DP, and PA subscales were better predicted by Fairness factor and Teacher Autonomy among Iranian and Turkish teachers, respectively. Finally, he also found that Teacher Autonomy, Reward Adequacy, and Fairness factors had cross-culturally discriminatory roles, while Fringe Benefits factor did not have such a role.

In studies such as the ones just mentioned, different groups of teachers are compared with each other. Although the cross-cultural perspective is a valuable line of inquiry, it has made researchers lose sight of variation at local and individual levels because of attempting to pursue generalizable patterns about one cultural group as compared to another. In such studies, teachers are compared as groups as if all of the participants in each group have similar characteristics in all respects except the one under investigation. In fact, the focus is not on individual teachers; rather, the emphasis is on averages that group together people who share certain characteristics. Holding such a view will surely lead to negligence of local and especially individual variations (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

To the best of the present researchers' knowledge, the only study conducted in the context of Iran which benefited from a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative studies is that of Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki (2015). He attempted to identify sources of emotional problems of English language teachers and to propose solutions to obviate those problems. Among 79 language teachers with high scores on emotional exhaustion subscale of MBI, nine were chosen to be interviewed. First, Thematic Content Analysis was used to extract the recurring themes and then, Interpretive Phenomenological

Analysis was utilized to find the loci of attribution. Results of his study indicated that agents of attribution were mainly external to the teachers with underpayment as the most important contributor. The problem associated with his study, however, is that he has only considered the emotional exhaustion subscale without paying attention to the other two equally important subscales of MBI (i.e., depersonalization and personal accomplishment) while identifying teachers who displayed symptoms of burnout syndrome. Had he taken the other two subscales into account, he could have had a different sample of the participants and probably different findings and results.

All of the above-mentioned shortcomings cast doubts on the trustworthiness of the findings of previous studies on burnout and makes us reconsider the approaches we utilize in investigating this issue. Therefore, we need to enrich and diversify our understanding of the different factors which lead to EFL teachers' burnout which points up the need for more in-depth studies on teachers' burnout that is the main aim of the present study. Moreover, considering the destructive effects teachers' burnout can have on both teachers and learners, we can convincingly argue that the issue of burnout is worth a more in-depth examination and investigation especially in the context of Iran. Therefore, in addition to the bulk of quantitative studies on burnout, we need to conduct qualitative as well as mixed methods investigations to complement and corroborate the results and findings of those studies. To this aim, the present study intends to examine the issue of burnout, specifically, as to teachers of English as a foreign language who work at public schools of Iran. Accordingly, it is going to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the factors which contribute to these teachers' burnout from their own points of view?
2. What solutions do the teachers propose for overcoming this problem?

3. Method
3.1. Participants

For the first phase or the quantitative part of the study, a convenient sample of 105 (male=50, female=55) public school English teachers were recruited from different cities of Fars province located in the southwest of Iran (i.e., Darab, Estahban, Fasa, and Shiraz). These participants' age ranged between 21 and 47 with an average age of 32.6 years and their teaching experience ranged between 1 and 27 averaging 9.8 years. They held B.A. and M.A. degrees in different English majors (English Literature, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and English translation). All of these participants filled in the questionnaire which was distributed by the second researcher who was present in the session and guided and helped them if they had any problems understanding its items. Then, in the second phase of the study or the qualitative part, the participants displaying symptoms of burnout syndrome (N=13) who were identified based on their responses to the questionnaire were contacted by the second researcher. He made arrangements for the interview sessions with them. All of them except for one who was reluctant to be interviewed agreed to participate in the interview session. Therefore, at the end, 12 teachers took part in the interview sessions. Table 1 shows each of these participants' profile in detail.

Table 1. Each participant's profile

Number	Gender	Age	Education	Teaching experience	City
1	Male	39	B.A.	15	Darab
2	Female	30	M.A.	8	Darab
3	Male	24	M.A.	2	Shiraz
4	Female	25	B.A.	3	Shiraz
5	Male	45	B.A.	22	Shiraz
6	Female	30	B.A.	8	Darab
7	Male	29	M.A.	5	Fasa
8	Male	28	M.A.	6	Shiraz
9	Female	37	B.A.	15	Estahban
10	Female	30	B.A.	7	Shiraz
11	Male	42	B.A.	20	Fasa

| **12** | Female | 30 | B.A. | 8 | Darab |

3.2. Instruments

For the first phase of the study, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach & Jackson 1981) was utilized to identify teachers with burnout syndrome. This questionnaire consists of three sub-dimensions of emotional exhaustion (EE, 7 items, maximum score – 42), depersonalization (DP, 7 items, maximum score – 42), and personal accomplishment (PA, 8 items, maximum score – 48). The items of the questionnaire were Likert type requiring the participants to choose one of the alternatives ranging from *Never* to *Everyday*. Higher emotional exhaustion and depersonalization sub-dimensions as well as lower personal accomplishment sub-dimension were considered as a symptom of high burnout status (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Previous researchers estimated and confirmed the validity and reliability of this questionnaire (Iwanicki & Schwab, 1981; Gold, 1985) and reported reliabilities for data gathered from each of the three sub-dimensions ranging from .76 to .90 (Iwanicki & Schwab, 1981) and from .72 to .88 (Gold, 1985). As for the context of Iran, Tabatabaee Yazdi et al. (2013) estimated its reliability and came to similar and acceptable results (EE= .89, DP= .71, PA= .71). For the second part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted by the second researcher. Each of the 12 teachers who displayed burnout symptoms was individually interviewed.

3.3. Data collection and analysis procedures

As stated before, this study was a mixed methods one consisting of two different phases. Hence, for each phase, data collection and analysis procedures were followed differently and independently. At the outset of the study, MBI was administered to different groups of teachers from different cities of Fars province. The second researcher was present to answer the teachers' questions and remove any potential ambiguities concerning questionnaire items. After gathering the required data, the researchers scored the items based on the Likert scale. Then, for each sub-dimension of the questionnaire, the sum of all item scores was calculated. Higher scores of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization sub-dimensions as well as lower scores of personal accomplishment sub-dimension were considered as a symptom of high burnout status (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

On the basis of the instructions given in the questionnaire, the participants' scores were interpreted in the following way. For the first sub-dimension of the questionnaire, emotional exhaustion, total scores of 17 or less were considered as a symptom of low-level burnout, between 18 and 29 moderate burnout and over 30 high-level burnout. For the second part of the questionnaire, depersonalization, total scores of 5 or less were indicative of low-level burnout, between 6 and 11 moderate burnout, and 12 and greater high-level burnout. For the third part of it (personal accomplishment), on the other hand, total scores of 33 or less were considered as a sign of high-level burnout, between 34 and 39 moderate burnout, and greater than 40 low-level burnout. After calculating the sum of scores of each of the participants and interpreting the total scores based on the above-mentioned instructions, the researchers selected 13 teachers with high or moderate emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and moderate or low personal accomplishment scores. Out of 13 teachers who were identified as teachers showing symptoms of burnout, 12 of them who were willing to be interviewed constituted the participants of the second phase of the study. Table 2 shows the interpretations of these participants' scores in detail.

Table 2. Interpretations of participants' scores

Number	Emotional exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal accomplishment
1	High	Moderate	Low
2	High	Moderate	Moderate
3	Moderate	High	Moderate
4	High	Moderate	Low
5	High	Moderate	Moderate
6	High	Moderate	Moderate
7	High	Moderate	Moderate

8	High	Moderate	Moderate
9	High	Moderate	Moderate
10	Moderate	High	Moderate
11	High	High	Moderate
12	Moderate	High	Moderate

In this latter phase, the 12 teachers were contacted one by one and arrangements were made for the interview sessions with them. In each interview session, while asking the questions, the researchers allowed the participants to elaborate on them or to add extra information not elicited by those questions. The majority of the participants preferred to be interviewed in Persian (N=10) because they felt more comfortable with their mother tongue while all of the interviews were recorded in situ. After conducting all of the interviews, the researchers transcribed the interviews carefully. Later, first, one of the researchers went through the transcriptions to find recurrent themes and patterns. To ensure the validity of the findings, the second researcher also coded the data. The agreement between the two sets of codes was ensured while the remaining discrepancies were resolved through discussion.

4. Results and discussion

For the first or quantitative phase of the study, results indicated that 13 out of 105 teachers displayed symptoms of burnout which is indicative of the fact that in this study, 12.38% of the participants were experiencing burnout syndrome. Although this percentage might seem rather small, in practice, it indicates a great alarm which can awaken responsible authorities to their duties towards teachers. In the next section, in order to answer the two research questions of the study, each of the participants' responses to the interview questions will be reported and discussed in detail. For the sake of clarity, the responses will be categorized based on two themes which constituted the main concerns of the present study; that is, factors contributing to burnout as well as solutions to this problem.

4.1. Factors contributing to burnout

Based on the teachers' responses to the interview questions, it was found that the majority of them viewed low income as one of the most important factors contributing to their burnout (N=7). Furthermore, overwork was considered as the second major factor referred to by the teachers. Teacher 3, for instance, believed that there is no logical relationship between what public school teachers do and the amount of money they receive. Teacher 8, too, referred to low income as a demotivating factor by explaining it in this way: "it doesn't support me financially, and also it needs so much of my energy. I do my best but I'm not paid enough" (Translated version). This finding corroborates Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki's (2015) results which indicated that in the sample of teachers he studied, underpayment and heavy workload were the most important factors contributing to the teachers' burnout.

Another influential factor, according to these teachers, is the unfriendly atmosphere they experience every day at the school which is the offspring of their colleagues or students' behavior. Although Teacher 4 shouldered the responsibility for such a bad relationship, Teachers 1, 5, and 6 blamed their students or colleagues for this problem. As mentioned by Teacher 4, "actually, there could be many factors like economical problems or my social problems. Frankly speaking, I'm not a sociable person. Yes, the main reason why I don't feel good about my job" (Originally in English). Teacher 1, on the other hand, has done his best to overcome this problem, but the result has not been that satisfactory,

I feel lonely in my work place because we don't have a good relationship there. Everybody is doing their job and the atmosphere isn't that much positive. I like to talk to my colleagues, be friends with them but you know … So, I don't like my work place or maybe my job. (Translated version)

Teacher 5 believed that this terrible atmosphere is brought about by the competition among teachers. Teacher 6, on the other hand, did not make any mention of bad relationships among colleagues, but she was suffering from her students' unfriendly behavior. As she said, "I think poor student-teacher relationship led to this feeling. Well, I did my best to overcome this, but I wasn't successful. I tried to

be friendly with them, not just being their teacher" (Translated version). On the basis of these findings, it seems that workplace atmosphere is one of the neglected areas of inquiry in the Iranian context which merits further attention on the part of researchers and scholars.

Besides referring to a meager salary, Teacher 7 pointed to another source of problem which can be a potential source of burnout in teachers. In his opinion, Iranian public school teachers are not provided with the opportunity to promote to higher levels in their career which, in turn, leads to feelings of demotivation and disappointment in teachers. This lack of promotion opportunities is also one of the factors mentioned by the participants of this study which has been overlooked in the previous studies on teacher burnout in the context of Iran. Teacher 9, however, is experiencing burnout because of her sense of failure at her career. As she said, "I try hard to teach them [the students]. I use different methods, but they don't learn. Their grades indicate that. So, I feel that I'm not a good teacher" (Translated version).

In contrast to other teachers, Teacher 10 doubts her own capabilities as a successful teacher and compares herself with her colleagues stating that, "my colleagues are very skillful and I'm not as good as them. I feel incompetent and poorly trained" (Originally in English). What she is worried about is, in fact, what is referred to in the literature as teachers' lack of self-efficacy. This last finding regarding the relationship between burnout and self-efficacy has already been supported in several studies in the context of Iran. For instance, Akbari and Tavassoli (2011) found that teachers who showed high levels of efficacy did not suffer greatly from burnout. Similarly, Marandi et al.'s (2015) results demonstrated that the higher the teachers' self-efficacy is, the less likely they will be to experience burnout in their work. In another study, Mashhady et al. (2012) found that self-efficacy was negatively correlated with burnout; therefore, they came to the conclusion that it could be a potent predictor of burnout among EFL teachers. Motallebzadeh et al. (2014) also found that the self-efficacy of the participants of their study had a reverse relationship with their burnout.

To put it in a nutshell, results of the interview phase of the present study highlighted some of the main factors which contributed to these Iranian EFL teachers' burnout from their own point of view. Based on their remarks, low income, overwork, unfriendly work place atmosphere, lack of promotion opportunities, unsatisfactory results and low self-efficacy constituted the major factors leading to burnout in teachers. Among these factors, low self-efficacy is the only factor which has repeatedly attracted the attention of Iranian researchers while the other equally important factors have largely been neglected in this context. Nevertheless, the results of this study demonstrated that the issue of burnout is worth further attention and investigation and also pave the way for more studies on burnout from diverse perspectives.

4.2. Solutions to the problem of burnout

In the next step, teachers were asked about the potential solutions to the problems causing them to burnout. Obviously, the most important solution to the problem of low income is "a reasonable salary" (Teacher 3, translated version). Teacher 2, too, declared that, "the government should pay us more in accordance with our job. I'm working a lot but the money is not good. So, how can I love my job and do my best?" (Translated version). In contrast to Teachers 3, 4 and 8 who viewed both authorities and themselves responsible for solving this problem, Teachers 2, 7, 11 and 12 believed this problem can just be solved by those in charge. For instance, Teacher 2 explained that "well, authorities should motivate teachers with good salaries and good job facilities. I cannot do much about these problems. Responsible authorities should help teachers more than before" (Translated version) and Teacher 12 maintained that "the ministry of education. They should care more about us" (Translated version). They also held the same view regarding the solution to the overwork problem by considering both the government and they themselves responsible for solving this problem even though the majority of them held the authorities responsible.

Another problem which concerned these teachers was the unfriendly work place atmosphere. As stated above, Teacher 4 believed that it is her own duty to attempt to solve this problem. As she said, "actually, it's my problem that I can't have a good relationship with my students and my colleagues, and I cannot blame society or my family or anybody else for that. I must change my feelings" (Originally in English). Unlike Teacher 4, Teacher 1 believed that authorities are responsible

to come up with an optimal solution to this problem: "those who are in charge can help a lot. Maybe if authorities care more about the work place and increase the facilities or try to motivate teachers, that would be better" (Translated version). Teacher 6 who was suffering from poor student-teacher relationships, on the other hand, suggested that the students and their parents as well as the teachers need to cooperatively try to solve this problem. Hence, she proposed that, "well, both my students and I. I want my students to be active in the classroom. Maybe their parents could play an important role in this. They can motivate them" (Translated version). Teacher 5, too, thought that this tense atmosphere can be improved by the teachers themselves,

Everyone should do their job. There should not be any competitive feeling among colleagues. We are teachers. We have a duty which is teaching. Actually, these bad relationships and feelings among us lead to bad teaching. We should help each other to increase our teaching efficiency (Translated version).

In Teacher 9's opinion, her burnout has been brought about by her students' low success rate. Therefore, she thought that the students and their parents can help to solve this problem:

If just they could get better grades, everything would be Ok. Maybe some make-up classes would be helpful. Parents and students themselves can help. If parents provide children with a good environment for studying, it might help. Also, students should study well and regularly and listen to the teacher carefully while they are in the classroom (Translated version).

Lack of promotion opportunities as a source of burnout, according to Teacher 7, can also be handled by those in charge: "there should be scales for payment based on promotion. They, I mean those who are in charge, should define what promotion is in our job. And based on that, they should increase or decrease the salary" (Translated version). Unlike other teachers, Teacher 10 attributed her burnout to her own personality and, therefore, thought that she herself should solve this problem: "maybe I should stop thinking and worrying about that and just stick to my job or maybe I should really try harder to excel. It is all about me and I'm the one who should change. They can help me to overcome this feeling by reminding me of my strong points" (Originally in English).

All in all, the majority of these teachers did not shoulder the burden of their own burnout by considering the government authorities responsible for creating and, therefore, tackling this problem. Therefore, it can be concluded that government officials might be able to partially handle the problem of teachers' burnout by changing their current policies and paying more attention to the economical as well as social problems teachers are dealing with at the school contexts. The teachers also referred to the students as well as their parents as the people who can be of help in this regard. Nevertheless, some of them admitted having some share of the responsibility in solving this problem.

5. Conclusions

This study was an attempt to identify factors leading to Iranian EFL teachers' burnout syndrome and to find potential solutions for those problems from the teachers' viewpoint. On the basis of their answers to the interview questions, it was revealed that low income, overwork, unfriendly work place atmosphere, lack of promotion opportunities, unsatisfactory results and low self-efficacy were perceived as the main factors causing their burnout. To alleviate this problem, they wanted the government authorities to change their current policies and pay more attention to the economical and social problems they experience at the school contexts. They also wanted their students as well as their parents to lighten their burden by taking some of the responsibilities. Although all of them did not accept their own share of the responsibility and placed the entire burden on the authorities, some of them pointed out that they themselves can also contribute to solving the problems.

At the end, it is worth mentioning that even though the findings of this study are not definitive, they can draw the attention of researchers and scholars to other factors which have rarely been considered in studies on teachers' burnout. Also, since this study is an exploratory piece of research, more exploratory and confirmatory studies are needed to corroborate and confirm its results and findings. Nevertheless, it can be an attempt to pave the way for more studies on burnout from diverse perspectives, some of which have completely been neglected in the context of Iran.

References

Akbari, R., & Tavassoli, K. (2011). Teacher efficacy, burnout, teaching style, and emotional intelligence: Possible relationships and differences. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 14*(2), 31-61.

Alavinia, P., & Ahmadzadeh, T. (2012). Toward a reappraisal of the bonds between emotional intelligence and burnout. *English Language Teaching, 5*(4), 37-50.

Arslan, H., Ünal, M., Aslan, O., Gürkan, S., & Alpaslan, N. (1996). Exhaustion levels for practitioner physicians. *Düşünen Adam (Thinking Man), 9* (3), 48-52. (In Turkish)

Asgari, A. (2012). The effects of gender and marital status on burnout of English teachers in Iran. *Pertanika Journals: Social Sciences and Humanities, 20*(3), 635-644.

Bayani, A. A., Bagheri, H., & Bayani, A. (2013). Influence of gender, age, and years of teaching experience on burnout. *Annals of Biological Research, 4*(4), 239-243.

Byrne, B. M. (1999). Teacher-burnout: The nomological network. In R. Vandenberghe, & A. M. Huberman (Eds.), *Understanding and preventing teacher-burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cephe, P. T. (2010). A study of the factors leading English teachers to burnout. *H. U. Journal of Education, 38*, 25-34.

Chaplain, R. P. (2008). Stress and psychological distress among trainee secondary teachers in England. *Educational Psychology, 28*, 195–209.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Harlow: Longman.

Erturgut, R., & Soysekerci, S. (2010). An empirical analysis on burnout levels among second year vocational schools students. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*, 1399-1404.

Ghonsooly, B., & Raeesi, A. (2012). Exploring the relationship between creativity and burnout among Iranian EFL teachers. *International Journal of Linguistics, 4*(3), 121-134.

Gold, Y. (1985). Does teacher burnout begin with student teaching? *Education, 105*, 254–257.

Hosseini Fatemi, A., & Raoufi, R. (2014). Burnout and teaching style among Iranian English language educators in public schools and private institutes: A cross-comparison study. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning, 3* (6), 85-94.

Iwanicki, E. F., & Schwab, R. L. (1981). A cross-validation study of the Maslach Burnout Inventory. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 41*, 1167–1174.

Jabbari, M. J., & Homayoun, S. (2014). The relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' burnout and emotional intelligence. *Asian Journal of Education and E-learning, 2*(3), 225-229.

Javadi, F. (2014). On the relationship between teacher autonomy and feeling of burnout among Iranian EFL teachers. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 770-774.

Khezerlou, E. (2013). Administrical factors as predictors of teacher burnout across Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. *Journal of History, Culture, and Art Research, 2*(2), 57-68.

Knepper, D. (2013). Teacher burnout is common and destructive...but treatable. *White paper.* Retrieved from d2bjhchiwb3fzj.cloudfront.net/.../blood-splattered-on-the-paper_1uwtez....

Mahmoodi, M. H., & Ghaslani, R. (2014). Relationship among Iranian EFL teachers' emotional intelligence, reflectivity, and burnout. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies, 6*(1), 91-118.

Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, M. (2015). Detecting agents of emotional exhaustion among Iranian language teachers within the framework of attribution theory. *GESJ: Education Science and Psychology, 2*(34), 45-61.

Marandi, N., Baghelani, E., & Azizi, R. (2015). Exploring the relationship between self-efficacy and burnout: The case of Iranian EFL teachers. *Cumhuriyet University Faculty of Science, Science Journal (CSJ, Special issue): The Second National Conference on Applied Research in Science and Technology, 36*(3), 21-31.

Mashhady, H., Fallah, N., & Lotfi Gaskaree, B. (2012). The role of foreign language teachers' self-efficacy in their burnout. *British Journal of Education, Society, and Behavioral Science, 2*(4), 369-388.

Maslach, C., & Jackson, E. S. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior, 2*, 99-113.

Maslach, C., & Jackson E. S. (1984). Burnout in organizational settings. *Applied Social Psychology Annual, 5*, 133-154.

Mehrabi, M., & Radi, N. (2015). On the relationship between biographical variables and Iranian EFL teachers' burnout and stressors. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6*(4), 543-553.

Motallebzadeh, K., Ashraf, H., & Tabatabaee Yazdi, M. (2014). On the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' burnout and self-efficacy. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 1255 – 1262.

Pishghadam, R., & Sahebjam, S. (2012). Personality and emotional intelligence in teacher burnout. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 15*(1), 227-236.

Rostami, S., Ghanizadeh, A., & Ghapanchi, Z. (2015). A study of contextual precursors of burnout among EFL teachers. *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology, 4*(1), 13-24.

Sadeghi, K., & Khezrlou, S. (2014). Burnout among English language teachers in Iran: Do sociodemographic characteristics matter? *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 1590 – 1598.

Sadeghi, A., Ofoghi, N., Niyafar, G. H., & Dadashi, K. (2015). Survey of the relationship between personality types and burnout among teachers at first period (guidance school) and second period of high school (secondary school) in the city of Rasht, Iran. *Creative Education, 6*, 835-845.

Sayil, I., Seda, H., Senay, O., & Halise, D. (1993). Exhaustions levels of doctors and nurses working at Ankara university hospitals. *Crysis Magazine , 5* (2), 71-77

Schaufeli, W. B., & Enzmann, D. (1998). *The burnout companion to study and research: A critical analysis*. London: Taylor and Francis.

Soderfelt, M., & Soderfelt, B. (1995). Burnout in social work. *Social Work, 40*, 638-647.

Soleimani, N., & Abbaszadeh, N. (2010). The relationship between teachers' instruction procedures and job burnout. *Curriculum Planning: Knowledge and Research in Educational Sciences, 26*, 1-12.

Soltanabadi Farshi, S., & Omranzadeh, F. (2014). The effect of gender, education level, and marital status on Iranian EFL teachers' burnout level. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 3*(5), 128-133.

Stoeber, J., & Rennert, D. (2008). Perfectionism in school teachers: Relations with stress appraisals, coping styles, and burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping, 21*(1), 53doi:10.1080/10615800701742461.

Tabatabaee Yazdi, M., Motallebzadeh, K., & Ashraf, H. (2013). Iranian EFL teachers' self-efficacy and teachers' burnout: A case of comparison. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 4*(2), 59-73.

Vaezi, S., & Fallah, N. (2011). The relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout among Iranian EFL teachers. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2*(5), 1122-1129.

Wright, S. P., Hom, S. P., & Sanders, W. L. (1997). Teacher and classroom context effects on student achievement: Implications for teacher evaluation. *Journal of Personal Evaluation and Education, 11*, 57-67.

Yaghoubi, A., & Habibinejad, P. (2015). Teacher burnout and critical thinking among EFL teachers. *Journal of Educational and Management Studies, 5*(1), 85-91.

ON THE DESIGN, VALIDATION AND RELIABILITY OF THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE IN AN EFL CONTEXT

Hamid Ashraf*, Khalil Motallebzadeh, Mohsen Arabshahi
English Department, Torbat-e Heydarieh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Torbat-e Heydarieh, Iran
Corresponding author: hamid.ashraf.elt@gmail.com; h.ashraf@iautorbat.ac.ir
*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT
THE APPLICATION OF THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS TO THE FIELD OF ELT IN THE LAST FEW YEARS HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE IMMERGENCE OF CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES TOWARD THESE KINDS OF SKILLS AND THEIR POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON THE TEACHING/ LEARNING PROCESS. DESPITE THE RAPID SPREAD OF ENGLISH AND THE RELEVANCE OF THE ISSUES ADDRESSED AS THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS, FEW STUDIES HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED TO SURVEY EFL LEARNERS' SITUATION IN THE SKILLS. THE PRESENT STUDY, THEREFORE, AIMED AT DEVELOPING A QUESTIONNAIRE THAT COULD BE USED TO EVALUATE ELT COMMUNITY'S PERFORMANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS AMONG WHICH ICT LITERACY PLAYS A KEY ROLE. THE NEWLY DEVELOPED SELF-REPORTING QUESTIONNAIRE WAS VALIDATED BY ADMINISTERING IT AMONG 210 ENGLISH LEARNERS IN TWO CITIES IN IRAN. THIS STUDY INVESTIGATED THE INTERNAL CONSISTENCY AND CONSTRUCT VALIDITY OF THE NEWLY-DEVELOPED INSTRUMENT WHICH BOTH INDICATED ACCEPTABLE RESULTS.

KEYWORDS: 21ST CENTURY SKILLS, EFL, ICT LITERACY, CRITICAL THINKING, WAYS OF WORKING

1. Introduction

The 21st century rose as the beginning of the Digital Age – a time of unexpected new growth in technology and its subsequent information explosion. Never before have the tools for the information access and management made such an impact on the way we live, work, shop and play. New technologies and tools multiply daily and the new technologies of today are outdated almost as soon as they reach the market (Beers, 2012). "Exemplary science education can offer a rich context for developing many 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and information literacy. These skills not only contribute to a well-prepared workforce of the future but also give all individuals life skills that help them succeed." (NSTA, 2011)

This generation of 21st century skills keeps its own effect on the communication and the language learning especially foreign language learning. EFL learners, also, have certainly experienced these possible effects, i.e. they have come to class with different backgrounds, a variety of achievement levels, and different learning styles and strategies, affecting their way of acquiring the new language knowledge. Teachers of EFL have also been affected by the new century technologies. They have changed their teaching channels together with the strategies and beliefs in teaching and learning. Trilling and Fadel (2009) suggest that teachers need to move away from the traditional methods of teaching and bring new and innovating techniques into the classroom to teach the language skills more efficiently.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, almost all students and their parents other than the specialists and educators are certain about the benefits of the new technologies available in today's world as the new life style components. This new era brings with it some other skills called 21st century skills such as critical thinking, ICT literacy, life and career skills, learning and innovation or so, have been the focus of attention in academic settings.

These skills could be mostly done through learning a second language as the indirect learning skills which in turn shows the improvement of people's awareness of the necessity of learning English. In addition to the interrelationship between the 21st century skills and learning English, the most important aspect is the use of these skills in learning a second or foreign language. They not only improve the direct proficiency of EFL learning but will affect their emotional factors like motivation and anxiety.

In this research, the first purpose has been to investigate the necessary construct and items to be included in the inventory for the measurement of 21st century skills in an EFL context. Then, investigating its construct validity and internal consistency has been the other purpose followed in the present study.

1.2 Research Hypotheses

To avoid subjectivity the researchers propose the null hypothesis to find the answer to the questions of the research.

$H_0$1: The 21st Century Skills Questionnaire will not show good internal consistency.

$H_0$2: The 21st Century Skills Questionnaire will not show good indices of construct validity as measured by Principal Component Analysis.

1.3 Significant of the Study

Designing and validating together with the estimation of the reliability of a questionnaire on the 21st century skills is the purpose of the study. Developing the specific skills of the current century brings with it the question of how useful they can be in the different situations. This questionnaire can help researchers to discover the relationship between these skills and some aspects of social, economic or psychological fields of study. English language learning as EFL or ESL may be a relevant field in finding the relationship. Motivation, anxiety and proficiency or even the four language skills are some instances.

1.4 (De) limitations of the Study

Like any other researches, some inevitable limitations, which may raise new questions for further researches in the same field in the future, will be imposed on. In addition variables such as gender, age and other personal ones were not taken into account due to the limited number of the available participants.

2. Literature Review

The 21st century skills are not really different. We have always wanted students to be creative thinkers and problem solvers who have the skills necessary to function effectively in society and in the workplace. However, the way in which these skills are incorporated in the classroom and how technology is integrated will greatly change instruction (Beers 2012). Indeed, with technology, today's classroom transcends physical walls and reaches around the globe. In addition, we need to plan instruction with an understanding of the "digital natives" (Prensky, 2001) who have grown up in the Digital Age and who expect learning to be interactive, engaging and up-to-date.

Numerous studies and reports have emerged over the past decade that seek to identify the life, career, and learning skills that define the skills needed for success in the 21st century world. While there are some differences in how the skills are categorized or interpreted, there are also many commonalities.

2.1 Framework for 21st Century Learning

        For the students in order to be successful in the 21st century, some skills seem to be of great importance. This is the framework of the present study which includes the three core skills as: life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, information and technology skills. Also, some core subjects like English, Reading, Language Arts, World Languages, Arts, Mathematics, Economics, Science, Geography, History, and Government and Civics are among these skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). In addition to the core subjects, there are some themes in the instructional activities including global awareness, financial, economic, business, official literacy, civil literacy, health literacy, and environmental literacy (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

Looking at the Figure 1 below, the "pools" underneath the rainbow consist of standards and assessments, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and learning environment. The learning goals include core subject and themes (in green), such as social studies, math, science, language, etc.; interdisciplinary and contemporary thematic expertise, such as environmental, health, financial and civic literacy; and three sets of essential skills (in gold, purple and red), applied to the learning of content knowledge:

Figure 1 - P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning

The learning support systems represented by the pools below the rainbow, are the typical services and operations of an educational system: learning standards and assessments, curriculum and instruction, professional development, and lesson plans that are taught within the classroom.

The third category refers to career and life skills. This includes flexibility, adaptability, initiative, self-direction, communication, social and cross-cultural interaction, productivity and accountability, and leadership and responsibility. As Trilling and Fadel (2009) recommend, this is "The ability to work effectively and creatively with team members and classmates regardless of differences in culture and style is an essential 21st century life skill".

Likewise, students need to fit themselves for a world beyond the classroom in order to become successful in all aspects of life. Also, leadership and responsibility provides lots of opportunities to take responsibility and exercise leadership-skills important to future employers. Learning some responsibilities will strengthen their work ethic when they have a job or career. They will be prepared and be confident when they are seeking for job opportunities. It will continue to help them succeed in the job market and learn even more skills.

2.2 Benefits of 21st Century Skills

Students trying 21st century skills can benefit in different aspects and domains; linguistically, socially and cognitively; linguistically, by being able to learn lifelong skill in meaningful, authentic ways through challenging content (Cantoni-Harvey, 1987; Snow et. al., 1989), and since "Language is

learned most effectively for communication in meaningful, purposeful social and academic contexts and in real life to talk about what we know and what we want to know more about, not to talk about language itself" (Snow et. al., 1989), students can benefit socially. Cognitively, integration of these skills can help students in using reasoning and problem-solving skills to promote higher level of thinking and in large learning gains for students with a wide range of learning styles and backgrounds (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

2.3 Assessing 21st Century Skills
When we talk about a kind of skill it is expected to be a way, method or a kind of technique for its assessment and evaluation; otherwise, it is something abstract with no measurements, therefore its applicability may be under question. On the other hand assessment of student skills and knowledge is essential to guide learning and provide feedback to students, teachers, and parents on how well students are achieving set standards.
There are 10 skills (or the most important ones) that will typify those necessary for the 21st century. For each of these 10 skills, there are some measureable descriptions of the skill, considering the **K**nowledge, **S**kills, and **A**ttitudes, **V**alues and **E**thics aspects of each skill, (Marilyn Binkley et. al, 2010).
This is referred to as the **KSAVE** framework described in more details below:
- *Ways of Thinking*
1. Creativity and innovation
2. Critical thinking, problem solving, decision making
3. Learning to learn, meta-cognition
- *Ways of Working*
4. Communication
5. Collaboration (teamwork)
- *Tools for Working*
6. Information literacy (includes research on sources, evidence, biases, etc.)
7. ICT literacy
- *Living in the World*
8. Citizenship – local and global
9. Life and career
10. Personal & social responsibility – including cultural awareness and competence
To accommodate and reflect these differences in approach, three categories have been designed within the KSAVE model: *Knowledge* that includes all references to specific knowledge or understanding requirements for each of the 10 skills, *skills* that include the abilities, skills and processes that curriculum frameworks are designed to develop in as a focus for learning, and finally, *attitudes, values and ethics* referring to the behaviors and aptitudes that the students exhibit in relation to each of the 10 skills.

2.3.1 Ways of Thinking
The three categories of skills under this domain represent a promotion in the realization of thinking emphasizing the upper end of thinking skills, such as recall, and inferences.
-    *Creativity and Innovation*
Creativity is often described as a thinking skill or at least as an important aspect of thinking that can and should be fostered (Wegerif & Dawes, 2004). Triling & Fadel argue that creativity can be grown by teachers and learning environments that encourage questioning, openness to new ideas, and learning from mistakes and failures, and they can be developed, like other skills, with practice and over time (Wegerif & Dawes, 2004).
Innovation, on the other hand, is economically improving, advancing, and implementing new products and ideas. Education, just like business and industry, must constantly adapt itself to the rapid shifts in this 21st Century. This set of skill promotes creative thinking and the ability to work creatively with others, (Marilyn Binkley et.al 2010).
-    *Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making*

Critical thinking and problem solving have become the important features of the curriculum in many parts of the world. In the USA, for example, the American Philosophical Association has published the Delphi report on critical thinking, (Facione, 1990) which identified six cognitive thinking skills: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation. This framework was further elaborated to include attitudinal and values based criteria: students should be inquisitive, well informed, open-minded, fair, flexible and honest.

In 2000, England's Department for Education developed new computer-based tests of problem solving for children aged 8-14, making creative use of computer in the domains of mathematics, science, design and technology as a new scale in the assessment of students' thinking and ability to apply a range of techniques to solve novel and unexpected problems.

- *Learning to Learn and Meta-Cognition*

Learning to learn and meta-cognition have most frequently been measured by thinking aloud protocols that have been administered in one-on-one situations. Clearly this methodology is not suitable for large-scale assessments; however, technology might be used to support and assess 'learning to learn', including self-assessment and self-regulated learning. One interesting example of this is the e-VIVA project developed at Ultra-lab in the United Kingdom (Marilyn Binkley et. al, 2010). Prins, Veenman, & Elshout (2006), believed that meta-cognition may help to compensate for the lack of intelligence or prior knowledge of a subject during problem solving. they showed that students with high meta-cognitive skill levels tend to outperform those with low meta-cognitive skills on complex and unfamiliar tasks, even when they are equal in ability or aptitude.

2.3.2 Ways of Working

21st century brought with it a rapid shift in the way people work, as well. Having team members telecommute while working on the same project is an example employing some skills in the domain as:

- *Communication*

Marilyn Binkley et al. (2010), proposed communication as the mainstay of assessments in the form of reading, writing and alternative representations such as graphing in mathematics and science, though in the form of listening and speaking the assessments have not taken into account the full range of possibilities. As an example of a change, consider the use of text messaging. The first commercial text message was sent in December of 1992. Today the number of text messages sent and received everyday exceeds the total population of the planet.

- *Collaboration and Teamwork*

Collaboration at the most basic, school level assessments focuses on the individual performance; consequently, in doing a collaborative task, the most important question is how to assign credit to each member of the group, as well as how to account for differences across groups that could measure the student's performance (Laurillard, 2009).

Collaboration also has powerful effects on student learning. This can be seen in the higher scores on collaborative works than separate products (Fall, Webb, & Chudowsky, 1997; Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003; Saner, et. al., 1994; Webb, 1993).

Working in collaboration can improve students' social competency, as well (e.g., conflict resolution skills and use of helping behaviors) and academic self-concept (Ginsburg-Block, Rohrbeck, & Fantuzzo, 2006).

2.3.3 Tools for Working

-   Information Literacy

Information literacy includes research on sources, evidence, biases, etc. These are clearly important skills, (Table 1).

For the purpose of communication, entertainment, or accessing information, most children acquire practical skills in using computers that are not part of the assessment processes that they meet in schools. Some research has shown that students who are active computer users perform lower than expected on paper-based tests (Russell & Haney, 2000).

Table 1: Educational Testing service Framework for ICT

Basic	Be able to open software, sort out and save information on the computer, and other simple skills on the use of computer and software.
Download	Be able to download different information types from the internet.
Search	Know about and how to get access to information.
Navigate	Be able to orient oneself in digital networks, learning strategies in using the internet.
Classify	Be able to organize information according to a certain classification scheme or genre.
Integrate	Be able to compare and put different types of information together in relation to multimodal texts.
Evaluate	Be able to check and evaluate the information one seeks from the internet or to judge the quality, relevance, objectivity and usefulness of the information one has found. Critical evaluation of sources.
Communicate	Be able to communicate information and express one self through different media tools.
Cooperate	Be able to take part in net-based interactions of learning, and take advantage of digital technology to cooperate and take part in networks.
Create	Be able to produce and create different forms of information as multimodal texts, make web pages and so forth. Be able to develop something new by using specific tools and software. Remixing different texts into something new.

- *ICT Literacy*

In 2001, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the U.S. developed a panel framework for ICT literacy. The outcome was the report *Digital transformation: A framework for ICT literacy* (International ICT Literacy Panel, 2002). Based on this framework, shown in Table 1, one can define ICT literacy as "the ability of individuals to use ICT appropriately to access, manage and evaluate information, develop new understandings, and communicate with others in order to participate effectively in society" (Ainley et. al., 2005).

E-learning as one of the outstanding feature of 21st century is regarded as a valuable category of ICT literacy that turned to be a valuable asset to educators and students. Assessing this important skill has been among one of the major recent issues of E-learning in school education which in turn can develop 21st century skills (Kong, et. al., 2014).

2.3.4 Living in the World

Essentially people must learn to live not only in their town or country but also in the world. As more and more people individually move in the 21st century to compete, connect and collaborate, it is even more important that they understand all the aspects of citizenship; what happens in their country and in the globe as well (Marilyn Binkley et. al, 2010).

- *Citizenship*

Citizenship as an educational objective is not new, and has been part of curricula, especially in social studies. A central focus has been on knowledge about democratic processes. Citizenship as a competence implies certain challenges in measurement (Marilyn Binkley et. al, 2010).

- *Life and Career*

The management of life and career is also another skill needed for living in the world. There is long tradition of measurement of occupational preferences as one component for career guidance but no strong basis for building measures of skill in managing life and career (Marilyn Binkley et. al., 2010).

- *Personal and Social Responsibility*

The exercise of personal and social responsibility is also included among the skills needed for living in the world. There are aspects of this skill in collaboration and teamwork, which is among the skills included among ways of working. Personal and social responsibility is taken to include cultural awareness and cultural competence.

3. Methodology

This chapter represents an overview of the research methodology, an account of the procedures used in the study, including the research design, selection and description of the participants, setting, instruments used for data collection and analysis.

3.1 Study Design

The nature of the study is both quantitative and qualitative; the gathered data and discussed results are based on scores and statistics and the construction of the questionnaire is a kind of qualitative survey. Factual questions were asked to identify demographic characteristics of the participants like gender, age and experience or their level of proficiency. Behavioral recognition questions helped to determine the students' performance and knowledge of the 21st century skills.

3.2 Participants and sampling

To collect the required data, a group of 210 EFL learners among the high school students in Tehran and Shahryar, Iran were selected quite randomly. This sampling is pilot study of a larger research which is to be done nationwide. The learners in our population were equal number of male and female, between 15 to 18 years of age, accidentally selected from 3 different high schools.

3.3 Instrumentations and Procedure

The procedures followed in this study comprise designing and validating the questionnaire.

To begin with, in order to design the questionnaire, a group of 3 M.A EFL teachers under the supervision of two Ph.D. professors were selected to gather the data for 21st century skills. Due to the groups of skills (Table 2) some questions were designed to show the degree of skills attributed. This was adapted from many different sources and studies done in recent years.

After some revision and editing the questions, the Likert scaling of 5 was selected for the degree of ability the participants may have. Then to ascertain clarity and prevent any misunderstanding for the Iranian participants a Persian copy prepared which was then revised by the professors. A group of teachers from different fields together with some limited number of students were asked to pilot the questions for the last revision. The 21st CSQ of 50 questions in a 5-point Likert scale including 1 = always/entirely, 2 = often/ mostly, 3 = sometimes/ partly, 4 = seldom/ hardly ever, 5 = never/ not at all. The scores then range between 50 and 250 was the result (See Appendix).

To gather the data for the degree of reliability the questionnaire performed in some high schools in Tehran and Shahryar, Iran. The 210 participants included 160 boys and 50 girls who answered the questionnaire in 30 minutes based on the time allocated.

Gathering the data, they were entered into and processed with Excel software specified for the reliability measurement in Alpha Cronbach and Spearman-Brown prophecy discussed as follows in data analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

The internal consistency of the whole questionnaire was measured with the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. Moreover, using Alpha Cronbach, the reliability of each factor constructing the validated questionnaire was also examined.

To validate the questionnaire, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used. First, PCA extracted the underlying factors by calculating the eigenvalues of the matrix greater than 1.0. The Scree test was used in order to decide about the number of factors to retain for rotation. For conducting factor rotation, Varimax (orthogonal rotation) with Kaiser Criterion was used. The result was a rotated component matrix and a transformation matrix. The rotated component matrix indicated the variables loaded on each factor so that the researchers came up with the new factors.

Descriptive statistical analysis via SPSS and EXCEL software was used in this study to analyze the data. While the mean shows the degree of skills attributed to the participants, its standard deviation (SD) measures the variability of responses.

3.5 Reliability

The reliability of the whole questionnaire was 0.82, a good reliable test when estimated in Cronbach Alpha through the Excel software created by Del Siegle (dsiegle@uconn.edu) and so as the other reliability calculating scales are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Reliability Calculating Scales

Cronbach's Alpha	0.824855868	Reliability Calculator	
Split-Half (odd-even) Correlation	0.774979132		
Spearman-Brown Prophecy	0.873226189		
Mean for Test	131.252381		
Standard Deviation for Test	18.64960408		
KR21	1.646168415	Questions	Subjects
KR20	1.698829344	50	210

N of Cases = 210.0	N of Items = 50	Alpha = .8249

On the other hand analyzing the reliability in item deletion was at least 0.81 which showed again a good reliability for all the items in isolation.

3.6 Construct validity

The Factorability of the inter-correlation matrix was measured by two tests: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The results obtained from the two tests revealed that the factor model was appropriate (Table 3).

Table 3.
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.706
Bartlett's Test of Approx	Chi-Square Sphericity	2956.735
	Df	1225
	Sig.	.000

The 210 valid questionnaires were collected to carry on a pilot study. The researchers chose to base their estimate on the Principal Component Analysis with the variance covariance matrix, because the 50 variables were obtained on a 5-point scale of Likert. The adequacy indicator of the sample KMO=0.706 > 0.70 indicated that the sample data are suitable for the undergoing of factor analysis. The control of sphericity (Bartlett's sign 0.000 < 0.001) proved that the principal component analysis has a sense. Through this analysis, data grouping was based on the inter-correlation with the aim of imprinting those factors which describe completely and with clarity the participants' attitudes towards the research subject.

The construct validity of the Social and Cultural Capital Questionnaire was examined through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). PCA extracted 16 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 which accounted for 69% of the variance.
The results obtained from the Scree Test indicated that a five-factor solution might provide a more suitable grouping of the items in the questionnaire.

The researchers, then, inspected orthogonal rotation. The result of Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was a rotated component matrix. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 3. The results indicated that the first factor consisted of 15 items. The second factor consisted of 11 items. Factor 3 consisted of 6 items. Factor 4 consisted of 7 items and items 18, 19, and 25 made up the fifth factor. The total number of items was 42.

Finally, the researchers analyzed the items comprising each factor and named them as listed in Table 4.

Table 4.
Classification of 21st CSQ items

No.	Skill Category	Items
1	Critical thinking and problem solving	1-2-3-4-5-6
2	Creativity and innovation	7- 8
3	Communication and collaboration	9- 10-11-12-13
4	Interpersonal skills	14- 15-16
5	Leadership	17- 18-19
6	Entrepreneurialism	20- 21
7	Health and wellness	22- 23
8	Flexibility and adaptability	24- 25
9	Global and culture awareness	26
10	Social responsibility and ethics	27- 28
11	Technology literacy	29- 30- 47- 48- 49- 50
12	Curiosity and inquisitiveness	31- 32-33
13	Media literacy	34- 45
14	Information literacy	35- 46
15	Environmental literacy	36
16	Financial and business literacy	37- 38
17	Meta-cognition	39- 40
18	Accountability	41
19	Civil literacy	42- 43
20	Visualization	44

5. Discussions and Conclusion

As it was indicated in this study the researchers sought to find out the reliability and validity of the 21st Century Skills Questionnaire (CSQ) when examined with EFL students in an EFL context. The 21st CSQ is then a valid and reliable questionnaire which can be used for several studies in the area of the new world skills needed to live and work. The factors can help researchers focus on some specific areas wherever necessary for their studies.

On the other hand, since this seems to be the first study done on the 21st century skills, at least in the area of Iranian EFL learners, it will open new eras in the field of TEFL or TESL, as well. Most researchers will need the whole or some parts of the questionnaire to perform their EFL subject areas in relation to the 21st century skills. This in turn can be utilized by the researchers of the other fields of studies like humanities and psychology.

Each factor in the classification of skills is itself an open area for further studies. This can be done in relation to the other factors or on its own. For example, the study of the means individually reveals that Iranian EFL learners are good in the first factor under the name of critical thinking and problem solving in comparison to the other factors.

Correlational studies also will reveal the predictability of some pedagogical and psychological factors. These include the learners' special attitudes, aptitude, motivation and anxiety. Wen-chi et.al, 2011, in their study as the relationship between the learners' online interaction and the level of confidence, motivation and skills revealed that in EFL realms, technology makes it possible to

provide opportunities more commonly found only when there is a surrounding population of native speakers, and thus helps transform traditionally passive learners into more engaged and interactive learners. The data showed that even a relatively small amount of positive authentic interaction in the target language made students more comfortable in applying their skills, more confident in what they learned, and more inspired to make global, cross- cultural connections. Therefore, this instructional design positively influenced what Dörnyei called the vision of self of the students, promoting the idea of being able to function in the cosmopolitan 21st century international culture and leading to stronger overall EFL motivation, confidence, and ability.

References

Ananiadou, K. and M. Claro (2009), "21st Century Skills and Competences for New Millennium Learners in OECD Countries", OECD Education Working Papers, No. 41, OECD Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/218525261154

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Frisbie, D. A. (2008). NCME Instructional Module on Reliability of Scores from Teacher-Made Tests. The University of Iowa.

Ghanizadeh A. & Moafian F. The Relationship between Iranian EFL Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy and their Pedagogical Success in Language Institutes. Islamic Azad University, Mashhad Branch, Iran

Golafshani N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Hixson, N.K., Ravitz, J., & Whisman, A. (2012). Extended professional development in project-based learning: Impacts on 21st century teaching and student achievement. Charleston, WV: West Virginia Department of Education, Division of Teaching and Learning, Office of Research.

Kazi, AM. & Khalid, W. (2000). Questionnaire designing and validation; Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan.

Kong, S. C., Chan, T.-W., Griffin, P., Hoppe, U., Huang, R., Kinshuk, Looi, C. K., Milrad, M., Norris, C., Nussbaum, M., Sharples, M., So, W. M. W., Soloway, E., & Yu, S. (2014). E- learning in School Education in the Coming 10 Years for Developing 21st Century Skills: Critical Research Issues and Policy Implications. *Educational Technology & Society, 17* (1), 70–78.

Kyllonen, P. C. (2012, January). The role of non-cognitive skills in academic success. Paper presented at the conference of 21st century knowledge and skills: the new high school curriculum and the future of assessment, University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Ledward, C.B. & Hirata, D. (2011).An Overview of 21st Century Skills. Pacific Policy Research Center, Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools–Research & Evaluation

Marilyn Binkley M. et.al. (2011). Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills (ATC21S) Draft White Paper 1. Integrating Research Findings, National Council on Measurement in Education, Vancouver, B.C.

National Research Council. (2011). Assessing 21st century skills: Summary of a workshop. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. Retrieved from http://ctl.sri.com/publications/downloads/21st_century_skills.pdf

Noreen M. & Webb, R. J. (2006). Shavelson and Edward H. Haertel. Reliability Coefficients and Generalizability Theory

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) & Metiri Group, (2003). en- Gauge 21st Century Skills: Literacy in the Digital Age. *http://www.ncrel.org/engauge*

Pacific Policy Research Center. (2010). 21st Century Skills for Students and Teachers. Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools, Research & Evaluation Division.

Patrick C. K. (2012). Measurement of 21st Century Skills within the Common Core State Standards, May 7–8.

P21 Framework Definitions, (2009). The Partnership for 21st Century Skills. http://www.21stcenturyskills.org.

Appendix
21st Century Skills Questionnaire
This questionnaire tends to measure your level of ability (what to do or have in mind)
in 21st century skills.
Please try to read the items and use the choice based on your present state in these skills.

Student's Name: (optional)……………………….. **Gender:** ◯ male ◯ female
Institute's name: ………………………. **State:** ……………. **City:**…………….
Age: ◯ below 15 ◯ between 15-18 ◯ between 18-21 ◯ 22 and over
Education: ◯ Junior High School ◯ Senior High School ◯ College ◯ B.A/S ◯ M.A/S
Foreign Language Class Experience: ◯ Yes ◯ No How Long...................
Level of EFL Proficiency: ◯ Elementary ◯ Lower Intermediate ◯ Intermediate
◯ Upper Intermediate ◯ Advanced ◯ Proficient

No	Items	Entirely/ Always	Mostly/often	Partly/ Some times	Rarely/ Hardly ever	Not at all/ Never
1	When faced with a problem I know how to apply knowledge to solve them.					
2	When faced with a difficult problem, I tend to get discouraged easily.					
3	After I've made a decision, I find myself wishing I had chosen differently.					
4	I'd prefer to let other people make difficult decisions for me.					
5	When others get stuck, I am able to think of new solutions to problems.					
6	I can generate good ideas based on logic and facts.					
7	I believe that creativity is fundamentally driven by luck and accident.					
8	I can make new and creative suggestions and solutions in groups.					
9	I'm patient during a consultation and try not to jump to conclusions too quickly.					
10	I'm willing to spend time with others.					
11	I undermine any of others' personal beliefs.					
12	I speak in a way that others could understand.					
13	While speaking, I give my addressee enough time to ask questions.					
14	If I don't understand someone's explanation the first time, I ask for clarification.					
15	I have no difficulty putting my thoughts and feelings into words to express to others.					
16	When other people become emotional around me, I know how to react.					
17	I can easily get people to follow my lead.					
18	People look at me for help when things go wrong in the organization.					
19	I feel that I inspire other people - I influence how they think, act, and accomplish goals.					
20	I prefer my own way of doing things.					
21	I view mistakes as learning opportunities.					
22	I care about my fitness.					

23	I am calm and cool without any stress and depression.					
24	I can adapt myself to different roles, job responsibilities, schedules, and contexts.					
25	I can work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities.					
26	I learn from and work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures including those of foreign languages.					
27	I act responsibly with the interests of the larger community.					
28	I behave in a respectable professional manner when dealing with other people.					
29	I use computers as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and access the information.					
30	I use mobile phones, media players, GPS, etc. as a tool to communicate with others and to access the information.					
31	Simple explanations leave me with a lot of questions to ask.					
32	When I come across something puzzling, I like to try to find a solution.					
33	I curiously enjoy learning about unfamiliar subjects.					
34	I understand and utilize the most appropriate media creation tools, characteristics, and conventions.					
35	I know where and how to find information efficiently and effectively using appropriate sources like, journals, encyclopedias, database or so.					
36	I understand the environment in which I live, particularly as relates to air, climate, land, food, energy, water and ecosystems and the factors that may damage or survive them.					
37	I'm responsible for day-to-day decisions about my money.					
38	I do my financial jobs using credit cards and on-line gateways.					
39	I have a good memory for words and names and easily remember to do my tasks.					
40	I know how to control my thoughts and learning activities.					
41	I can manage time to control and perform all my intended programs and get the best results.					
42	I understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship at local, state, national, and global levels.					
43	I know the purpose and function of each of the three branches of government and the Constitution.					
44	I can demonstrate, interpret, recognize, and understand information presented through visible actions like objects and symbols.					
45	I prefer electronic (written or audio) form of books and magazines.					
46	I follow the daily news and events through the internet.					
47	I use the electronic mail (e-mail) rather than postal mail to communicate with others.					
48	I prefer the distance education rather than attending schools.					
49	I prefer on-line exams rather than personal/ usual school exams.					
50	I prefer to use audio-visual recorded clips rather than note taking in my classes.					

THE ROLE OF TEACHING MATERIALS IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Mustafa Zamanian
Assistant Professor, Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

Farideh Ataeifar
Ph.D Candidate in TEFL, Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

Sepideh Alipour
Ph.D Candidate in TEFL, Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

ABSTRACT
THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE IS TO STATE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TEACHING MATERIALS IN DEVELOPING A LANGUAGE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CRITICAL THINKING PEDAGOGY. FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE, THIS WORK QUESTIONS THE TRADITIONAL CONCEPTS AND NOTIONS RELATED TO INSTRUMENTS OF ACCESS ASSIGNED TO MATERIALS. THEY ARE CONCEIVED AS DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS THAT CAN HELP STUDENTS PROMOTE AN IMPORTANT CHANGE IN THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMICAL PROBLEMS THEY FACE EVERY DAY BY USING A CRITICAL DISCOURSE. THE CURRENT PAPER STUDIES THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS RELATED TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE OF TEACHING MATERIALS IN THE LANGUAGE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS. IT ALSO THERE ANALYZES THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG TEACHING MATERIALS AND MOTIVATION. SINCE A CRITICAL POSITION ABOUT THE ROLE OF TEACHING MATERIALS IS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE REPRODUCTION OF PREJUDICES AND COMMON SENSE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE LANGUAGE AND SOCIETIES, IT CAN ALSO BE CONCLUDED THAT MATERIALS ARE REPRODUCTIONS AND CONSTRUCTORS OF CERTAIN DISCURSIVE AND IDEOLOGICAL REALITIES THAT USUALLY FAVOR THE INTERESTS OF THE DOMINANT CLASSES.

KEY WORDS: TEACHING MATERIALS, LANGUAGE TEACHING, LANGUAGE LEARNING, DISCOURSE, MOTIVATION.

Introduction
Teaching a foreign language has been considered a difficult task to accomplish because of the various situations individuals are exposed to in the process. Students' different learning styles and needs, levels of motivation, students and teachers' expectations, availability of resources and accuracy of materials are just some examples of many struggles teachers and students have to cope with.

The unexpected and various situations in which learners and teachers work together require them to use language to face the world. In this sense, Fairclough (2001:19) suggests that "language is part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are (in part) linguistic phenomena". Therefore language is considered as a social practice that provides inputs, experiences, emotions and discourses to solve everyday problems for every individual.

Language is not only a set of rules that learners have to master; rather it is a way to place oneself in a world where there are unequal power relationships.

From a critical perspective, the sociability of language can be understood as a means for cultural and ideological awareness. In this respect, Tishman et al. (1995) state this process of consciousness - or lack of it - is strongly developed in educational institutions because schools are places of culture. Not only in the sense that they introduce students to great intellectual achievements, but also in their sense of community, their spirit of common enterprise. Spend a little time in any classroom and you will instinctively sense it –a particular culture of teaching and learning. It is evident in the way students and teachers interact, in their expectations of one another, their common ways of talking, their shared understanding of what is acceptable, what is interesting, what is valuable.

The context of teaching-learning is so complex that it sometimes seems a hard challenge for teachers and students to understand the critical role of the language in forming individual and social identity.

Materials in English Language Teaching
Teaching materials help both teachers and students to have critical thinking about language use in different contexts. It not only develops certain linguistic skills but also makes them aware of the ideological implications of the educational processes related to language. In other words, one thing is to be able to produce coherent utterances regarding phonological, syntactical and grammatical aspects, and another is to use language to enable oneself to know a critical discourse and attitude to face the world. Moreover, teaching materials can help teachers and students to develop more critical thinking, or to construct misconceptions and ideas about language and its linguistic contexts.

Lack of social and ideological awareness brings about some problems regarding the language teaching and language learning process as well as the use of teaching materials. These problems are highly dependent on the impossibility of conceiving language in social rather than structural terms. Fairclough (2001) claimed that the teaching of language in schools has to a remarkable extent contrived to ignore its most decisive social functions. This cannot be blamed on the teachers, because the same is true of most of the academic work on language which the teachers have been offered as models.

The scholars' academic work has transcended the theoretical field to the creation of textbooks and any other type of materials. These teaching instruments regulate the use and production of language in the educational processes. Some linguistic forms are accepted as correct; and some others are stigmatized. Stereotypes, prejudices and lack of tolerance toward cultural and linguistic diversity are finally organized in a language program, and in the materials they use to develop the class experiences. Roberts (1995) stated that the issues of power and are generally seen as inherent in language policy and planning on a macro level, classrooms themselves may be seen as self-contained, autonomous systems, insulated from external political concerns. The actual teaching that goes on behind closed doors is often conceived of as a neutral transfer of skills, knowledge, or competencies, to be left in the hands of trained professionals whose job it is to implement the latest methods and techniques. Language acquisition is seen as little more than a tool in service on other goals, to be used for whatever purposes the learner chooses, but generally leading toward greater economic access.

Even though theory, materials and other aspects related to teaching-learning a language are regulated in the language planning, the dynamics of power and domination can be brought to the class discussion to neutralize its influence. Bridging the gap between the level of consciousness (which a critical position about language demands) and the lack of attention to "the what for?" – in ideological terms – people use the language in study have implications in the educational processes, as well as the attitudes and values individuals develop towards linguistic matters, cultural diversity and society.

From a curricular perspective, a language teaching-learning program is tied to certain proposals that may restrict critical thinking because of the political view of language usage, the texts required, the aims and content targets proposed, the emphasis of evaluation criteria and the idea of culture among some other factors. Cooper (1989: 45) states that "language planning refers to deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition [and learning], structure, or

functional allocation of their language codes." As a way to modify people's attitudes, language planning often functions within a context of ideological control. One might think that when those components of the curriculum are so restrictive in terms of tolerance towards diversity, it is very difficult to construct a teaching learning environment based on the principles of critical thinking pedagogy. Using language can thus become a means to reinforce stereotypes, prejudices and lack of tolerance towards oneself and others.

However, there is always a range of possibilities to question and analyze the proposed teaching policies for language learning and teaching. Even though the curriculum is a world construction permeated by discriminated worldviews, it is not self-sufficient and autonomous. The curriculum is composed by the community, teachers, students, parents and the school background. The development and success of the curriculum depend on the context, the role of the individuals involved in the educational process and the use of resources. All these elements are subjects and objects at the same time. According to Roberts (1995) the pedagogical choices about the curriculum development, content, materials, classroom processes, and language use, although appearing to be informed by apolitical professional considerations, are, in fact, inherently ideological in nature, with significant implications for learners' socioeconomic roles (social and cultural contexts, motivations, among other aspects).

Therefore, the way the curriculum is presented and developed can make the difference between a critical thinking classroom and a non-critical thinking one. What makes the difference between a stereotyped oppressive education and a liberating one is found in the activities students and teachers perform and their use of language. Wiley (1996) proposes that language planning frequently attempts to solve conflicts over language, it can result in creating conflicts. Thus, we may ask: what is the relationship between language planning and various types of conflicts – social, legal, economic, political, educational? Language planning affects speakers of regional and social varieties within the language, immigrants who do not speak the standard or majority language, and indigenous conquered peoples and colonized peoples who speak languages other than the dominant one.

As part of a discipline or working field, teachers acquire and develop knowledge that is implicitly influenced by common sense assumptions regarding politics, economy, culture, education, religion, science, law, among other aspects. For instance, Unamuno (2003) states that the strong cultural and linguistic homogenizing processes are presenting uniformity as something natural when diversity and variation are what is natural.

Therefore, in a complex and struggling educational context, being aware that language planning is more than an innocent curricular program to "guide" the teaching-learning process is an important step to promote critical thinking in the language classroom. In order to do so, teachers must think about the implicit information and values students are provided with when learning another language because their teaching practice could create and promote common sense assumptions.

Part of a holistic language education includes a critical analysis of those ideas diminishing cultural diversity. By using teaching materials such as textbooks, language planning and national policies are put into practice. For example, "*Society and Language Classroom*" is a book that faithfully follows the content targets, objectives, language functions, and the cultural views of the English language.

Language and culture go together in order to communicate social meanings. This means that the language must be presented in meaningful situations according to appropriate cultural contexts". However, as it is presented in the textbook " *Society and Language Classroom*" culture seems to be associated to subject maters developed through target contents like holidays and celebrations in English Speaking countries and tourist attractions offered by English communities. The cultural components of a language can be studied as target contents but it does not mean that a cultural respect regarding values, attitudes and linguistic functions are achieved or promoted when using language. Language functions should include a critical view of cultural practices, values and attitudes; and teaching materials as textbooks should also respond to demands.

All in all, teaching materials can promote certain discourses. The danger or positive aspect regarding educational processes is that ideology is inscribed in discourses in the sense that it is literally written or spoken in it; it is not a separate element which exists independently in some free-floating realm of 'ideas and is embodied in words, but a way of thinking, speaking, experiencing. (Besley, 1980: 5)

Teaching Materials: Conceptualization

Since what is left out of definitions is often more than what is included in them, conceptualizing is considered a tough and risky task. Conceptualizations are defined and determined by particular perceptions about reality that may restrict other opinions about the truth. The world is organized, limits are set, and life is regulated by means of definitions. As Roberts (1995: 17) states "social control is exerted not just by what is taught, but by what is omitted". Therefore, a conceptual review of what has been understood as didactic materials is necessary for it helps one to rethink common sense assumptions about the role and significance that didactic materials have. Traditionally, teaching materials are considered as instruments to access the target language. They are used for dealing with grammar, syntax, phonetics, and cultural matters among others. Obviously, materials have only one purpose "presenting the language in study". They are considered as objects used to inform students and help teachers deal with the curricular aspects.

According to Tomlinson (1998), a teaching material is something which is used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. In other words, they can be anything that teachers deliberately use to increase the learners' knowledge and/or their experience of the language.

Materials are instruments that try to reduce the difficulty that the learners may face when to access the linguistic aspects of the target language. Thus, materials are essential resources as they stimulate and develop learners' linguistic skills.

On the other hand, teaching materials are perceived as partial constructors of knowledge. In this regard, Maslow (1999) explains that materials are symbolic representations or direct references of objects incorporated into teaching strategies that help the learners reconstruct knowledge through the creation of partial meanings of the curricular concepts.

Similarly, materials are meaningful constructions of reality and truth. More than teaching instruments, materials are useful because they create certain mental images and representations of everything related knowledge.

Materials and Motivation

Human beings are emotional creatures. So at the heart of any thought, meaning and action is emotion. All human beings do what their feelings tell them to do. However, feelings are not just some simple reactions; yet they are shaped based on the indeviduals social and cultural stance. Society and culture form peoples' attitude, viewpoints and responces.

Since teaching materials activate students' affectivity towards academic performance and the competence of the language in study, the importance of them has often been associated with the learners' motivation. According to the idea of material-stimulus, once students receive the stimulus, they move to the responding facet which demands both their voluntary and required participation.

Moreover, teaching materials are important as teachers elicit the reactions that the learners need for language learning by using them. These behaviorist assumption of motivation is as an instrument which plays a key role in the teaching and learning process for materials seem to become tools to reach the language goals.

Thus, teaching materials shape the construct of motivation. They can encourage students to "perceive the value of reading, meet the needs of exploration, stimulation, knowledge, self-esteem, and autonomy" (Brown, 2000: 161). In cognitive and behaviorist terms, materials should be used, selected or designed according to scientific stages of knowledge (exploration, manipulation, etc.), needs of belonging and the self-actualization of desires. Didactic materials should serve to satisfy each requirement within the hierarchy of needs. If they fail to do so, students will not be able to realize the rewards of knowledge and will "connect the learning only to superficial needs (e.g. fulfilling a requirement)" (Brown, 2009: 161).

SO, materials are part of an approach empowering the learners to realize the social, cultural, and economical practices in which language is used. Teaching materials can help teachers and learners develop a language teaching and learning process related to their attitudes towards content targets and one's system of values and feelings.

Worldview Materials Portray

If students are provided with communicative spaces by teachers using appropriate materials, then they can evaluate the messages transmitted through the language, images and content presented in the materials they have used. It requires them to be able to understand what people do, and why they do that. Materials can be used in the classroom in a way to help the learners use their cognitive and affective domains for reinterpreting and reconstructing their identities and realities. It is necessary for teachers and students to consider the materials as some ideological projects that are used to persuade them.

Teachers should use the teaching resources not only to deal with any linguistic content but also to discover the worldview materials portray. Teachers and students are sometimes obliged to use materials which do not respect cultural and linguistic diversities by language planning programs. Yet, both students and teachers can question the content and the approach of those materials to discern their implicit worldview. At the time they reach the institutional demands, teachers and students can criticize the social, economical and cultural discourses of the materials provided by official institutions.

Some students and teachers think of the teaching materials simply as a means for getting information about teaching and learning the language content assigned in the curriculum. Some negative aspects and characteristics of some teaching materials such as anger, fear, consumerist practices and prejudices could play a key role in the construct of new attitudes and notions of the reality the learners may live or face. Teaching materials that are full of stereotypes can help students to question what they are being presented with in the teaching classrooms.

The way materials are used in classroom should be a critical, conscious process. Students and teachers can obtain the course objects by using materials that challenge their thinking about the world. So, materials could transcend the idea of breaking down students' thinking into discrete cognitive and/or physical performances. Materials should persuade the learners to express their own viewpoints respecting differences, with a clear understanding of the possible implications that their positions have in the social contexts.

Conclusions

When teachers and learners are aware of the worldview materials are promoting, they can use them to develop critical thinking. Materials have the power to elicit and shape images in teachers' and students' minds. When students are exposed to the use of certain teaching resources, they are not only offered an instrument to access knowledge; but they are also presented with a version of reality dressed up by discourses. They portray and develop specific treatments, perceptions and common sense assumptions about the language under study. Discourses exercise their power stimulating certain values and attitudes toward language speaking communities and economic systems. In a world permeated discriminatory attitudes among individuals, taking care about the language and cultural matters presented in materials may prevent the possible negative or dangerous effect teaching materials may cause. Then, instead of being instrumental structures to legitimize unfair relationships among individuals such as the lack of respect to cultural diversity and the right to be in a world free of stereotypes, self-destruction, dehumanization, contamination and war, teaching materials can be means of emancipation.

None can deny the influence that teaching materials have on the teaching learning process; therefore, language teachers must be aware of the role of the materials in their classrooms and the way they should be used. Teachers must consider the consequences that those teaching learning practices promoted by the use of materials, that they have in the social contexts and in the real life of their students. Thus, it is urgent to rethink the significance materials have from discursive, ideological and critical perspectives. Materials should encourage the learners to be the center of a teaching-learning process based on a responsible and critical understanding of the reality they and other human beings experience, and the reality offered by dominant groups through the materials they use in classes.

More comprehensive, teaching materials are outstanding elements in the construction of students' motivations, worldviews and perception about a language, society and culture. Learning a language

is an affective process that requires an understanding of the culture and comprehension of oneself and others. So, it is crucial to create affective language backgrounds that underline respect for linguistic and cultural diversities. Also, teachers and students should consider the fact that the affective domain is not just a response or a set of common sense attitudes toward a situation or a particular person. In fact, it is perceived as an emotional set of attitudes and values about the world that is ideologically and discursively constructed. Considering the role that didactic materials play in the language teaching-learning process, one can refer to them as some counteract stereotyped notions and behaviors about the language and culture under study.

References

Besley, C. (1980). *Critical Practice.* New York: Routledge.

Brown, H.D. (2009). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching.* New York: Longman

Coleman, H. (2012). *Society and Language Classroom.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, R. L. (1989). *Language Planning and Social Change.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power* (2nd ed.). London: Longman.

Maslow, A. A. H. (1999). *Toward of a Psychology of Being.* (2nd ed.) New York: Harper & Row.

Roberts, E. A. (1995). The Politics of the ESL Classroom: Issues of power in pedagogical choices. In J. W. Tollefson (ed.), *Power and Inequality in Language Education.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tishman, S., Perkins, D., and Jay, E. (1995). *The Thinking Classroom: Learning and Teaching in a Culture of Thinking.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials Development in Language Teaching.* London: Cambridge University Press.

Unamuno, V. (2003). *Lingua, Sociocultural: Critical Linguistic Education.* Barcelona: GRAO.

Wiley, T. G. (1996). Language Planning and Policy. In S. L. McKay and N. H. Hornberger (eds.), *Sociolinguistic and Language Teaching.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

AUTHORIAL IDENTITY PRESENCE IN PHYSICAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Simin Attarzadeh
Department of English, Bushehr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bushehr, Iran. Email:
silveratt@hotmail.com

Ali A. Khansir
Bushehr University of Medical Sciences, Bushehr, Iran. Email:
ahmad_2004_bu@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
THE AUTHOR'S APPEARANCE IN A TEXT WORKS TO CREATE A PLAUSIBLE IDENTITY AND A VOICE WITH WHICH TO PRESENT AN ARGUMENT. HOWEVER, SOMETIMES CREATING SUCH AN IDENTITY IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS. IN ORDER TO INVESTIGATE IF TWO DISCIPLINES FOLLOW THE SAME CONVENTIONS OF IDENTITY IN ACADEMIC WRITING, THE PRESENT STUDY BENEFITED A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE CORPUS OF THIRTY JOURNAL ARTICLES FROM TWO VARIOUS CATEGORIES BASED ON CATEGORIZATION PROPOSED BY SCIENCE DIRECT. ALSO, THE RESEARCHER USED THE TAXONOMY OF FUNCTIONS DEVELOPED BY HYLAND (2002A) TO SHOW THE DEGREE OF AUTHORIAL PRESENCE THROUGH THE USE OF FIRST PERSON PRONOUN. THE RESULTS SHOWED THAT ALTHOUGH SELF-MENTION CONSTITUTES A CENTRAL PRAGMATIC FEATURE OF ACADEMIC DISCOURSE AND PLAY A FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN HELPING AUTHORS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR ADDRESSEES AND TO BUILD THEIR AUTHORIAL SELF, THE WRITERS WERE RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT ITS CLEAR CONNOTATIONS OF AUTHORITY AND PERSONAL COMMITMENT. THEREFORE, THEY SIGNIFICANTLY UNDERUSED AUTHORIAL PRONOUNS AND DETERMINERS AND ADOPTED A LESS CLEARLY INDEPENDENT STANCE. IT IS WORTH MENTIONING THAT THE RESULTS OBTAINED FROM THE PRESENT STUDY REVEALED THAT THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE IN THE USE OF IDENTITY MARKERS IN ACADEMIC WRITING ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES.

KEY WORDS: WRITING, ACADEMIC WRITING, IDENTITY, DISCIPLINE

1. Introduction

Despite the fact that almost everything that writer writes say something about him, and the source of relationship that he wants to set up with his readers (Hyland, 2005a), authors often aim at being objective in the expression of ideas and thus try to avoid specific reference to personal opinions. This is partly because these identities can differ from those they know from their everyday lives, or past learning experiences (Cadman, 1997), but also because they haven't been taught that disciplinary conventions differ (Lea and Street, 1999). Briefly, if we simply think that academic writing is impersonal, we deny variability and this may have the effect of preventing students from coming to terms with the specific demands of their disciplines (Hyland, 2002). In this case, students cannot construct a credible representation of themselves and cannot align themselves with the social identities; therefore, those new to an academic community are likely to find the discipline very

different from those they bring with them (Barton and Hamilton, 1998). This social identity is accomplished through a range of rhetorical features, but most visibly in the use of first person pronouns and corresponding determiners. While the use of first person pronoun is the powerful rhetorical strategy for emphasizing a contribution, many second language writers feel uncomfortable using them because of their connotations of authority

To investigate how the identities of writers are revealed through uses of first person pronoun, and to show writers of which disciplines try more to be invisible, the present study addressed the issue of disciplinary variation in the use of self-mention resources by analyzing a corpus of thirty research articles from two different fields of knowledge. Additionally, the researcher elaborated on the previous works to suggest a refined categorization of the major discourse functions of self-mention strategies in academic texts and provided statistical data on the distribution of these functions across disciplines.

2. Review of Literature

Recent investigations on writer identity and the use of first person pronoun have focused on texts produced by student writers (Tang and John,1999), and also on the comparison of writings of expert writers with those of novice ones (Hyland, 2002b) or on texts produced by native and non-native writers of English (Martinez, 2005).

Tang and John (1999) study of authorial pronouns focused on the texts of student writers. They examined the use of first person pronouns in the essays of 27 students in a university of Singapore. They concluded that presenting themselves as originators of their own ideas is an intimidating process for students.

In a comparative study, Hyland (2002b) interviewed expert writers and examined 240 published journal articles of 8 disciplines to examine the use of first person pronouns. Hyland found that expert writers preferred to downplay their personal role to highlight the issue under study.

On the basis of Hyland's findings, Harwood (2005a) focused on the function of personal pronouns *I* and *we* in ten published academic articles from leading journals representing four different disciplines. He found that personal pronouns served as a way for the authors to project themselves.

Another study compared the use of personal reference of native and non-native writers (Martinez, 2005) in Biological Science articles. Results indicated that while native writers had highest concentrations of first person pronouns, non-native writers used them in higher percentages than native writers.

Despite the number of studies into the use of personal pronouns in academic writing, investigations into the actual use of personal pronouns remain incomplete. This study examined the use of first person pronouns in the articles of two different disciplines, and it aimed at exploring the ways in which the authors conceptualize their identities in their writings.

3. Methodology

To find out how academic writers can use first person pronouns in their writings, this research used text analysis methodology. The corpus in the current study consists thirty journal articles from two different disciplines based on classification proposed by Science Direct; namely, Physical Sciences and Engineering and Social Sciences and Humanities. Each of the two sub-corpora consists of 15 articles that had been randomly chosen from recent issues of one journal in each group. Also, in the current study, the researcher benefited the taxonomy developed by Hyland (2002a) to show the degree of authorial presence through the use of first person pronoun.

Table 1. Hyland (2002a) Taxonomy of the Functions Projected by First Person Pronouns

Hyland (2002a)
Pronoun for…
stating a purpose
explaining a procedure
stating results/claims
expressing self-benefits
elaborating an argument

To avoid diversity, one discipline was selected from each category, and for each discipline one journal was chosen. In order to provide a typical sample of articles from each of the disciplines, random selection was adopted. Therefore, from each of the journals 15 articles were extracted randomly and were numbered from 1 to 15. Moreover, to form a corpus of almost (200000) words, tables, abstracts, and reference sections were deleted. The sampling procedure considered an imbalance in terms of the number of single-authored and multiple-authored articles. Also, this research emphasizes that all examples of identity markers were examined in the context to assure that they refer to the authors not to anyone else. Then, the quantitative analysis was carried out in two steps. First, all the texts were analyzed and all instances of authorial markers were extracted. The corpus was analyzed by the use of Word Pilot 2000 software in order to calculate the frequency of each authorial indicator. Percentages were calculated in relation to various authorial markers, different functions and various kinds of articles (single-authored and multiple-authored) and were tabulated for the purpose of comparison. Finally, the results were described and explained.

Table 2. Number of Single-Authored and Multiple-Authored Articles

	Physical Sciences and Engineering	Social Sciences and Humanities	TOTAL
Single-authored articles (S)	4	2	6
Multiple-authored articles (M)	11	13	24
TOTAL	15	15	30

Based on what the table illustrates, this sampling procedure entailed an imbalance in terms of the number of single-authored (S) and multiple-authored (M) articles. The latter is clearly predominant. The paucity of single-authored articles is because of the fact that research in some areas requires the joint effort of a team of researchers, which makes it difficult for individual researchers to stake claims individually.

4.   Results and Discussion

As mentioned in methodology section, the analysis of the corpus revealed several findings related to the use of self-mention features across disciplines. As can be seen in the following table, first person pronouns and possessive adjectives were quite recurrent in both categories.

Table 3. Frequency of Identity Markers in Two Categories

	Physical Sciences and Engineering	Social Sciences and Humanities
I	2	1
My	0	0
Me	0	0
We	1189	598
Our	104	398
Us	28	15
Total	1323	1012

The results also revealed that the category of Physical Sciences and Engineering received higher occurrence of first person plural pronouns. For the use of first mention singular pronouns it can be said that it was almost the same in two categories. These preliminary results are discussed in detail in the following sections.

As can be seen from the above table, the patterns of use of first person singular pronouns and possessive adjectives in the corpus were very different from the ones of plural pronouns, which was not surprising given that only five of the thirty articles were single-authored. As mentioned before, this paucity of single-authored articles could ultimately be explained by the fact that research in some areas is expected to be the result of the joint effort of a team of researchers, which makes it difficult for individual researchers to stake claims individually. Based on what Becher (1989) points out, team work is more common in "urban" disciplines, where the number of hot issues for research is limited and there is a higher competition and more intense interaction among disciplinary members. Interestingly, researchers in their disciplines actually do write some articles on their own, although in some cases it seems to be a common practice to compose them and publish them as if they had been created by the whole group of specialists.

While the personal pronouns "I" "my" and "me" were almost non-existent in the disciplines analyzed, the pronouns "we" "our" and "us" were frequent. A number of single authors in both disciplines decided to avoid using exclusive first person pronouns altogether or, perhaps more surprisingly, opted for the use of exclusive plural pronouns and possessive adjectives rather than singular ones when referring to themselves in their text. In sum, there seems to exist a degree of variation among individual authors as to the ways in which singular pronouns and possessives were used in single-author RAs in the disciplines studied. However, a deeper investigation of this aspect of pronoun use would require a fully comparable corpus of single-author and multiple-author RAs in each discipline, such analysis is beyond the scope of the present study.

According to the results (Table 3), there was also a difference in the incidence of the two plural first person pronouns analyzed in the corpus, namely "we" and "us". The exclusive subject pronoun "we" was used very frequently in the category of Physical Sciences and Engineering. The results for the use of personal markers in research articles were in apparent conflict with the traditionally accepted view that articles are descriptive and impersonal. This finding might suggest that authors tend to be aware of the importance of using first person pronouns so as to project a strong authorial voice and to take credit for one's findings. Moreover, the researchers' decision to use personal markers in order to clearly stand behind their research findings and conclusions might also be affected by factors like the journals' status, inasmuch as self-mention resources may be perceived as a necessary marketing strategy in order to get their research published in prestigious international journals.

Unlike the pronoun "we", the object pronoun "us" seems to be rare in RAs. Despite its low occurrence, it should be noted that this personal pronoun was used more in Physical Sciences and Engineering. According to the data, in these two disciplines the pronoun "us" mostly appeared following verbs such as "allow", "enable", "help" or "provide" in the explanation of the benefits or limitations of particular methodological decisions (See example 1). In doing this, the authors seemed to attempt to reveal the sound logic underlying their decisions and to stress their competency as researchers.

Example 1

The above convention enables us to effectively enumerate the set of immediate successors of a given node of a homogeneous tree T. (Physical Sciences and Engineering)

The first person plural marker "our" was overall a very frequent indicator of the writer presence in RAs in the corpus, only second to the pronoun "we" (See Table 3). However, there were some notable differences in the incidence and use of these two self-mention features. The use of the possessive adjective "our" was comparatively more frequent in Social Sciences and Humanities than in Physical Sciences and Engineering. In order to investigate this cross disciplinary variation in the use of the exclusive possessive adjective we need to consider the uses and collocations of this word in research articles. In the disciplines studied, the word "our" was often used to express the authors' ownership of the research being reported or the data or results obtained from this research in expressions such as "our results", "our data", "our findings", etc. These noun phrases tend to function in the sentence as the inanimate subjects of epistemic lexical verbs such as "suggest", "indicate", "imply", and also more emphatic verbs such as "show" or "demonstrate" (See examples 2 &3).

Example 2

It is worth emphasizing, however, that with sufficient computer power, our results give a practical method for calculating $\tau\_m(\phi)$ for any reasonably small m and any ϕ which is conveniently represented as a sequence of Whitehead moves. (Physical Sciences and Engineering)

Example 3

Our findings suggest the existence of only some international differences in the use of discretion under IFRS. (Social Sciences and Humanities)

These "abstract rhetors" (Halloran, 1984: 74) help writers to present data as the originators of the findings, thus concealing the part played by subjective interpretation in the conception of that claim. By using inanimate subjects the potential threat inherent in the presentation of personal claims or findings is notably hedged, and the writer's commitment to the truth of that statement is also reduced. The use of "our" when presenting claims or stating hypotheses may also fulfil another hedging function different from that of abstract rhetors. In some cases, researchers used expressions such as "our results", "in our series", or "in our sample" in order to suggest that the findings or conclusions they had arrived at were not assumed to have general validity for other studies, as the examples below illustrate:

Example 4

Our results also provide a new perspective on NCCR in the known cases and suggest how to build the module M in the definition of NCCR. (Physical Sciences and Engineering)

Example 5

Our main results indicate that, in our setting, relative to traditional accounting measures, the increased use of nonfinancial metrics induces sales managers to think more about the longer-term consequences of sales tasks. (Social Sciences and Humanities)

Through these expressions, authors were in fact purportedly limiting the external validity of their research in a strategic attempt to limit their individual responsibility for the findings.

To summarize, the use of the possessive adjective "our" seems to be comparatively more frequent in the articles of Health Sciences than in those of Life Sciences. A possible explanation for this difference may lie in the lower degree of writer commitment conveyed by the use of the first person plural possessive compared to the first person pronoun "we". Writers in the fisrt category tended to favor this self-mention resource because they seemed to be aware that the use of "our" followed by "results", "data", "findings", among others, allows them to reduce responsibility for their statements and, therefore, protects them from the potential negative consequences of having their claims refuted. Moreover, in the category of Life Sciences the small incidence of the personal pronoun "we" may also be related to the authors' desire to gain "persuasive authority" (Hyland, 2001) and credibility by highlighting the objective and impersonal nature of the research process.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage of Different Kinds of Authorial Identity in Category 1(Physical Sciences and Engineering)

Article No.	I	My	Me	We	Our	Us
1. S	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	81 6.8%	0 0%	0 0%
2. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	25 2.1%	0 0%	5 17.8%
3. S	1 50%	0 0%	0 0%	77 6.4%	1 0.9%	0 0%
4. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	51 4.2%	4 3.8%	0 0%
5. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	23 1.9%	1 0.9%	0 0%
6. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	258 21.6%	15 14.4%	7 25%
7. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	72 6%	4 3.8%	0 0%
8. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	96 8%	8 7.6%	3 10.7%

	I	My	Me	We	Our	Us
9. S	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	54 4.5%	6 5.7%	0 0%
10. S	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	69 5.8%	10 9.6%	4 14.2%
11. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	52 4.3%	4 3.8%	2 7.1%
12. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	49 4.1%	8 7.6%	1 3.5%
13. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	42 3.5%	1 0.9%	6 21.4%
14. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	54 4.5%	13 12.5%	1 3.5%
15. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	186 15.6%	29 27.8%	4 14.2%
TOTAL	2 100%	0 0%	0 0%	1189 100%	104 100%	28 100%

A number of single authors in this discipline decided to avoid using exclusive first person pronouns altogether or, perhaps more surprisingly, opted for the use of exclusive plural pronouns and possessive adjectives rather than singular ones when referring to themselves in their text. In sum, there seems to exist a degree of variation among individual authors as to the ways in which singular pronouns and possessives were used in single-authored research articles in the disciplines studied. Therefore, as the table explains, the writers used "we, our, us" instead of "I, my, me" even in single-authored articles. In other words, all markers were used in the plural form (See example 6). The use of "I" can be noticed in acknowledgment section of research articles (See example 7). And for multiple-authored articles, the pronouns were mostly mentioned in the body subsection of Methodology section (See example 8).

Example 6

Hence, we concentrate on the sizes of the extremal values. Our results are as follows…

Example 7

I thank Tien-Cuong Dinh and Nessim Sibony for the informative reference [6] and comments about g-periodic points, and the referee for the better exposition of the paper.

Example 8

By $|\cdot|$ we denote the Euclidean norm on Rn and we use the representation $\_n2 = ($R$n, |\cdot|)$. The Euclidean ball in Rn and the inner product are denoted by $Bn2$ and $\_;$. For a subspace $E \subset$ Rn, we denote by PE the orthogonal on E…

Table 5. Frequency and Percentage of Different Kinds of Authorial Identity in Category 2 (Social Sciences and Humanities)

Article No.	I	My	Me	We	Our	Us
1. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	81 13.5%	61 15.3%	2 13.3%
2. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	16 2.6%	6 1.5%	1 6.6%
3. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	15 2.5%	6 1.5%	0 0%
4. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	74 12.3%	29 7.2%	2 13.3%
5. M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	86 14.3%	44 11%	2 13.3%
6. M	0	0	0	0	0	0

	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 0.5	0 0%	0 0%
8.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	73 12.2%	66 16.5%	2 13.3%
9.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	77 12.8%	29 7.2%	0 0%
10.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	40 6.6%	30 7.5%	1 6.6%
11.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	35 5.8%	27 6.7%	2 13.3%
12.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	54 9%	59 14.8%	2 13.3%
13.　M	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	41 6.8%	41 10.3%	1 6.6%
14.　S	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	3 0.5	0 0%	0 0%
15.　S	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
TOTAL	1 100%	0 0%	0 0%	598 100%	398 100%	15 100%

Comparing with the first category, there was approximately no use of personal markers in single-authored articles, and the incidence of plural markers of self-mention was lower in the second category. In this discipline, for multiple-authored articles the pronouns were occurred mainly in the body of Methodology, Discussion and Result sections (See example 9).

Example 9
To compare our findings to a creditor-oriented code law regime, we also list in Table 2 the results of Lantto and Sahlström (2009).
While frequency of occurrence is important in determining the scale of underuse, we can learn a lot more about authorial identity by exploring the rhetorical functions of the first person that is used to perform. The points at which writers choose to make themselves visible in their texts through self-reference have considerable rhetorical importance, indicating the kinds of commitments writers are willing to make and the information they are prepared to give about their beliefs as individuals. The following table illustrates some information about discourse functions of first person pronouns in selected papers of these two disciplines.

Table 6. Frequency and Percentage of Discourse Functions of Self-mention in 30 RAs

Function	Physical Sciences and Engineering	Social Sciences and Humanities
Stating a purpose	234 17.6%	125 12.3%
Explaining a procedure	626 47.3%	331 32.7%
Stating Results/claims	151 11.4%	292 28.8%
Expressing self-benefits	0 0	0 0
Elaborating an argument	312 23.5%	264 25.8%
Total	1323	1012

In some of the cases writers use authorial pronouns to state their discoursal purposes in order to signal their intentions and provide an overt structure for their texts. This kind of framing help clarify both the direction of the research and the schematic structure of the argument, but it also foreground a fairly low risk writer role, simply signposting readers through the text. The use of this function was higher in the category of Physical Sciences and Engineering.

Explaining a procedure

There is a similar meta-textual dimension to describe the research procedures used and this also reflects a similarly low degree of personal exposure. In the selected papers, many of the writers were willing to detail their approach as a first-person account. Comparing the percentages, it is observable that the category of Physical Sciences and Engineering received higher use of this function.

Stating results/claims

This is the most self-assertive, and consequently potentially the most face-threatening use of self-reference and it contrasts baldly with professional uses. In expert discourses, the explicitly persuasive use of self -mention is most clearly displayed by the fact that writers choose to announce their presence where they make a knowledge claim. At these points they are best able to explicitly foreground their distinctive contribution and commitment to a position. Comparing the percentages, writers of Social Sciences and Humanities used this function more than writers of Physical Sciences and Engineering.

Expressing self-benefits

A number of writers include comments on what they had personally gained from the project and this category represents the least threatening function of authorial self-mention. This requires a personal statement, usually in the conclusion, where the writer can adopt a less threatening role than the originator of ideas or interpreter of results, presenting him or herself in a way which does not step beyond a familiar student identity. As the table illustrates, there was no use of this function in the papers studied.

Elaborating an argument

This is a high-risk function where results contrast starkly between the two genres. Setting out a line of reasoning would seem to be a key purpose of academic writing but generally only the professional academics choose to stake their commitments to their arguments with the use of first person. Comparing the percentages, writers of Physical Sciences and Engineering used this function more than writers of Social Sciences and Humanities.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that self-mention constitutes a central pragmatic feature of academic discourse since it contributes not only to the writer's construction of a text, but also of a rhetorical self. The authorial pronoun is a significant means of promoting a competent scholarly identity and gaining acceptance for one's ideas, and while some writers were sensitive to its rhetorical effects, they were reluctant to accept its clear connotations of authority and personal commitment. As a result, they significantly underused authorial pronouns and determiners, downplayed their role in the research, and adopted a less clearly independent stance. It should be noted that there was a difference in the use of identity markers in academic writing across disciplines. The ways that writers chose to report their research and expressed their ideas obviously result from a variety of social and psychological factors. Most crucially, however, rhetorical identity is influenced by the writer's background and this becomes more intricate for writers familiar with intellectual traditions which may be very different from those practiced in academic contexts.

References

1. Barton, D., Hamilton, M. (1998). *Local Literacies*. London: Routledge.

2. Becher, T. (1989). *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Inquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines*. Milton Keynes: SRHE/ Open University Press.

3. Cadman, K. (1997). Thesis writing for international students: a question of identity? *English for Specific Purposes,* 16 (1), 3-14.

4. Harwood, N. (2005a). "'Nowhere has anyone attempted ... In this article I aim to do just that'. A corpus-based study of self-promotional *I* and *we* in academic writing across four disciplines". *Journal of Pragmatics,* 37, 1207-1231.

5.	Hyland, K. (2001). "Humble servants of the discipline? Self-mention in research	articles". *English for Specific Purposes,* 20, 207-226.

6.	Hyland, K. (2002). "Options of identity in academic writing". *ELT Journal,* 56, 351-358.

7.	Hyland, K. (2002a). "Authority and invisibility: authorial identity in academic writing". *Journal of Pragmatics,* 34, 1091-1112.

8.	Hyland, K. (2002b). "Options of identity in academic writing". *ELT Journal,* 56, 351-	358.

9.	Hyland, K. (2005a). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing.* London:	Continuum.

10.	Lea, M., & Street, B. (1999). Writing as academic literacies: understanding textual practices in higher education. In C. N. Candlin & 30. K. Hyland (Eds.), *Writing: texts, processes and practices* (pp. 62-81). London: Longman.

11.	Martínez, I. A. (2005). "Native and non-native writer's use of first person pronouns in the different sections of biology research articles in English". *Journal of Second Language Writing,* 14, 174-190.

12.	Tang, R., & S. John (1999). "The "I" in identity: Exploring identity in student	academic writing through the first person pronoun". *English for Specific Purposes,* 18 (Supplement 1), S23-S39.

A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF TEXT COHESION BY COH-METRIX:
CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF L1/L2 PH.D. DISSERTATIONS

Masoud Azadnia
Department of English Language, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan)
Email: masoudazadnia@gmail.com

Reza Biria
Assistant Professor, Department of English language, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan)

Ahmad R. Lotfi
Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan)

ABSTRACT
IN ASSESSING SECOND LANGUAGE (L2) WRITING, COHESION, AS THE PRIMARY MEANS OF REACHING DISCOURSE COHERENCE, HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF TEXT LINGUISTICS.THIS STUDY PRESENTS A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEXT COHESION DEVICES MEASURED IN ACADEMIC TEXTS WRITTEN BY STUDENTS WHO WERE NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISHEMPLOYING A NEW COMPUTATIONAL TOOL; NAMELY,COH-METRIX. IN SO DOING, 177 TEXTS INCLUDING 94TEXTS WRITTEN BY ENGLISH NATIVE SPEAKERS AND 83 TEXTS COMPOSED BY IRANIAN WRITERS WERE EXTRACTED FROM CHAPTER 5 OF THEIR DISSERTATIONS AT PH.D LEVELS. SUBSEQUENTLY, AMONG ALL INDICES MANIFESTING TEXT COHESION, SIX LINGUISTIC INDICES WERE SELECTED AND ANALYZED QUANTITATIVELY. THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THERE WAS A STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO CORPORA IN TERMS OF TEXT COHESION. MOREOVER, THE RESULTS DEMONSTRATED A SIGNIFICANT LINK BETWEEN LATENT SEMANTIC ANALYSIS (LSA) METRICS AND COHESION IN ACADEMIC WRITINGS IN A WAY THAT L2 WRITERS FORMED SENTENCES WHICH WERE CONCEPTUALLY MORE SIMILAR TO THE CONSECUTIVE, ADJACENT SENTENCES IN THE TEXTS THAN L1 WRITERS. LIKEWISE, THE SENTENCES PRODUCED BY L2 WRITERS OF ENGLISH CONVEYED MORE GIVENNESS COMPARED TO THOSE COMPOSED BY NATIVE ENGLISH WRITERS.

KEY WORDS: TEXT LINGUISTICS, SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING, COHESION, COH-METRIX

1. Introduction
Writing is an important aspect of communication because it provides the opportunity to articulate ideas and synthesize perspectives in a persuasive manner that is independent of time and space constraints (Crowhurst, 1990). As regards, learning how to convey meaning competently in written

texts is a crucial skill for academic and professional success (Geiser&Studley, 2001). The value of writing in academic and professional settings renders the understanding of writing and particularly the differences between good and bad writing, both for theoretical and applied reasons.

The study of written texts is regarded as an important contribution to the text linguistics devoted to describe how texts are created and understood and what constitutes their textuality (De Beaugrande& Dressler, 1981; Crystal 1992). According to De Beaugrande& Dressler (1981) a text will be defined as a communicative occurrence which meets seven standards of textuality. This seven standards are cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, contextuality and intertextuality.

There is a strongly held sense that text quality is highly related to the surface cohesion as well as overall coherence of the text which conform the picture of one possible world in the experience or imagination of the receiver (Enkvist, 1978, p. 126), and a message must provide adequate signals for the listener or the readers to make connections for the understanding of a text. The predominance of cohesion and coherence in forming a text reflected in the literature about writing (e.g., Collins, 1998; DeVillez, 2003). Consequently, recent research in text studies has emphasized the importance of the cohesion of a text in comprehension (e.g., McNamara, 2001) owing to the fact that cohesion is the degree to which ideas in the text are explicitly related to each other and facilitate a unified situation model for the reader. Such research has led to the development of a computational tool, Coh-Metrix, (Graesser, McNamara, Louwerse, &Cai, 2004) that delivers over 300 indices of textual cohesion and difficulty. It could be hypothesized that a Coh-Metrix analysis of texts would indicate that cohesion indices would identify characteristics of texts.

Considering all above, the primary purpose of this study was to identify the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 texts on various indices related to text cohesion. Following the same line of inquiry and interest, our secondary aim was to explore how linguistic features related to text cohesion could be used to distinguish between texts written by L1 writers of English and Iranian L2 writers of English.The present study used the computational tool Coh-Metrix to analyze the linguistic features related to text cohesion in a corpus of L1 and L2 Ph. D dissertations. Using computational tools is a reputable approach to investigating writing patterns, the results of the analyses may be hindered by the amount of text that can be examined, the fallibility of hand counts, and the subjective nature of intuitive judgments. The computational tool Coh-Metrix is capable of measuring cohesion and text difficulty at various levels of language, discourse, and conceptual analysis.

2. Literature Review

Distinguishing between texts written by L1 and L2 writers has a long history in second language writing studies. In an overview of research concerning differences between English L1 and L2 writing, Silva (1993) found a number of salient differences. Silva's findings have been supported in other studies as well (e.g., Harley & King, 1989; McClure, 1991). Taken together, the general conclusion from studies in this domain is that there are significant differences between texts written by first language (L1) writers of English and second language (L2) writers of English. As noted by both Silva (1993) and Ferris (1994), cohesion as a critical aspect of successful language processing and comprehension, plays an important part in the lexical development of L2 writers, and it also serves as a means to distinguish differences between L1 and L2 writers and evidence supports the notion that text cohesion in L2 writing is influenced by the linguistic and rhetorical patterns in a L2 writer's L1 (Ferris, 1994; Reid, 1992). Cohesion refers to the presence or absence of explicit cues in the text that allow the reader to make connections between the ideas in the text, whereas coherence refers to the understanding that the reader derives from the text, which may be more or less coherent depending on a number of factors, such as prior knowledge, textual features, and reading skill (McNamara, Kintsch, Songer, &Kintsch, 1996).

As reported in Graesser et al. (2004), recent advances in various disciplines have made it possible to computationally investigate various measures of text and language comprehension that supersede surface components of language and instead explore deeper, more global attributes of language. The various disciplines and approaches that have made this approach possible include computational linguistics, corpus linguistics, information extraction, information retrieval, psycholinguistics, and

discourse processing. Taken together, the improvements in these fields allow for the analysis of many deep level factors of textual coherence and language to be automated, providing more accurate and detailed analyses of language. A synthesis of the developments in these areas has been achieved in Coh-Metrix. The system integrates lexicons, pattern classifiers, part-of speech taggers, syntactic parsers, shallow semantic interpreters, and other components that have been developed in the field of computational linguistics (Jurafsky& Martin, 2002). Utilizing these resources, Coh-Metrix can analyze texts on several dimensions of cohesion including co-referential cohesion, causal cohesion, and density of connectives, latent semantic analysis metrics, and syntactic complexity. It also includes several lexical metrics such as word frequency, concreteness, polysemy, word meaningfulness, hypernymy, word age-of-acquisition scores, word imagability, and word familiarity measures. Coh-Metrix has been used to distinguish text types, examine the linguistic structures of texts, and explore textual differences in L2 discourse studies and L1 discourse studies. In addition, multiple validation studies have been conducted on Coh-Metrix measures in relation to cohesion and lexical indices (Crossley& McNamara, 2010, 2011a, 2011b).

Various studies have been conducted on the influence of cohesion on distinguishing between texts written by first language (L1) writers of English and second language (L2) writers of English.As regards Reid (1992) examined differences in essays written in English by native speakers of Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and English in order to determine if differences in the production of cohesive devices existed between and among the language backgrounds. Reid investigated the use of four features of cohesion: pronouns, conjunctions, subordinate conjunction openers, and prepositions. Overall, she found that L2 writers, regardless of their L1, produced a significantly greater number of pronouns and conjunctions, as well as fewer prepositions, when compared to L1 writers. However, there were no shared similarities among the L2 writers in the production of subordinate conjunction openers. Reid interpreted these results as providing evidence for general differences in L2 writing as compared to L1 writing and suggested such differences could influence writing quality and present opportunities for direct pedagogical intervention.

Hinkel (2002) carried out a similar investigation to Reid (1992), except Hinkel's focus was not on invariance among L2 writers as a homogenous group, but variance between L2 writers from specific L1 backgrounds and L1 writers of English. However, the results of her study enabled generalizations about shared linguistic features that characterized L2 writing across a wide range of languages. In her study, Hinkel (2002) examined over 1400 academic essays written by native speakers of English and L2 learners of English whose L1s were Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Indonesia, and Arabic. For each text, she computed incidence scores for linguistic features (semantic and lexical classes for nouns, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, nominalizations, gerunds, tense, and aspect), subordinate clause features (nouns, adjective, and adverb clauses), and rhetorical features (conjunctions, exemplification, hedges, and emphatics). She then compared the incidence of these linguistic features between language groupings of L2 essays and L1 essays. Hinkel's (2002) analysis reported numerous features that distinguished L1 essays from specific groupings of L2 essays, such as vague nouns, private and public verbs, modal verbs, amplifiers, emphatics, and tense and aspect markings. When differences between specific language groups writing in English and L1 writers were collapsed, patterns emerged that allowed Hinkel (2002) to define L2 writing as generally being similar to personal narratives because both contain restricted syntactic variety and complexity and limited lexical sophistication.

Crossley and McNamara (2009) provided a detailed analysis of how lexical differences related to cohesion and connectionist models can distinguish first language (L1) writers of English from second language (L2) writers of English through the computational tool Coh-Metrix, which measures cohesion and text difficulty at various levels of language, discourse, and conceptual analysis, and a statistical method known as discriminant function analysis. Results show that no transition from oral to written usage of causal connectors exists for L2 writers and also implied that the L1 writers in this study likely use less frequent written words and do not depend on common spoken words as often as L2 writers. Moreover, the findings presented a portrait of L2 writers as lexically less proficient than L1

writers and provide additional support to the notion that L2 writers provide less lexical variation and sophistication in their writing. The research also highlighted differences between L1and L2 writers in relation to deeper-level lexical indices that have correlates in cohesion and network models.

Crossley and McNamara (2010) examined links between the cohesive devices reported by Coh-Metrix (e.g., semantic coreference, causal cohesion, spatial cohesion, temporal cohesion, connectives and logical operators, anaphoric resolution, word overlap) and human judgments of coherence. Among these variables, only one index (subordinating conjunctions) demonstrated positive, significant correlations with the human ratings of coherence. Based on the results of their study, Crossley and McNamara (2010) concluded that coherence is an important attribute of writing quality and essay raters' evaluations of coherence were highly related to their overall holistic scores for the essays. They also found that coherence is not necessarily defined through the use cohesion devices, and in fact may be inversely related to the presence of cohesion cues and it could be said that the indices currently available from which to measure cohesion are not strongly linked to human judgments of coherence. In other words the majority of the cohesion indices correlated negatively to the human ratings, indicating an inverse relation between the selected cohesion variables and the human judgments of coherence.

Crossley and McNamara (2011a) provided additional evidence supporting the importance of human judgments of coherence in explaining holistic judgments of essay quality and the potential for computational indices of cohesion and coherence to model human judgments of coherence. As in Crossley and McNamara (2010), this study's top predictor of essay quality was an analytical feature related to coherence, which explained 60% of the variance in holistic essay scores that indicated better specified and more commonly associated with writing assessment. The results of the study also indicated that human judgments of coherence are the most predictive features of holistic essay scores and that computational indices related to text structure, semantic coherence, lexical sophistication, and grammatical complexity best explain human judgments of text coherence.

Crossley and McNamara (2011b) investigated the potential for linguistic features related to text cohesion, lexical sophistication, and syntactic complexity to discriminate between texts written by L1 and L2 writers. The study particularly interested in examining if general linguistic differences exist between L1 and L2 essays that are likely not specific to the first language of the L2 writer. In order to examine potential linguistic differences between L1 writers and L2 writers, the researchers used the computational tool Coh-Metrix to analyze the linguistic features in a corpus of L1 and L2 essays. The corpus consists of a sub-corpus of L1 essays and four L2 sub-corpora of essays written by English learners from four language backgrounds: Czech, Finnish, German, and Spanish. The results of the study provide evidence for intergroup homogeneity in the linguistic patterns of L2 writers in that four word-based indices (hypernymy, polysemy, lexical diversity, and stem overlap) demonstrated similar patterns of occurrence in the L2 writer populations sampled. However, significant differences were reported for these indices between L1 and L2 writers. The results of this study provide evidence that some aspects of L2 writing may not be cultural or independent, but rather based on the amount and type of linguistic knowledge available to L2 learners as a result of language experience and learner proficiency level.

3. Method
3.1 Corpus selection
Corpus of the present study contains 10 English L2 dissertations written by Ph. D Iranian students of Khorasgan Azad University which were selected randomly from the whole registered L2 dissertations in the field of English-language teaching, English-language literature, and applied linguisticsto increase representation while staying broadly within a group that can be described as similar i.e., L2 dissertations. Of all the chapters, chapter fivewas targeted for analysis since other chapters manifested traces of plagiarism and technically there were paragraphs which were not reputable to be composed by the students themselves, which could potentially lead to eschew the result of the study. Due to the dissertations thematic structure, chapters were sub-divided into other

headings such as *Overview, Discussion,and Implications of the Study,* each served as a separate text. These yielded, in turn, the total number of 83 texts from chapters five of the theses.

To collect a comparison corpus, 10 L1 dissertations written by English native speakers studied at Ph.D. level of the same majors in the United States and the United Kingdom were randomly downloaded, which provided total number of 94 texts from chapters five of the theses. It is worth mentioning that the researcher made sure that the theses had been written by natives through asking via emails.It is worth mentioning that the whole corpus was collected from dissertations written from 2011 to 2014 and supplied the study with 177 texts consisting a roundabout 125000 words.

In order to collect the data required for the current study, the texts were later cleaned and formatted. A clean corpus is one which is as close to human readable form as possible. In other words, a clean text looks just like it would look if the writer had just finished typing it, had it checked for typos and errors by a large group of copy editors, printed if off, and handed it over to the reader. In our case, though, few cases of typos and errors could be detected; however,the corpus that had been passed around from computer to computer tended to grow various oddities such as the odd Spanish letter or a string of mathematical symbols. Besides, there were cases where these texts included pictures, charts and diagrams and when converted into text files, the pictures in the document disappeared often leaving the caption of the pictures lurking mysteriously in the middle of the text. Each of these dirtieshad the potential to seriously undermine the validity of the analysis. They needed to be free from these dirties and more besides, they were converted into Cohmetrix-readable format as files with txt extension by a Coh-Metrix-team recommended software; namely, TextPad.

3.2. Instruments

For the statistical analysis, the researcher selected Coh-Metrix, a computational web tool available online, and Coh-Metrix indices that measure linguistic features related to text cohesion (e.g., connectives, word overlap, and semantic co-referentiality).

3.2.1 Coh-Metrix software

Coh-Metrix is a computational tool that produces indices of the linguistic and discourse representations of a text. These values can be used in many different ways to investigate the cohesion of the explicit text and the coherence of the mental representation of the text. The Coh-metrix definition of cohesion consists of characteristics of the explicit text that play some role in helping the reader mentally connect ideas in the text (Graesser, McNamara, &Louwerse, 2003). Coh-Metrix provides indices of such cohesion characteristics.

3.2.2 Coh-Metrix indices

As many as 108 indices related to different linquistic features in Coh-Metrix 3.0 are categorized into eleven groups: (1) Descriptive, (2) Text Easability Principal Component Scores, (3) Referential Cohesion, (4) Latent Semantic Analysis LSA, (5) Lexical Diversity, (6) Connectives, (7) Situation Model, (8) Syntactic Complexity, (9) Syntactic Pattern Density, (10) Word Information, and (11) Readability. In accordance with the purpose of our study, the following groups were selected to technically address cohesion of the texts.

Referential Cohesion

Referential cohesion or co-reference which refers to the overlap in content words between local sentences is a linguistic cue that can aid readers in making connections between propositions, clauses, and sentences in their textbase understanding (Halliday&Hasan, 1976; McNamara &Kintsch, 1996). Coh-Metrix measures for referential cohesion vary along two dimensions. First, the indices vary from local to more global. Local cohesion is measured by assessing the overlap between consecutive, adjacent sentences, whereas global cohesion is assessed by measuring the overlap between all of the sentences in a paragraph or text.

Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA)

Coh-Metrix measures semantic co-referentiality using LSA, which is a mathematical and statistical technique for representing deeper world knowledge based on large corpora of texts (Landauer, McNamara, Dennis, &Kintsch, 2007). Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA; Landauer et al., 2007) provides measures of semantic overlap between sentences or between paragraphs. Coh-Metrix 3.0 provides eight LSA indices, each of these measures varies from 0 (low cohesion) to 1 (high cohesion).

Situation Model

The expression *situation model* has been used by researchers in discourse processing and cognitive science to refer to the level of mental representation for a text that involves much more than the explicit words (van Dijk&Kintsch, 1983; Graesser& McNamara, 2011; Graesser, Singer, &Trabasso, 1994; Kintsch, 1998; Zwaan&Radvansky, 1998). Some researchers have described the situational model in terms of the features that are present in the comprehender's mental representation when a given context is activated (e.g., Singer & Leon, 2007). For example, with episodes in narrative text, the situation model would include *the plot*. In an informational text about the circulatory system, the situation model might convey *the flow of the blood*.

Connectives

Connectives play an important role in the creation of cohesive links between ideas and clauses and provide clues about text organization (Cain & Nash, 2011; Crismore, Markkanen, &Steffensen, 1993; Longo, 1994; Sanders &Noordman, 2000; van de Kopple, 1985). Coh-Metrix provides an incidence score (occurrence per 1000 words) for all connectives as well as different types of connectives. Indices are provided on five general classes of connectives (Halliday&Hasan, 1976; Louwerse, 2001): causal (*because, so*), logical (*and, or*), adversative/contrastive (*although, whereas)*, temporal (*first, until*), and additive (*and, moreover)*. In addition, there is a distinction between positive connectives (*also, moreover*) and negative connectives (*however, but*).

3.3 Variable Selection

Among all the measures related to text cohesioncomputed by Coh-Metrix, in each of the four category mentioned above, the indices which manifested different aspects of the measure were regarded as theinitial variables of the study. Owing to the fact that Coh-Metrics generally computes a same concept (e.g. word overlap) based on different word categories (e.g. noun, verb, content words, etc.) and evaluating the texts in two different text spans (adjacent sentences as well as all sentences), content words was decided to consider as a representative word category and adjacent sentences was considered as the predetermined pattern of text evaluation. Adjacent sentences are successive sentences in a span of text. For example, if a span of text has 4 sentences, then the adjacent sentences would be sentences 1-2, 2-3, and 3-4. In contrast, all sentences are all possible pairs of sentences: 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 1-3, 1-4, and 2-4. Before final selection of the variables, we assessed co-linearity between variables so as not to waste potential model power. In testing for co-linearity, we ensured that no index pair correlated above r = >.70 and that each variable passed tolerance tests (i.e., VIF and tolerance values). Overall, six indices as the representative of the four categories related to text cohesion were selected as follows:

Local content words overlap

This measure represents referential cohesion and considers the proportion of explicit content words that overlap between pairs of adjacent sentences. For example, if a sentence pair has fewer words and two words overlap, the proportion is greater than if a pair has many words and two words overlap. This measure. This measure may be particularly useful when the lengths of the sentences in the text are a principal concern.

LSA overlap

This index, as a representative of semantic co-referentiality, computes mean LSA cosines for adjacent, sentence-to-sentence. This measures how conceptually similar each sentence is to the next sentence.
Example:

Text 1: The field was full of lush, green grass. The horses grazed peacefully. The young children played with kites. The women occasionally looked up, but only occasionally. A warm summer breeze blew and everyone, for once, was almost happy.

Text 2: The field was full of lush, green grass. An elephant is a large animal. No-one appreciates being lied to. What are we going to have for dinner tonight?

In the example texts printed above, Text 1 records much higher LSA scores than Text 2. The words in Text 1 tend to be thematically related to a pleasant day in an idyllic park scene: *green, grass, children, playing, summer, breeze, kites,* and*happy*, In contrast, the sentences in Text 2 tend to be unrelated.

LSA given/new

This index manifest semantic co-refrentiality and measure the averagegivenness of each sentence and would be interpreted as the extent to which each sentence in the text was given.

Causal cohesion

This is a ratio of causal particles to causal verbs which manifested the situation model. The denominator is incremented by the value of 1 to handle the rare case when there are 0 causal verbs in the text. Cohesion suffers when the text has many causal verbs (signifying events and actions) but few causal particles that signal how the events and actions are connected.

Temporal cohesion

This index, as another index related to situation model, is the repetition score for tense and aspect. The repetition score for tense is averaged with the repetition score for aspect.

Causal connectives

Among the various types of connectives, only causal connectives discriminated between the high and low cohesion texts, presumably because the researchers who created the texts primarily manipulated causal cohesion and not additive, temporal, or clarification connectives.

3.4. Data Analysis

To examine whether the linguistic features related to text cohesion differentiate L1 texts from L2 texts, a Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted followed by a Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA). The MANOVA was conducted to select variables that demonstrate significant differences between L1 and L2 texts. A DFA is a common approach used in many previous studies that distinguished text types (e.g., Biber, 1993; Crossley& McNamara, 2009; Crossley& McNamara, 2011) and was also used in this study to analyze differences between the L1 dissertations and the L2 dissertations in order to determine if linguistic features manifesting text cohesion distinguish L2 texts from L1 texts.

4.Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the indices which reflect the cohesion of the L1 as well as L2 texts written at Ph.D level.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Indices Related to Text Cohesion for L1 and L2 Corpora

Variable	L1/L2	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
LSA overlap	L2	.073	.290	.170	.051	.451	-.465
	L1	.048	.357	.146	.053	1.074	1.407
LSA given/new	L2	.222	.471	.330	.058	.319	-.434
	L1	.147	.380	.296	.044	-.712	.512
Content words overlap	L2	.000	.167	.052	.032	1.007	1.325
	L1	.000	.204	.047	.028	1.092	1.674
Causal cohesion	L2	15.385	93.750	49.076	14.986	.225	-.009
	L1	7.353	108.696	48.123	13.573	.918	1.744
Temporal cohesion	L2	.810	1.000	.940	.041	-.466	.289
	L1	.808	1.000	.938	.047	-.480	-.258
Causal Connectivity	L2	34.483	181.818	88.640	23.383	.598	1.554
	L1	34.483	153.333	91.228	18.613	-.072	1.171

As shown in Table 1, L2 texts on average recorded higher LSA overlap scores (*M*=.170) compared to L1 texts (*M*=.146) indicatingthat, in L2 textson average, each sentence was conceptually more similar to its consecutive sentence in comparison with L1 texts. In addition, the average of texts' sentences givenness in L2 texts (*M*=.330) was higher than the L1 texts written at the same level (*M*=.296), that is, L2 texts contained more given sentences compared to L1 texts. Furthermore, the average proportion of local content words overlap was slightly higher in L2 texts (*M*=.052) in comparison with the L1 texts (*M*=.047). in other words, the proportion of the explicit content words that overlap between

pairs of adjacent sentences was higher in L2 texts than L1 texts. According to the results the L2 texts written at Ph.D. level conveyed more degree of causality (*M*=49.076) owing to the more average of causal verbs and particle used in these texts compared to the L1 texts (*M*=48.123); however, the amount of difference seems negligible. Moreover, both L1 and L2 texts conveyed approximately the same degree of temporal cohesion (L2: *M*=.940 and L1: *M*=.938). Finally, as demonstrated in the above table, the average number of causal connectives are slightly higher in L1 texts (*M*=91.228) than L2 texts (*M*=88.640).

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (one-way MANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there are any significant differences between L1 and L2 texts in terms of various indices related to text cohesion. However, it was extremely important first, to make sure that the data can actually be analyzed using MANOVA by checking the main underlying assumptions. The first underlying assumption was multivariate normality. Unfortunately, multivariate normality is a particularly tricky assumption to test for and cannot be directly tested in SPSS Statistics. Instead, normality of each of the dependent variables (indices related to text cohesion) for each of the groups of the independent variable (L1 and L2 texts) was used in its place as a best guess as to whether there is multivariate normality. According to tables 1,the skewness and Kurtosis values in both groups were between +2 and -2, indicating little clustering of the scores at the ends and a very small degree of flatness. The values for asymmetry and kurtosis between -2 and +2 are considered acceptable in order to prove normal univariate distribution (George &Mallery, 2010).

Another required assumption to use MANOVA was that there should be no multicollinearity between the dependent variables, means that the correlation (between the dependent variables) should be low to moderate. Based on the results, it was ensured that no index pair correlated above r=>.70. (See Table A1 in the Appendix)

The other assumption was the homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices. This assumption was checked using Box's M test of equality of covariance as well as Levene's test of homogeneity of variance. The Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices checks the assumption of homogeneity of covariance across the groups using $p < .001$ as a criterion. According to the results, the *Box's M* was not significant (*Box's M*= 79.128, p > .001 for M.A level and Box's *M*= 41.508, p > .001 for Ph.D. level) indicating that there are no significant differences between the covariance matrices(See Table A2 in the Appendix). The results of the Levene's test showed the homogeneity of variance for all the dependent variables. (See Table A3 in the Appendix)

Assuming that no assumptions have been violated, a MANOVA was conducted using the selected Coh-Metrix indices related to text cohesion as the dependent variables and the written texts in L1 and L2 as the independent variables. The actual results of one way MANOVA for the indices related to text cohesion are presented in Tables 2 below.

Table 2
Multivariate Tests' Results for the Indices Related to Text Cohesion

Effect		Value	*F*	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.999	19050.611b	6.000	170.000	.000	.999
	Wilks' Lambda	.001	19050.611b	6.000	170.000	.000	.999
	Hotelling's Trace	672.375	19050.611b	6.000	170.000	.000	.999
	Roy's Largest Root	672.375	19050.611b	6.000	170.000	.000	.999
Group	Pillai's Trace	.157	5.288b	6.000	170.000	.000	.157
	Wilks' Lambda	.843	5.288b	6.000	170.000	.000	.157
	Hotelling's Trace	.187	5.288b	6.000	170.000	.000	.157
	Roy's Largest Root	.187	5.288b	6.000	170.000	.000	.157

As shown in Table 2, one can easily conclude that the test was significant (Wilk's Λ = .702, *F*(6, 170) = 5.288, p < .001, multivariate η² = .157). This significant *F* indicated that there are significant differences among L1 and L2 texts on a linear combination of the dependent variables related to text cohesion.

The multivariate η^2 = .157 indicated that approximately 16% of multivariate variance of the dependent variables was associated with the group factor.

Table 3 presents the results based on the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects to determine how the dependent variables differ for the independent variable.

Table 3

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects on the Indices Related to Text Cohesion

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	LSA overlap	.027[a]	1	.027	9.852	.002	.053
	LSA given/new	.052[b]	1	.052	19.877	.000	.102
	Content word overlap	.001[c]	1	.001	1.199	.275	.007
	Causality	40.001[d]	1	40.001	.197	.658	.001
	Temporal Cohesion	.000[e]	1	.000	.145	.704	.001
	Connectivity	295.204[f]	1	295.204	.670	.414	.004
Intercept	LSA overlap	4.403	1	4.403	1606.718	.000	.902
	LSA given/new	17.278	1	17.278	6558.124	.000	.974
	Content word overlap	.439	1	.439	485.340	.000	.735
	Causality	416440.958	1	416440.958	2050.067	.000	.921
	Temporal Cohesion	155.408	1	155.408	78756.631	.000	.998
	Connectivity	1426072.715	1	1426072.715	3238.682	.000	.949
Ph.D. Group	LSA overlap	.027	1	.027	9.852	.002	.053
	LSA given/new	.052	1	.052	19.877	.000	.102
	Content word overlap	.001	1	.001	1.199	.275	.007
	Causality	40.001	1	40.001	.197	.658	.001
	Temporal Cohesion	.000	1	.000	.145	.704	.001
	Connectivity	295.204	1	295.204	.670	.414	.004
Error	LSA overlap	.480	175	.003			
	LSA given/new	.461	175	.003			
	Content word overlap	.158	175	.001			
	Causality	35548.683	175	203.135			
	Temporal Cohesion	.345	175	.002			
	Connectivity	77056.882	175	440.325			
Total	LSA overlap	4.884	177				
	LSA given/new	17.740	177				
	Content word overlap	.598	177				
	Causality	453135.164	177				
	Temporal Cohesion	156.329	177				
	Connectivity	1511515.258	177				
Corrected total	LSA overlap	.507	176				
	LSA given/new	.513	176				
	Content word overlap	.159	176				
	Causality	35588.684	176				
	Temporal Cohesion	.346	176				
	Connectivity	77352.085	176				

Follow-up univariate ANOVAs (shown above) indicated that significant differences were found between the L1 and L2 texts written at Ph.D. level in LSA overlap (F(1, 175) = 9.852, p< .008, η^2 = .053) and LSA given/new scores (F(1, 175) = 19.877, p< .008, η^2 = .102). In other words, significant differences were noted between the L1 and L2 texts written at Ph.D level in LSA overlap as well as

LSA given/new; however, no significant differences were found between the L1 and L2 texts in terms of content words overlap, connectivity, causality and temporal cohesion.It is worth mentioning that the Bonferroni correction (.05 divided by the number of ANOVAs conducted which should equal the number of dependent variables) was adopted to make an alpha level to account for multiple ANOVAs being run. As such, in this case, we accepted statistical significance at $p < .008$ (.05/6).

To determine whether the linguistic features related to text cohesiondifferentiate English L1 texts from English L2 texts a discriminant function analysis (DFA) was conducted to examine the potential for only those indices that strongly characterized L2 academic writing samples from L1 samples. Accordingly, the linguistic indices that demonstrated significant differences between L1 and L2 texts including LSA overlap and LSA given/new were analyzed through the current model .

A stepwise discriminant function analysis was used to determine which of the linguistic features that demonstrated significant differences between L1 and L2 samples (predictor variables) could discriminate more between two naturally occurring groups in this study (L1 and L2 texts) as the dependent variable. Table 5 below provides a clear answer for the question **"how many variables would one include in the model to get the best possible prediction?"**

Table 4

Variables Retained in the DFA Model

Step	Entered	Wilks' Lambda				Exact F			
		Statistic	df1	df2	df3	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	LSA given/new	.898	1	1	175.000	19.877	1	175.000	.000

As displayed in Table 4, among the two indices included in the DFA, LSA given/newwas retained and LSA overlap was removed from the model indicating thatLSA given/new was the only good predictor of the model (*Wilk's Λ* = .898, *F*(1, 175) = 19.877, *p*< .001), as a model with just one predictor. Table 5 below indicates the classification results for the DFA model.

Table 5

Classification Results Based on the DFA Model

			Predicted Group Membership		
			L2	L1	Total
Original	Count	L2	48	35	83
		L1	40	54	94
	%	L2	57.8	42.2	100.0
		L1	42.6	57.4	100.0

57.6 % of original grouped cases correctly classified.

As displayed in Table 4.26, the classification results for the DFA correctly classified 57.6% of the texts as L1 or L2 texts. According to the results, the sensitivity of the test was 57.8% and the specificity of the test was 57.4%. Sensitivity is the measure used to report how effective the test is in identifying texts based on the indices involved in the model. Specificity is the measure used to report how effective the test is in identifying texts without the indices. The higher amounts of specificity and sensitivity are more favorable indicating a highly effective model.

5. Discussion

This study aimed to identify the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 academic texts in terms of cohesion. The results of the study indicated that between group differences exist among L1 and L2 texts on a combination of the linguistic features related to text cohesion. While several contrastive studies focused on comparing L1 and L2 texts' cohesion in various genres (e.g. Reid, 1992 ; Crossly & McNamara, 2010), this study, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, is the first attempt to explore the shared and different features related to text cohesion between L1 and L2 texts in an academic genre.Despite this lack of empirical evidence in this regard, the findings of the study

supported those of the past studies which highlighted differences between L1 and L2 writing in relation to various cohesive features.

Furthermore, The findingsalso revealed that among all the six linguistic features related to text cohesion in this study, four indices; namely, *content words overlap*, *temporal cohesion*, *causal cohesion*, and *causal connectives* reported significantly similar values across the L1 and L2 writers, whereas, the L1 and L2 essays significantly differed in terms of the indices *LSA overlap* as well as *LSA given/new*.The results demonstrated a significant link between LSA values and cohesion in academic writings in a way that L2 writers formed sentences which were more conceptually similar to the consecutive, adjacent sentences in the texts than L1 writers did. Likewise, the sentences produced by the L2 writers of English conveyed more givenness compared to those composed by the native writers of English.Moreover, among the two features differed significantly between L1 and L2 texts (LSA overlap and LSA given/new) , only the LSA given/new index was robust enough to detect Iranian L2 writers from native writers of English with an acceptable amount of sensitivity (57.7%).

These findings seemto have nothing in common with the view often expressed in the literature that most L2 writers over-rely on overt cohesive devices and overlook the significant value of coherence in forming a text (e.g. Carrell, 1982). The current study showed that Iranian L2 writers were aware of importance of underlying concepts and semantic links in their texts, even more than English L1 writers, while constructing a cohesive text in order to convey the intended meaning in a special writing genre (e.g. academic writing).The findings also demonstratedthe existence of more given sentences in Iranian college students' dissertations which corroborated the primary finding of the study. It could be inferred that the more instances of LSA overlap in atext, the more the sentences of the text are given. As Crossley, McCarthy, Salsbury and McNamara (2008) mentioned, when learners develop their lexicon, their adjacent utterances become more semantically similar. This semantic similarity is important in maintaining semantic links between utterances ensuring that interlocutors are able to co-reference new information with prior information.

One of the possible reasons for this disparity may lie in the fact that Iranian writers over-rely on covert cohesive devices (semantic co-referentiality) and it can reflect their attempt to construct a unified idea flow within the constraints of their limited syntactic and lexical range of accessible linguistic means.It can be said that the finding is in line with Carrell's (1982) point of view stating that text cohesion is not necessarily a textual property manifested by means of grammatical or lexical connective ties, but rather cohesion is an outcome of coherence when readers of a text are able to derive the connectivity of ideas from their knowledge of the world and text schema.

Another possible reason for the higher degree of LSA values in Iranian's dissertations can be the existence of an internalized benchmark for writing an academic dissertation at Ph.D level. The limited lexicon of the L2 writers in comparison with the rich lexical repertoire of native speakers, may imposeL2 writers to usean almost established design which is stronglypreferable to follow in order to have an acceptable writing style. Based on the typical style in writing L2 dissertations, the students try to focus on a limited number of main ideas and more relevant details about those ideas (supportive sentences); however, the findings of the current study showed that L1 writers formvarious but relevant main ideas about the same topic. Accordingly, it can be concluded that L2 students are more careful about thesemantic links between sentences whileexpanding their messages in comparison with their native counterparts.

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the importance of cohesive features in distinguishing L1 and L2 writing samples. Overall, this study revealed that LSA values (LSA overlap and LSA given/new) help to demonstrate between group heterogeneity in texts written by Iranian L2 writers of English and Native speakers of English. Such a finding not only supports the notion that L2 and L1 writing have potential linguistic differences n terms of text cohesion, but also can be used to distinguish L2 writing samples from L1 writing samples.

Additional studies that attempt to replicate the findings of this study and assess the inclusion of additional linguistic and rhetorical structures that exhibit languages heterogeneity in terms of different linguistic features related to other areas of interest in L1 and L2 writing including syntactic

complexity as ell as lexical diversityare needed.Specifically, such analyses need to be extended to a greater number of language backgrounds, particularly to writers outside of Iran, as well as to a greater variety of proficiency level (B.A and M.A), to assess the generalizability of these findings outside of Iran and about a larger population of L2 academic writings.

References

Biber, D. (1993). Representativeness in corpus design. *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 8, 243 257.

Cain, K. &Nash, H. M. (2011). The influence of connectives on young readers' processing andcomprehension of text. *Journal of Educational Psychology 103*, (2): 429-441.

Carrell, P. (1982). Cohesion is not coherence. TESOL Quarterly, 16/4,479-488.

Collins, J.L. (1998). *Strategies for struggling writers*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Crismore, A., Markkanen, R., &Steffensen, M. S. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuasivewriting: a study of texts written by American and finish university students. *Written Communication, 39, 39- 71.*

Crossley, S. A., McCarthy, P. M., Salsbury, T., & McNamara, D. S. (2008). LSA as a measure ofcoherence in second language natural discourse. In *In Proceedings of the 30th annual conference of the cognitive science society.*

Crossley, S.A. & McNamara, D.S. (2009). Computationally assessing lexical differences in L1 and L2 writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 18, 119-135.

Crossley, S. A., & McNamara, D. S. (2010). Cohesion, coherence, and expert evaluations ofwriting proficiency. In *Proceedings of the 32nd annual conference of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 984-989).

Crossley, S. A., & McNamara, D. S. (2011 a). Text coherence and judgments of essay quality: Models of quality and coherence. In *Proceedings of the 29th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 1236-1241).

Crossley, S. A., & McNamara, D. S. (2011 b). Shared features of L2 writing: Intergrouphomogeneity and text classification. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 20(4), 271 285.

Crowhurst, M. (1990).Reading/writing relationships: An intervention study. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 15, 155-172.

Crystal, D. 1992. *An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Language and Languages*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

De Beaugrande, R.A. & W.U. Dressler (1981). *Introduction to Text Linguistics*. London: Longman.

DeVillez, R. (2003).*Writing: Step by step*. Dubuque, IO: Kendall Hunt.

Enkvist, N. E. (1978). Coherence, pseudo-coherence, and non-coherence. In J. O. Ostman (Eds.),*Cohesion and semantics* (pp. 109-128). Abo: Akademi Foundation.

Ferris, D. R. (1994). Lexical and syntactic features of ESL writing by students at different levels of L2 proficiency. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28, 414–420.

Geiser, S. &Studley, R. (2001). UC and SAT: *Predictive validity and differential impact of the SAT I and SAT II at the University of California*. Oakland, CA: University of California.

George, D., &Mallery, M. (2010). SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference, 17.0 update (10a ed.) Boston: Pearson.

Graesser, A. C., & McNamara, D. S. (2011). Computational analyses of multilevel discoursecomprehension. *Topics in Cognitive Science, 3*, 371-398.

Graesser, A. C., McNamara, D. S., Louwerse, M. M., &Cai, Z. (2004). Coh-Metrix: Analysis of text on cohesion and language. *Behavioral Research Methods, Instruments, and Computers*, 36, 193–202.

Graesser, A. C., Singer, M., &Trabasso, T. (1994). Constructing inferences during narrative textcomprehension. *Psychological Review*, *101*, 371–395.

Grant, L., &Ginther, A. (2000). Using computer-tagged linguistic features to describe L2writingdifferences. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. 9, 123–145.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1976). &R. Hasan. *Cohesion in English*. London. Longman.

Harley, B., &King,M. L. (1989). Verb lexis in thewritten compositions of young L2learners. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11, 415–440.

Hinkel, E. (2002). *Second language writers' text: Linguistic and rhetorical Features*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Jurafsky, D., & Martin, J. H. (2002). *Speech and language processing: An introduction to natural language processing, computational linguistics, and speech recognition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kintsch, W. (1998). *Comprehension: A paradigm for cognition.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Landauer, T., McNamara, D. S., Dennis, S., &Kintsch, W. (2007) (Eds.). *Handbook of Latent Semantic Analysis.* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Longo, B. (1994). The role of metadiscourse in persuasion. *Technical Communication*, *41*, 348- 352.

Louwerse, M. M. (2001). An analytic and cognitive parameterization of coherencerelations. *Cognitive Linguistics, 12,* 291-315. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

McClure, E. (1991). A comparison of lexical strategies in L1 and L2 written English narratives. *Pragmatics and Language Learning*, 2, 141–154.

McNamara, D.S. (2001). Reading both high and low coherence texts: Effects of text sequence and prior knowledge. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 55, 51-62.

McNamara, D. S., &Kintsch, W. (1996). Learning from text: Effects of prior knowledge and text coherence. *Discourse Processes*, 22, 247-287.

McNamara, D. S., Kintsch, E., Butler-Songer, N., &Kintsch, W. (1996). Are good texts always better? Interactions of text coherence, background knowledge, and levels ofunderstanding in learning from text. *Cognition and Instruction*, 14, 1-43.

Reid, J. R. (1992). A computer text analysis of four cohesion device in English discourse by native and nonnative writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 1, 79- 107.

Sanders, T. J. M., &Noordman, L. G. M. (2000). The role of coherence relations and their linguistic markers in text processing. *Discourse Processes*, *29*, 37–60.

Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27,657–675.

Singer, M., & Leon, J. (2007). Psychological studies of higher language processes: Behavioraland empirical approaches. In F. Schmalhofer& C. Perfetti (Eds.), *higher level language processes in the brain: Inference and comprehension processes*. Mahwah, NJ.

Van Dijk, T. A., &Kintsch, W. (1983). *Strategies of discourse comprehension.* New York: Academic Press.

VandeKopple, W. J. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *CollegeComposition and communication, 36, 82-93.*

Zwaan, R. A., &Radvansky, G. A. (1998). Situation models in language comprehension and memory. *Psychological Bulletin, 123*, 162-185.

Appendix

Results of Checking Underlying Assumption to Conduct MANONA *for the Dependent Variables Related to the Text Cohesion*

Table A1
Pearson Correlation Matrix for the Indices Related to Text Cohesion

		LSA overlap	LSA given/new	Content word overlap	Causality	Temporal Cohesion	Connectivity
LSA overlap	Pearson Correlation	1	.398**	.607**	-.035	.043	.007
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.552	.465	.913
	N	285	285	285	285	285	284
LSA given/new	Pearson Correlation	.398**	1	.300**	-.160**	.022	.033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.007	.711	.582
	N	285	285	285	285	285	284
Content word overlap	Pearson Correlation	.607**	.300**	1	-.178**	.068	-.089

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.003	.249	.133
	N	285	285	285	285	285	284
Causality	Pearson Correlation	-.035	-.160**	-.178**	1	-.308**	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.552	.007	.003		.000	.271
	N	285	285	285	285	285	284
Temporal Cohesion	Pearson Correlation	.043	.022	.068	-.308**	1	.165**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.465	.711	.249	.000		.005
	N	285	285	285	285	285	284
Connectivity	Pearson Correlation	.007	.033	-.089	.065	.165**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.913	.582	.133	.271	.005	
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284

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

Table A2
Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices for the Indices Related to Text Cohesion

	Statistics
Box's M	41.508
F	1.904
df1	21
df2	109017.228
Sig.	.007

Table A3
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the Indices Related to Text Cohesion

	F	df1	df2	Sig.
LSA overlap	.175	1	175	.676
LSA given/new	3.219	1	175	.054
Content word overlap	2.897	1	175	.091
Causality	1.926	1	175	.167
Temporal Cohesion	1.559	1	175	.213
Connectivity	1.923	1	175	.167

THE INVESTIGATING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS` SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, SELF-ESTEEM AND LANGUAGE PERCEPTION

Pari Darvishpour[a], Habib Gowhary[b], Azizifar Akbar[c]

[a]MA student of TEFL,Department of Language Teaching, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

[b]Assistant professor of linguistics, Department of Language Teaching, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

[c]Assistant professor of TEFL, Department of Language Teaching, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

ABSTRACT

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND SELF-ESTEEM ARE INTEGRAL PARTS OF FOREIGN AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING. THEY ARE WHAT STUDENTS BRING TO EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS WITH THEM AND ARE STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION. IN THE PRESENT STUDY, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS` LANGUAGE PERCEPTION, SELF-ESTEEM, AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS EXPLORED AMONG 60 ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12 AND 20 YEARS IN TWO INSTITUTES. THE STUDY DESIGN WAS TAKEN FROM ROSENTHAL AND ROSNOW`S (2008) AND AIMED TO COLLECT NORMATIVE DATA ON SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, SELF-ESTEEM AND LANGUAGE PERCEPTION OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS. ORAL PROFICIENCY TEST (OPT), SPEAKING, DEVELOPED BY FARHADI, JAFARPOOR AND BIRJANDI (1995) WAS APPLIED TO DETERMINE STUDENTS` PROFICIENCY LEVEL. A SELF-ESTEEM QUESTIONNAIRE WAS TAKEN TO DISTINGUISH LOW AND HIGH SELF-ESTEEM STUDENTS. ALSO, A DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE WAS APPLIED TO EXAMINE STUDENTS` SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS. THE RESULTS REVEALED THAT THERE WAS NO MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS` RATE OF ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT AND THEIR SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS. THE FINDINGS ALSO INDICATED THAT THERE WAS NO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDENTS` SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND THEIR SELF-ESTEEM AND ALSO NO MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS` PARENTAL OCCUPATIONS AND THEIR SELF-ESTEEM.

KEY TERMS: SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS; SELF-ESTEEM; LANGUAGE PERCEPTION; ECONOMIC HARDSHIP; DEMOGRAPHY ASPECTS; LANGUAGE-LEARNING ATTITUDES

1. Introduction

Among many factors affecting foreign language learning, socioeconomic status and self-esteem are chosen as the main variables of this study. In Iran, it seems that socio-economic condition has a clear influence on someone`s self-esteem, especially during the important stages of somebody`s language learning. Apart from various factors such as intrapersonal, interpersonal and sociocultural determinants affecting self-esteem, in this study, socioeconomic status is taken into consideration, and an integral part of socioeconomic situation is a language learner`s family.

Family, which is believed to be an important system, has an obvious impact on individuals' self-concept. Self-concept itself makes influential effects on some one's self-esteem. A friendly, intimate relationship and interaction result in positive self-concept among the members of a family non-friendly relations lead to negative self-concept. There is no doubt that high self-esteem contributes to

most of the achievements in language learning especially in academic ones. One can build her own self-esteem and parents and family also play on important role on children s' decisions and choices. Rosenberg (1965) states:" someone who has high self-esteem will respect himself and think of himself usable. While a low self-esteem person cannot accept themselves and always think they are useless, unsatisfied and less worthy." (In Lam, 1989) According to what has been achieved from language teaching history, it has been evident that learning a language can be associated with some one's emotional state. Most of the language teachers & researchers have wondered why learners' feelings affect learning a language & what can be done to help the learners to take more advantage of this situation. Thus, this study attempts to investigate the relationship between socioeconomic status, self-esteem and foreign language learning. More specifically, it aims to reveal how Iranian EFL students' language learning is affected by the by the relationship between socioeconomic and self-esteem.

Accordingly, the aims to be followed in this paper are based on three issues: first, investigating the relationship between language learners` socioeconomic status and their self-confidence. Second, exploring the relationship between language learners` rate of academic improvement, socioeconomic status, and self-esteem. Third, investigating the relationship between parental occupation and EFL learners` self-confidence. Therefore, the study analyzed to answer the following three research questions:

1. Is there any relationship between language learners` socioeconomic status and their self-confidence?

2. Is there any relationship between language learners` rate of academic improvement, socioeconomic status and self-esteem?

3. Is there any relationship between parental occupation and EFL learners` self-confidence?

2. Literature Review

The following is an overview of investigations into possible links between a learner's socio-economic status and their self-esteem towards language learning.

2.1. Socioeconomic status

A lot of definitions have been stated for SES and there are also a number of factors involved in socioeconomic situations such as financial and social resources. Willms believes that SES is defined as one's social and financial conditions and their prestige in society. Bradly and Crowyn think that it is related to not only one's social and financial conditions but also their levels of education. According to Twenge and Campbell (2002), there are three theoretical models that are relevant in explaining the relationship between socio-economic level and self-esteem.

a)   The social indicator or psychological centrality model

This model states that high socio-economic level, which can be considered as an important indicator, leads to high self-esteem.

b)   The reflected assessment model, which proposes that individuals' socio-economic level has an impact on the others' attitude toward them and on the way that people treat them which can result in high self-esteem.

c)   The self-protecting mechanism model, according to which individuals possess some protecting strategies that function as shields to external feedback related to socioeconomic level, so individuals from low levels can blame external factors for their economic situation, maintaining their self-esteem by comparing themselves with others less fortunate.

Green lee and Lantz (1991), carried out a research with the Appalachian population living in condition of poverty and found that stress caused by low economic conditions contributes to feeling of depression, anxiety and worry, as well as, the use of emotional strategies for coping.

2.2. Self-esteem

Resecting, valuing and paying attention to one self refers to self-confidence. It is considered vas a personal evaluation of worthiness. People with high self-esteem feel more assertive and confident; as a result, they are hardly or less affected by their environments and situations. It represents that if you know yourself you continue to work on your abilities and strengths, so it is not a monotonous process but ongoing.

Berk (2003) and Williams (2001) have two other views towards self-esteem definitions. Berk considers self-esteem as" the evaluative aspect of the self-concept; therefore, the evaluation of a person's own competence is related to accepting and approving of one's own characteristics." Williams(2001) states self-esteem as" greatly impacts individuals' attitudes, emotional experiences, future behavior and long-term psychological adjustments."

Self-esteem has an influential effect not only on current physical and mental health, and health-related behavior, but also on future health and health related behavior during adulthood. Self-esteem has some important consequences on cognitive models of health behavior such as the theory of planned behavior (TPB), the attitude-social Influence-self-Efficacy (ASE) model. The theory of triadic Influence (TTI) and the Precede-proceed model. According to the review by Mann et al. and TPB, self-efficacy can effect on self-esteem or the evaluation of self-worth. It is crucial to know the possible associations of low or high self-esteem which are considered to be important during the developmental stage of adolescence to change the effects of self-esteem on future health and health related behavior.

Harter believes that the development and maintenance of self-esteem in childhood and adolescence id effected by two important factors: Perceived competence in areas of importance and the experience of social support. Most of the researchers such as Cooper Smith (1959) and (1967), Rosenberg (1965), and Mruk (1999) and (2006) have been known as the first experts who have developed the theoretical concept of self-confidence. In total, they state 6 major components of self-esteem:

-competence and worthiness

-cognition and affect

-stability and openness

According to those conducted research, all components consist of a certain degree and may influence on a person's dependability on individual behaviors and context circumstances.

Some studies have been carried out on children's competence based on different labels (efficacy, success). Children's competence can be considered as a major influence in language learning regarding academic achievement. However, worthiness begins in early childhood when children receive acceptance and approval from their parents after doing something successfully. Therefore, making judgment about one-self is related to worthiness.

3. Method
3.1. Data
The currently proposed study design was taken from Rosenthal and Rosnow`s (2008), which is actually a quasi-experimental design. This study assigns language learners into their respective groups, such as low and high SES, self-esteem and language learning. This study aims to collect normative data on socioeconomic status, self-esteem and language perception of Iranian EFL learners. The currently proposed study involves 60 English language learners between the ages of 12 and 20 years. There is roughly equal numbers of boys and girls, as well as roughly equal numbers of low- and high-SES individuals. Both private and public institutes are taken into consideration in the study sampling and their range of educational quality and socioeconomic strata are also paid attention to. Oral Proficiency Test (OPT), speaking, developed by Farhadi, Jafarpoor and Birjandi (1995) was administered to determine students` proficiency level. It is carried out through interviews to measure the students' speaking abilities in English language. A self-esteem questionnaire also is distributed among a population of 60 EFL students taking the same course to group the participants into two groups, including those who are found to be the students having a high degree of self-esteem and those who indicate a low degree of self-confidence.

3.2. Procedures
First, a speaking test developed by Farhadi, Jafarpoor and Birjandi (1995) is used by the researcher, who is also the instructor, teaching the oral communication course is administered to determine the proficiency level of the students. Scores are given on a 6 point scale ranging from the least appropriate (1) to the most (6). In order to measure the participants' self-esteem, the researcher provides a questionnaire taken from Marsh and Herbert (2007) containing 20 items. At the beginning of the course, the self-esteem questionnaire is distributed between 60 students to select the required

information about participants` self-confidence in order to categorize them into low and high self-confidence groups.

Having been selected as the participants of the study, these students again will be interviewed at the end of the term by the researcher. The scale used by the researcher takes advantage of following points suggested by Farhady et.al. (1995) in order to make the scoring as reliable as possible.

1. Each interview must be carefully structured.

2. The number of raters will not be less than 20 for each case.

3. The candidates should be put at ease in order to make the results both more valid and reliable.

4. Each interview will be recorded for scoring and future reference.

5. Scoring will be discrete rather than holistic.

In addition, in this study during the term, the WASI is administered which takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

4. The analysis of the data, results and discussion

In order to determine if there was a significant relationship between the students obtained scores on the final exam in the form of the structured interviews and the subjects' self-esteem determined by the self–esteem questionnaire and socioeconomic status results, the researcher calculates the correlation co–efficient of the scores obtained on the speaking test and the scores resulted from the self–esteem and socioeconomic status questionnaires.

4.1. Is there any relationship between language learners` socioeconomic status and their self-esteem?

ANOVA statistical analysis was applied to distinguish the degree of association between independent variables, self-esteem and dependent variable, economical condition.

Table (1) ANOVA analysis, the relationship between the students` socioeconomic status and their self-esteem

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	117.863	1	117.863	3.414	.070a
	Residual	2002.070	58	34.518		
	Total	2119.933	59			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-esteem

b. Dependent Variable: Economical condition

The first research question and its related hypothesis aimed to investigate whether there was any relationship between language learners` socioeconomic status and their self-esteem. According to the table1, since the significance based on ANOVA analysis is 0.070 and is not smaller than 0.05, there is no relationship between the students` socioeconomic status and their self-esteem.

4.2 Results of the relationship between language learners` rate of academic improvement, socioeconomic status and self-esteem.

Univariate statistical analysis was applied to distinguish the degree of relationship between learners` perception of language and self-esteem.

Table (2) Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	217.581a	1	217.581	45.383	**.000**
Intercept	10324.114	1	10324.114	2153.415	.000
W	217.581	1	217.581	45.383	.000
Error	278.069	58	4.794		
Total	13727.000	60			
Corrected Total	495.650	59			

a. R Squared = .439 (Adjusted R Squared = .429)

Univariate statistical analysis was applied to distinguish the degree of relationship between economic condition and self-esteem.

Table (3) Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Economical condition

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	100.005ᵃ	1	100.005	2.872	**.096**
Intercept	67772.005	1	67772.005	1945.998	.000
W	100.005	1	100.005	2.872	.096
Error	2019.928	58	34.826		
Total	82640.000	60			
Corrected Total	2119.933	59			

a. R Squared = .047 (Adjusted R Squared = .031)

The second research question and its related hypothesis investigated whether there was any relationship between language learners` rate of academic improvement, socioeconomic status and self-esteem. According to the table (2), Univariate Analysis of Variance, the significance is 0.000 and is smaller than 0.05, therefore there was a relationship between language learners` self-esteem and their rate of academic improvement. Thus, there is no meaningful relationship between students` rate of academic improvement and their self-esteem is rejected. However, based on the result of Univariate Analysis of Variance, table (3), the significance is 0.096 which is not smaller than 0.05 therefore there is no relationship between language learners` socioeconomic status and their rate of academic improvement. Consequently, there is no meaningful relationship between students` rate of academic improvement and their socioeconomic situation is retained.

4.3. Results of the relationship between parental occupation and EFL learners` self-esteem

Univariate statistical analysis was applied to distinguish the learners` parental occupations and their self-esteem.

Table (4) The relationship between parental occupation and EFL learners` self-esteem

Dependent Variable: Self-esteem

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	25.397ᵃ	2	12.699	1.539	.223
Intercept	12205.401	1	12205.401	1479.434	.000
U	25.397	2	12.699	1.539	.223
Error	470.253	57	8.250		
Total	13727.000	60			
Corrected Total	495.650	59			

a. R Squared = .051 (Adjusted R Squared = .018)

The third research question and its related hypothesis aimed to investigate whether there was any relationship between parental occupation and EFL learners` self-esteem. Based on the results of the table (4), since the significance is 0.223 and is not smaller than 0.05, there is no meaningful direct relationship between the learners` parental occupations and their self-esteem.

According to the first research question which investigated the relationship between the foreign language learners` socioeconomic status and their self-esteem, the learners` families` income, amount and type of education, kind of prestige and occupation, place of residence and in some society's even ethnic origin and religious background had no impact on their attitudes, emotional experiences, future behavior, and long-term psychological adjustments. The results of the study for the first

research question are not in line with Twenge and Campbell`s reflected assessment model (2002) that the socio-economic level of individuals has an impact on the perception that others have, and consequently, on the treatment they received, and since individuals internalize others' perceptions, this affects their self-esteem.

With regard to the second research question the explored the relationship between language learners` rate of academic improvement, socioeconomic status and self-esteem, the findings relating to language learning and learners` self-esteem indicated that language learners with higher self-esteem had significant improvement in their academic carrier. The findings are in line with previous study such as Mruk (1999) indicating the clear and direct relationship between self-esteem and language perception.

However, there is no relationship between language learners` socioeconomic status and their rate of academic improvement. These are at odds with Ausubel`s findings (1968) that support the idea that middle-class children emerge as more academically competitive than their lower-class counterparts, the former demonstrating more ambition in their learning. Also, the idea that socioeconomic status has no effects on learners` academic improvement taken in this sudsy supports the survey conducted by Carr & Pauwels, 2006 in a Queensland state school located in one of the lowest socioeconomic areas of the state indicating that of sixty pupils, none had travelled abroad, and none anticipated doing so. This supports their comment that 'young working class people have not historically seen language study as having relevance to their lives.

Conversely, Crosnoe (2004) observed that students' distant relationships with parents would result in declining their academic achievement, a finding which highlighted the importance of the interplay of family and school as main sources of providing social capital. Different dimensions of social capital (e.g. individual and family characteristics, school experience, and participation in extracurricular activities) were taken into consideration by Israel and Beaulieu (2004) to see if they had any effect on students' academic achievement and their staying in school. The results of their study confirmed the hypothesis that families, schools, and communities play important roles in students' academic success and, as a result, their staying in school. Having refined the social capital theory with the concept of alignment between parents' and adolescents' goals and actions, Kim and Schneider (2005) sought to find out the effect of social capital in the transition to postsecondary education. The results indicated that this conception of social capital increased students' chances of attending a postsecondary institution in the year after high school graduation. Therefore, it seems that the subject of socioeconomic is not a clear indication of language development since different studies` results have been considerably different from each other, although it is a major factor not only in a person`s personal life but also his academic field.

Concerning the third research question investigating whether there was any relationship between parental occupation and EFL learners` self-esteem, the results showed that there was no meaningful direct relationship between the learners` parental occupations and their self-esteem. The finding are in line with Twenge and Campbell`s results (2002) indicating that individuals possess a range of self-protecting strategies that serve as shields to external feedback related to socioeconomic level, and thus individuals from low levels can blame external factors for their economic situation, maintaining their self-esteem by comparing themselves with others less fortunate.

5- Conclusion

It can be concluded that among many factors which influence foreign and second language learning, socioeconomic status and self-esteem were chosen as the main variables of this study and findings revealed that by investigating the relationships among the variables, socio-economic condition had no influence on someone`s self-esteem. The results also indicated that language learners with higher self-esteem had significant improvement in their academic carrier. In addition, the results showed that learners` parental occupations had no clear influence on foreign language learners` self-esteem.

6- Suggestions

This study has some suggestions for further research in order to give hints to those who want to probe other related areas especially the socioeconomic status in language learning since it is a multifaceted factor. In this study, among many areas related to this factor, parental financial

conditions and education, general demographic aspects, residential information, and family information were explored in this present study. Therefore, other branches involved in socioeconomic status influencing language learning can be investigated. Also, the role of different genders considering consciously or subconsciously the effects of socioeconomic condition on foreign and second language learning can be another direction for further study.

References

Ausubel, D. P. (1968) Educational Pyschology: a Cognitive View, New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston inc.

Carr, J. and Pauwels A. (2006) Boys And Foreign Language Learning: Real Boys Don't Do Languages, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Crosnoe, R. (2004). Social capital and the interplay of families and schools. Journal of Marriage and Family, 66, 267-280. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2004.00019.x, http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1741 3737.2004.00019.x

Farhady, H., Jafarpour, A., & Birjandi, P. (1995). Testing language skills: From theory to practice. Tehran: The Centre for Publishing and Compiling University Books in Humanities.

Kim, D. H., & Schneider, B. (2005). Social capital in action: Alignment of parental support in adolescents' transition to postsecondary education. Social Forces, 84, 1181 1206. doi:10.1353/sof.2006.0012, http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/sof.2006.0012

Lamb, M. (2004). Integrative Motivation in a Globalizing World. System. 32. 3-19.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-esteem*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rosenthal, R., & Rosnow, R. L. (2008). Essentials of behavioral research: Methods and data analysis (3rd edition). McGraw-Hill.)

Twenge, J.M., and Campbell, W.K. (2002). Self-esteem and socioeconomic status: A metaanalytic review. Personality and Social Psychology Review, 6(1), 59-71.

Mruk, C. 1999 (2nd ed.). Self-esteem: Research, theory and practice. New York: Single Publishing Company.

THE KNOWLEDGE BASE EFL TEACHERS NEED FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE: TARGETING THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS AND PRACTICAL DEMANDS

Mehdi Dehghayedi
Ph.D candidate, Department of foreign languages, Dashtestan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Borazjan, Iran
Email: mehdidehghayedi@gmail.com

Firooz Sadighi
Full Professor, Department of foreign languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
Email: Firoozsadighi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE BASE LANGUAGE TEACHERS NEED TO ACQUIRE IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN ACTUAL CLASSROOMS HAS REMAINED A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE AMONG SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS. THIS STUDY, THEREFORE, HAS TRIED TO PROVIDE THE INTERESTED READERS WITH THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF THE KNOWLEDGE BASE REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE. REVIEWING SUCH CONCEPTUALIZATIONS, ONE CAN NOTICE THAT WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON IS MUCH MORE THAN THEIR DIFFERENCES. THESE SIMILAR THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS ARE NOT, HOWEVER, SIMILARLY RELEVANT TO DIFFERENT SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS. THE QUEST FOR COMING UP WITH A STRAIGHTFORWARD GLOBALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNT OF THE CONSTRUCT "KNOWLEDGE BASE " IS ABORTIVE PARTLY DUE TO THE INDIGENIZATION PROCESS THROUGH WHICH TARGET LANGUAGES ARE LEARNED FOR LOCAL OBJECTIVES RATHER THAN INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTIONS.

KEY WORDS: KNOWLEDGE BASE- EFL TEACHERS

1. Preliminaries

The major goal of language teaching is to enhance students' understanding and learning. Teachers need to be equipped with various kinds of knowledge and skills to establish and maintain effective teaching environments that enable them to achieve that goal . So teachers' professional knowledge may be considered the single most important characteristic in instruction. Elbaz (1983, p.11) points out that "the single factor which seems to have the greatest power to carry forward our understanding of the teacher's role is the phenomenon of teachers' knowledge." The topic of teacher knowledge and the nature of the knowledge base have emerged as one of the central concerns of research in language teacher education over the last few years. That's why recent years have witnessed increased interest in evaluating the effectiveness of teacher education processes and how teachers and student teachers interpreted and gave meaning to the teacher education programs they experienced (Zeichner , 1999).This led to emergence of a number of theoretical frameworks. The most influential of these was possibly Shulman's (1987) formulation of the knowledge base of teaching as comprising a set of different categories of knowledge:

1. Content knowledge

2. General pedagogical knowledge (pedagogical issues that transcend subject matter)

3. Curriculum knowledge

4. Pedagogical content knowledge (the special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers)

5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics

6. Knowledge of educational contexts (at both micro- and macro-levels)

7. Knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values (p.97)

It was not until the mid-1990s, however, that serious thought began to be given to the question of what the knowledge base of language teaching might be. Up until this point, there had been a largely unchallenged assumption that what language teachers needed was declarative knowledge about the language which they were teaching. Under this conception, what teachers "knew" was the structure of the language they taught, and also some largely mechanistic pedagogy for "transferring" that knowledge to students.

Thus, historically, the knowledge-base of L2 teacher education has been grounded in the positivist epistemological perspective. It has been compartmentalized into isolated theoretical courses and separated from teaching, leading to what teacher educator D.L. Ball (2000) has referred to as the persistent dichotomy between subject matter and pedagogy. The content of language teacher education program positioned disciplinary knowledge about formal properties of language and theories of SLA as foundational knowledge for the professional preparation of the teacher. Thus, viewing L2 teaching as a matter of translating theories of SLA into effective instructional practices (*how L2 teachers should teach*), L2 teacher educators historically defined the knowledge base of language teacher education largely in terms of how language learners acquire a second language and less in terms of how language teaching is learned and how it is practiced (Freeman & Johnson, 1998).

2. The Nature of Teacher-Learning

A focus on the nature of teacher learning has been central to a rethinking of both the content and delivery of S/FLTE programs. Teacher learning from traditional perspectives was seen as a cognitive issue, something the learner did on his or her own. Nunan (1995) describes this learner-centered view this way: it is the learner who must remain at the center of the processes, for no matter how much energy and effort we expend; it is the learner who has to do the learning" (p.55). Teaching was then viewed as a transmission process. When couched within a transmission model the process-product paradigm examined teaching in terms of the learning outcomes it produced. Process-product studies concentrated on the link, which was often assumed to be causal, between the teacher's actions and the students' mental processes so in product-process research the aim was to understand how teachers' action led or did not lead to student learning (Freeman, 2002).

Traditionally the problem of teacher-learning was hence often viewed as a question of improving the effectiveness of delivery. The failure of teachers to acquire what was taught was seen as a problem of overcoming teachers' resistance to change (Singh and Richards 2006). A focus on teacher-learning as a field of inquiry however seeks to examine the mental processes involved in teacher-learning and acknowledges the situated and the social nature of learning (Lave and Wenger 1991). From this perspective, learning takes place in a context and evolves through the interaction and participation of the participants in that context. Teacher-learning is not viewed as translating knowledge and theories into practice but as constructing new knowledge and theory through participating in specific social contexts and engaging in particular types of activities and processes. This latter type of knowledge, sometimes called practitioner knowledge, is the source of teachers' practices and understandings.

While traditional views of teacher learning often viewed the teachers' task as the application of theory to practice, more recent views see teacher-learning as the theorization of practice, in other words, making visible the nature of practitioner know ledge and providing the means by which such knowledge can be elaborated, understood and reviewed. As Freeman (2002, 11) puts it: "teacher education must then serve two functions. It must teach the skills of reflectivity and it must provide the discourse and vocabulary that can serve participants in renaming their experience". In practical

terms this has led to a reconsideration of traditional modes of teaching in S/FLTE programs and a focus on the course room as a community of learners engaged in social practices and the collaborative construction of meanings. Transmission modes of teaching are replaced with various forms of dialogic and collaborative inquiry. This view of learning draws on sociocultural theory and the notion of identity construction and considers how the social processes of the course room or lecture room contribute to and shape learning. Key to the teacher-learning processes are the roles of participants, the discourses they create and participate in, the activities that take place and the artifacts and resources that are employed. All of these shape the nature of the learning that occurs (Singh and Richards 2006). Learning is seen to emerge through social interaction within a community of practice. Johnson (2006) captures current views of teacher learning as arising from research which has the following characteristics:

This research depicts L2 teacher learning as normative and lifelong, as emerging out of and through experiences in social contexts: as learners in classrooms and schools, as participants in professional teacher education programs, and later as teachers in settings where they work. It described L2 teacher learning as socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of self, subject matter, curricula, and setting. It shows L2 teachers as users and creators of legitimate forms of knowledge who make decisions about how best to teacher their L2 students within complex socially, culturally, and historically situated contexts (p.239).

3. The Knowledge base of Second/Foreign Language Teacher Education

What is it that language teachers need to know and do to be effective classroom practitioners and language teaching professionals? How is this knowledge and practice acquired? And how does it change over time? The issue of language teachers' knowledge and skill base is fundamental to our understanding of effective teaching and to approaches to language teacher education. Richards (2011) in a paper explored the knowledge, beliefs, and skills that language teachers make use of in their practice. His focus is on the understandings and practices of those teachers who would generally be regarded by their peers as exemplary language teaching professionals. In trying to realize what distinguishes the way they understand and approach their work, Richards focused on ten core dimensions of language teaching expertise and practice and argued that they are not in any hierarchical relationship, and there is some overlap among them, but they help lay out some of the basic territory and hopefully help conceptualize the nature of competence, expertise, and professionalism in language teaching. The nature of what we mean by effectiveness in teaching is not always easy to define because conceptions of good teaching differ from culture to culture (Tsui 2009). In some cultures a good teacher is one who controls and directs learners and who maintains a respectful distance between the teacher and the learners. Learners are the more or less passive recipients of the teacher's expertise. Teaching is viewed as a teacher controlled and directed process. In other cultures the teacher may be viewed more as a facilitator. The ability to form close interpersonal relations with students is highly valued, and there is a strong emphasis on individual learner creativity and independent learning. Students may even be encouraged to question and challenge what the teacher says. The ten core dimensions are as follows:

1. **The language proficiency factor**: Learning how to carry out aspects of a lesson fluently and comprehensively in English is an important dimension of teacher learning for those whose mother tongue is not English. There is a threshold proficiency level the teacher needs to have reached in the target language in order to be able to teach effectively in English. A teacher who has not reached this level of proficiency will be more dependent on teaching resources (e.g., textbooks) and less likely to be able to engage in improvisational teaching (Medgyes , 2001).

2. **The role of content knowledge**:   A recurring issue in second language teacher education concerns what the content knowledge or subject matter of language teaching is, and consequently the question of what it is that we think teachers need to know in order to reach their full potential as language teachers. This knowledge base was represented in the curricula of MA programs that began to be offered from this time. Typically it consisted of courses in language analysis, learning theory, methodology, and sometimes a teaching

practicum, but the practical skills of language teaching were often undervalued. The debate over the relation between theory and practice has been with us ever since.

3. **Teaching skills:** The initial challenge for novice teachers is to acquire the basic classroom skills needed to present and navigate their lessons. Teaching from this perspective is an act of performance, and for teachers to be able to carry themselves through the lesson, they have to have a repertoire of techniques and routines at their fingertips.

4. **Contextual knowledge :** Sociocultural perspectives on learning emphasize that learning is situated; that is, it takes place in specific settings or contexts that shape how learning takes place. Language teachers teach in many different contexts, and in order to function in those contexts they need to acquire the appropriate contextual knowledge.

5. **The language teachers' identity :** One of the things a person has to learn when he or she becomes a language teacher is what it means to be a language teacher. A sociocultural perspective on teacher learning posits a central aspect of this process as the reshaping of identity and identities within the social interaction of the classroom. Identity refers to the differing social and cultural roles teacher-learners enact through their interactions with their students during the process of learning. These roles are not static but emerge through the social processes of the classroom.

6. **Learner focused activity**: Although teaching can be viewed as a type of teacher performance, the goal of teaching is to facilitate student learning. The extent to which the focus of a lesson is teacher- rather than learner-focused is reflected in the amount of talking the teacher does during the lesson, the extent to which input from learners directs the shape and direction of the lesson, the extent to which the teacher's primary preoccupation during the lesson is with such things as classroom management, control, and order, and the extent to which the lesson reflects the teacher's lesson plan. Learner-centeredness as a characteristic of expert teachers is seen in some of the research Borg(2006) reviews, where these are the characteristics of expert teachers: 1) They are familiar with typical student behaviors.2) They use their knowledge of learners to make predictions about what might happen in the classroom.3) They build their lessons around students' difficulties.4) They maintain active student involvement. Suggesting that a central aspect of learner-focused teaching is creating a classroom that functions as a community of learners, Senior (2006) declared:

It is sometimes forgotten that language classes operate as communities, each with its own collection of shared understandings that have been built up over time. The overall character of each language class is created, developed, and maintained by everyone in the room. (p. 200)

7. **Pedagogical reasoning skills**: An important component of current conceptualizations of SLTE is a focus on teacher cognition. This encompasses the mental lives of teachers, how these are formed, what they consist of, and how teachers' beliefs, thoughts, and thinking processes shape their understanding of teaching and their classroom practices. Borg (2006) comments:

A key factor driving the increase in research in teacher cognition, not just in language education, but in education more generally, has been the recognition that teachers are active, thinking decision-makers who play a central role in shaping classroom event. Couples with insights from the field of psychology which have shown how knowledge and beliefs exert a strong influence on teacher action, this recognition has suggested that understanding teacher cognition is central to the process of understanding teaching. (p. 1)

8. **Theorizing from practice:** The development of a personal system of knowledge, beliefs, and understandings drawn from our practical experience of teaching is known as the theorizing of practice. The belief system and understanding teachers build up in this way helps them make sense of their experience and also serves as the source of the practical actions they take in the classroom

9. **Membership of a community of practice:** Viewing language teaching as a private activity is a narrow and self-centered view of teaching that fails to capitalize on the potential for learning and growth that comes from participating in a community of teachers having shared goals, values, and interests. The teaching context becomes a learning community, and its

members constitute a community of practice. A community of practice has two characteristics: 1. It involves a group of people who have common interests and who relate and interact to achieve shared goals. 2. It focuses on exploring and resolving issues related to the workplace practices that members of the community take part in.

10. **Professionalism:** English language teaching is not something that anyone who can speak English can do. It is a profession, which means that English teaching is seen as a career in a field of educational specialization, it requires a specialized knowledge base obtained through both academic study and practical experience, and it is a field of work where membership is based on entry requirements and standards.

Richards (2009) also distinguished two approaches within the field of second/foreign language teacher education(S/FLTE) – one focusing on classroom teaching skills and pedagogic issues, and the other focusing on what has been perceived as the academic underpinnings of classroom skills, namely knowledge about language and language learning. The relationship between the two has often been problematic. According to Richards(2009), one way to lessen the ambiguities regarding this issue is to contrast two differing kinds of knowledge which may be referred to as *knowledge about* and *knowledge how*. Knowledge about or *content knowledge* provides what has come to be the established core curriculum of S/FLTE programs, particularly at the graduate level, where course work on topics such as language analysis, discourse analysis, phonology, curriculum development, and methodology is standard. The language-based courses provided the academic content, and the methodology courses showed teachers how to teach it. An unquestioned assumption was that such knowledge informs teachers' classroom practices. Recent research however (e.g. Bartels, 2005) shows that teachers in fact often fail to apply such knowledge in their classrooms. Despite knowing the theory and principles associated with Communicative Language Teaching for example, in their own teaching teachers are often seen to make use of traditional grammar-and-practice techniques in their classrooms. Freeman (2002) raised the issue of the relevance of the traditional knowledge base of language to language teaching. Those working within a sociocultural perspective have hence argued that second language acquisition research as it has been conventionally understood has focused on an inadequate view of what the object of learning is since it has not considered the way language is socially and culturally constituted (Miller, 2006; Firth and Wagner, 1997;Norton, 1997).

The distinction between explicit knowledge and implicit knowledge throws some light on the dilemma of failed uptake, the former constituting the basis of "knowledge about" and the latter of "knowledge how". Implicit knowledge covers a wide range of terms that have been used in the literature to refer to the beliefs, theories, and knowledge that underlie teachers' practical actions (terms such as "principles", "practitioner know- ledge", "personal theories", "maxims") (Tsang, 2004). Central to *knowledge how* are concepts such as pedagogical content knowledge (the capacity to transform content into accessible and learnable forms) and practical knowledge, all of which refer to the knowledge and thinking that teachers make use of in facilitating learning in their classrooms and which belong to a third strand that has often been missing from formulations of the core content of S/FLTE – namely the nature of teaching itself. Freeman (2009) has emphasized that the knowledge-base of S/FLTE must be expanded to include the processes of teaching and teacher-learning and the beliefs, theories and knowledge which informs teaching. Rather than the MA course being a survey of issues in applied linguistics drawing from the traditional disciplinary sources, course work in areas such as reflective teaching, classroom research, and action research now form parts of the core curriculum in many language education programs and seek to expand the traditional knowledge base of language teaching. Van Lier (1992) proposed a way to resolve the theory-practice issue:

Instead of the usual linguistic sub-topics such as phonetics, syntax, discourse analysis and so on, I propose that we identify language-related themes from the teachers' own sphere of activity… Within each theme, it is inevitable that straightforward linguistic phenomena of phonology, syntax, discourse, etc will need to be explored at some point. This exploration will necessitate a certain amount of linguistic study in the traditional sense, but it is very important that such study is now motivated by a real-life question that requires an answer. Interestingly in this scheme of Language Awareness development, we treat "the teaching of linguistics" in a similar way to the way in which we treat "the teaching of grammar" in a task-based communicative approach. We do not teaching

linguistics "because it is there", but because it helps us to solve language problems in real-life tasks (p.23).

Kumaravadivelu (2012) proposes what he calls "critical classroom observation" as a procedure for engaging teachers in the process of theorizing their own practice, a procedure which involves self-observation of a lesson by the teacher together with observation by students in the lesson and an observer, following which their different perspectives are compared and the meaning of the lesson is interpreted and theorized.

4. Conclusion

There is generally consensus among the experts in the field that theoretical knowledge comes into play either consciously or subconsciously when teachers want to adopt particular teaching styles or use teaching techniques to reach the stated or unstated objectives. Teachers may be able to determine what constitutes good or bad teaching but sometimes they are not aware of the underlying sources for such abilities. Currently, we are yet to devise an investigative technique that helps us go about the underlying motives and factors which shape teachers' professional identity. Most studies on teacher knowledge have made use of self-reports, interviews, think aloud protocol, and case studies as data collection techniques. Such studies are dependent on whatever participating teachers say and the researcher has to infer a possible underlying knowledge they might have used for action. Kumaravadivelu (2012) asserts that studies on teacher knowledge can at best reveal only partial knowledge. Thus, teachers' beliefs regarding the unhelpfulness of theory in practical teaching may be due to the subconscious nature of such knowledge transfer while practicing inside the classrooms. One point, however, is that L2 teaching should not be viewed as a matter of translating theories into effective instructional practices (*how L2 teachers should teach*), teacher educators historically defined the knowledge base of L2 teacher education largely in terms of how language learners acquire a second language and less in terms of how L2 teaching is learned and how it is practiced (Freeman & Johnson, 1998).The final verdict, consequently, is that we need to avoid taking extremes and establish an appropriate balance between different knowledge areas in PSTE in Iran. Pre-service programs should be accompanied with practical courses that improve the teachers' knowledge of language and training.

References

Elbaz, F. (1983*). Teacher thinking: A study of practical knowledge*. London: Crown Helm.

Freeman, D. (2002). The hidden side of the work: Teacher knowledge & learning to teach. A perspective from North American research on teacher education in English language. *Language Teaching,* 35, 1-13.

Freeman, D. & Johnson, K. (1998). Reconceptualizing the knowledge-base of language teacher education. *TESOL Quarterly,* 32, 397-417.

Freeman, D. (1996). *The "unstudied problem": Research on teacher learning in language teaching.* In: FREEMAN, D.; RICHARDS, J.C. (Eds.). Teacher Learning in Language Teaching. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Freeman, D., & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). (1996). *Teacher learning in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Freeman, D. (1994). *Knowing into doing: Teacher education & the problem of transfer*. In: D. Li, D. Mahoney, & J. Richards (Eds.) Exploring Second Language Teacher Development. Hong Kong. City University of Honk Kong.

Freeman, D. (1993). Renaming experience/reconstructing practice: Developing new underst&ings of teaching. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 94, 485-497.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2012). *Language Teacher Education for a Global Society: A Modular Model for Knowing, Analyzing, Recognizing, Doing, & Seeing*. New York: Routledge.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Underst&ing Language Teaching: From Method to Postmethod*. *Mahwah*, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2001). Toward a postmodern pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(4), 537-560.

Medgyes, P. (2001). When the teacher is in a non-native speaker. In M. Celcie-Murcia (ed.), Teaching English as a second or foreign language (3rd edn.). Boston: Heinle & Heinle, 415-427.

Richards, J. C. (2011). *Competence & Performance in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches & methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (Ed.). (1998*). Beyond training*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. & M. Pennington (1998). *The first year of teaching*. In J. C. Richards (Ed.), Beyond training (pp. 173−90). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., & Lockhart, C. (1994). Reflective teaching in second language classrooms. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge & teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1-22.

Tsui, A. B. M. (2009). What shapes teachers' professional development? In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.). The international h&book of English language teaching. (Vol. 2.) Norwell, MA: Springer.

Van Lier (1992). Not the Nine O'clock Linguistics Class: Investigating Contingency Grammar'. *Language Awareness*, 1(2), 91-108.

A NEW HORIZON ON THE ANTONY SAINT-EXUPERY'S BOOK "THE LITTLE PRINCE" AND THE ISLAMIC PERSIAN LITERATURE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BASED ON THEIR THEOSOPHICAL COMMON GROUNDS

[1]Mohieddin Manouchehr Eghbalitabar, [2]Masoud Motamedi
1-English Department, Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran
2-English Department, Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran
(Corresponding Author: Mohieddin Manouchehr Eghbalitabar)
Email: manoochehr_eghbali401@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT ARTICLE HAS MADE AN ATTEMPT TO COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE BOOK "LITTLE PRINCE", BY ANTONY SAINT-EXUPERY, TO ISLAMIC THEOSOPHY. ON THE FACE OF IT, IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS NO COMMON GROUND BETWEEN THIS BOOK AND THEOSOPHY; HOWEVER, BASED ON A DETAIL COMPARISON BETWEEN THE TWO, THE FINDINGS OBTAINED SOUND HIGHLY AMAZING. THE AUTHORS ARE OF THE CONVICTION THAT SUCH COMMONALITIES STEM FROM THE ANTONY SAINT-EXUPERY'S RIGHTEOUSNESS-SEEKING RATHER THAN HIS FAMILIARITY WITH THEOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS. A VARIETY OF ISLAMIC THEOSOPHICAL TERMS ARE PRESENT IN THIS BOOK. ALL THE PIECES OF EVIDENCE CONVERGE UPON THE POINT THAT IN THIS LITERARY PIECE SUCH THEOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS AS MATERIAL KNOWLEDGE, SURRENDER, SATISFACTION, VISUALIZATION, PAINSTAKING SUFFERINGS, AND SPIRITUAL MASTER, CONTAINING DEEP IMPLICATIONS, HAVE SURFACED MERELY IN THE FORM OF A SIMPLE CHILD STORY. THE ANTONY SAINT-EXUPERY'S RESORT TO MAKING USE OF A CHILD LANGUAGE TRULY DEMONSTRATES HIS BEING TRULY KINDHEARTEDNESS. THE FREQUENT MEETINGS BETWEEN THE PRINCE AND THE PILOT ALSO ARE A REMINDER OF THE THEOSOPHISTS MEETINGS WITH ONE ANOTHER. THE PILOT'S STAYING IN THE DESERT IS A SYMBOL OF AMAZEMENT, AND THE ASSISTANCE ON THE PART OF THE PRINCE TO HIM IS A SYMBOL OF THE PROPHET KHEZR ASSISTANCE. HIS CRYPTIC AND VAGUE EXPRESSIONS REMIND US OF THE CRYPTIC LANGUAGE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL LEADERS AND THEIR SELF-CONTROL. THE MEETINGS BETWEEN THE PRINCE AND EVERY OTHER RESIDENT OF THE OTHER ASTEROIDS WHO HAD LIMITED THEMSELVES TO THE MATERIAL NEEDS OF THEIRS IS INDICATIVE OF THE MATERIAL WORLD THE COMMON HUMAN BEINGS HAVE ENCAPSULATED THEMSELVES WITHIN IT AND HAVE KEPT DREAMING ABOUT THEIR FUTURE AMBITIONS. THE MEETING BETWEEN THE PRINCE AND THE SERPENT AND ASKING IT TO BITE HIM IS A SYMBOL OF EUTHANASIA. HIS JOURNEY BACK TO THE PLANET HE HAD COME FROM IS ALSO A SYMBOL OF HUMAN BEING'S JOURNEY BACK TO THEIR ORIGIN.

KEYWORDS: ISLAMIC THEOSOPHY, INFERENCING, TRADITIONAL PERSIAN TEXTS, SUFIS

1. Introduction

As to the impact of Persian literature on the French one, various books have been written in either of them. Such authors as Pier Martino, Nayere Samsami, Mary Lewis, Mohammed Qaravi, and many

others have written a lot on this point. However, none of these books can afford to catch up with the book of 'From Saadi to Oregon' written by Javad Hadidi. This book has been tremendously indicative of French literature influenced by Persian. No need to say a plenty of relevant theosophical points have been mentioned in the light of such notion, however, drafting such a huge task appeared to be way beyond the literature repertoire of the present author.

In comparative studies of various literal subjects- irrespective of studying them within or without their respective community- a sort of resemblance falling into two distinct categories can be discerned to the effect that either the similar elements, i.e. no matter in the form or content, lead the audience to understand undoubtedly that there has been such exchanges between these languages or they lead the readers towards inferencing that the similarity has arisen out of mere frequency.

Even if the second alternative is adopted it is likely to lead to the claim that such commonalities have mostly likely taken root in the awesome or awful events happening to the offspring of Prophet Adam. Evidently the occurrence of such events is highly probable in any sort of society. The infinite commonality of human beings' sufferings, loves, wars, peaces, most obviously depicts a common affective window most likely to be sensed by all of them. This common sense seems to be nothing but the sense of humanity by the mediation of which various but homogeneous perspectives on theology and theosophy have emerged.

An investigation into this point across almost all mystic clans reveals a certain fact i.e. a common approach toward a distinct unity by the mediation of taking various routes. However, as the final destination is utterly clear it does not really matter which route to take. The only difference apparently lies in the language formed utilized by distinct authors. The theosophical oriented authors, by appealing to the language used or their writing style, at times, would state a theosophical point straightforwardly or present to the audience certain theosophical books directly or they may present them by the mediation of a range of literary metaphors. Theosophical language disguised in metaphors has long sought its place within various story books abundantly found in Iran (i.e., Hayyebn-e-Yaghzaan's books; or Sohravardi's books of the song of the wings of the gospel, to name but a few). What the present paper is to take over is analyze a book apparently written for a certain age level of young audience; i.e. children. Most surprisingly the deep structure of this book appears to be a tremendously mystic and sophisticated one to the effect that even the most complicated mystic concepts can be observed in it. The latter point (a highly mystic book written for young audience) apparently looks to be diverging from what we earlier pointed out when we defined the characteristics of mystic literature. However, from this stand view, it could be pointed out that this book is one of a kind as far as its writing style is concerned. Even it could be claimed that the void of missing it in the Persian literature is being highly recognized and the need of filling such a void is currently badly sensed. This (i.e. theosophical literature for the children) is a gap that needs to be bridged. This sort of literature which has been encrypted by means of a code which is expected to be cracked by the young readership is badly needed currently. Not need to say this code seems to constitute multiple layers deciphering of which leads to a higher joy on the part of the readers. This valuable book is a masterpiece of Antony Saint-Exupery from France. Whether he was acquainted with the Islamic theosophy or not is out of the scope of the present article. Rather what this paper is to seek out would be an optimally rational comparison of his book with the parallel prevalent theosophical concepts lying in Islamic books which seems to be widely astonishing in the first place. The compatibility of the concepts used by him and the ones implemented in Islamic theosophy look fundamentally extensive as if both have originated from the almost the same source. Maybe Antony Saint-Exupery was inspired by Andreh Zheed, or maybe he brought them to the forefront only based on their frequent usage. Whatever it is, in the course of the present paper we are to make a comparative study of the aforementioned concepts and hopefully would proceed to take a look on all of them in the forthcoming papers.

2. Commonalities among Traditional Islamic/Persian Texts and Exupery's book

At the very beginning of the book there is a conversation on the Exupery's drawing as a he was child. There was a drawing of his depicting a Boa who had swallowed an elephant. However, since the interior side of the belly of the boa was shadowed in black the grownups could not see the boa and

saw the drawing as depicting simply a hat. When Antony Saint-Exupery asked them if they were afraid of his drawing the answer was a big "no, there is nothing to a hat to be afraid of." As a result he was forced to draw the interior side of the boa's belly as well so that the grownups would recognize it. Antony Saint-Exupery goes on to say "the grownups are always in need of explanation….they cannot understand anything on their own and it is very tiring to the children to explain everything to them." (Antony Saint-Exupery, 1389:14). It is highly intriguing that this transparent feeling and sensation of children has also frequently been reflected in our theosophical literature. As we can see Rumi saying:

گفت با خود کز کف طفلان گُهر   -   بس توان آسان خریدن ای پدر

"Sure you may get valuable things from kids at no cost- they're so simple no attempt to deceive them is lost"

(Rumi, 1991:6/992)

می فروشی هر زمانی درِّ کان   -   همچو طفلان می ستانی گردکان

"Hark my word don't give away your wine so cheap- you're no more a kid to be tricked by a simple cheat"

(Rumi, 1991: 6/3466)

Also it is implied that in facing the mundane and the inescapable realities of the world one should act like the children or the insane which is a widely mentioned point in religious and theosophical instructions. In the same way we can see the apostles asking the Jesus "who's the greatest in heavens?" Jesus asked for a child and replied "I truly tell you unless you act like a child you won't get to the heaven to figure it out." (Zamāni, 2008:389) .In the book "Kashful Mahjoob" there is a story about a child who could see the truth by the mediation of the eye of his heart whose mother even failed to do so.

"There was a woman having a child who was sitting on the doorsteps. A well-dressed good looking horse rider passed her by. She prayed to the God and asked him to turn his son into someone like that horse rider in the future. Her little son also prayed to the God and asked him to turn him into a lady who was standing beside that horse rider. The boy's mother asked him "why did you wish so?" The boy replied "I did so as I could clearly see that this man was a cruel guy whereas that woman was a truly kindhearted human being whom the folks were not aware of. And I don't want to be a cruel guy like him I surely prefer to be a kind one." (Hajviri, 2011: 346). In the book "Tahzibul Akhlagh" written by "Ibn-e-Moskoyeh" and following it in the book "Kimiay-e-Saadat" we can read the following statement,

"One's child is so pure, as pure as a costly piece of jewelry, and so flexible like a mass of paste void of any sort of inscriptions." (Gazzali, 1993:444)

In a narrative in the book "Mosibat Nameh" by Attār, we hear of a child who had not done his class assignments and was terribly afraid of his tutor. There was a great mystic over there overwhelmingly impacted by that panicked boy. Seeing the boy he said to his friends "this boy is much like me, I am also terribly afraid as I am utterly empty handed in front of my creator."

نیست درسم نرم ،سختم اوفتاد   -   زانکه در پیش است چوب اوستاد

"The assignments look so tough- the worse is the teacher looks so rough"

(Attār, Mosibatnameh, 2008:456)

The same notion can be found in the book "Masnavi" by "Rumi" in which he narrates a child who was cast into fire by the Jewish king. The boy cried out to his mother inviting her to get into the fire and see the truth of it. As he believed the fire looked hot only superficially and this misconception prevented his mother from approaching him. In other words it simply referred to a clear piece of evidence observable by the child by not his mother.

اندر آ ای مادر اینجا من خوشم   -   گرچه در صورت میان آتشم

"Get in here mom it's so cool – it's not a hot fire don't look at me like a fool"

چشم بندست آتش از بهر حجیب   -   رحمت است این سر برآورده زجیب

"This fire is nothing but a magic- look deep inside, you don't need to panic"

(Rumi, 1991:1/786)

The same point exactly has been expressed in Antony Saint-Exupery's book, "The grownups invariably are in need of explanation ……..". Also when the prince says "when I showed this drawing to a grownup he would see it simply as a hat and I had to downgrade myself to his level by talking about playing golf, bridge, or talking about political affairs or one's necktie, and then that grownup would find me as a wise boy and would be so pleased to have met me" (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:15) we can see that he also refers to this pure sense of the kids.

Within this sentence there seems to be a sweet paradox hiding in a sense that the thought processes and deep understanding of the children look to outperform those of the adults. The prince talks about such dilemmas that look so robust to the adults whereas to the children they seem to be highly trivial. This may force the kids to *downgrade* themselves to the level of grownups. Also this point is indicative of the fact that the older the human beings are the less their spiritual vision will be whereas this sort of sight is far deeper and spiritual as long as they are at the level of prematurity. This sort of implication can be transparently sensed in the book of "Mersaadol Ebaad" by "Najmeddin Razi" saying: "the human child is accustomed to a far different world than ours. He cannot make it to get accustomed to it unless in the long run." (Najmeddin Razi, 1996:107).

Although the book of "the little prince" was written during the adulthood years of the author the adventure it talks about relates to his childhood years. The style of language looks to be as if the author does not recognize himself as an adult yet. As if he is intended to deliver the book to one of his peers of the same childhood age. So we see him write: "To Leo Vert" when he was simply a little boy.

In the remainder of the story we find him as a grownup with his broken plane in the African desert, in need of getting fixed and his water and food supplies lasting for no more than eight days. Irrespective of the truth of the story, the fact of the matter that he had fallen from the sky on to the earth reminds us of the descent of Adam on the earth and his residence on it. The desert denotes to the loneliness of humans in the world of existence. The trace of this sort of simile is abundantly found in Persian literature. As a case in point Hafiz states:

سوی اقلیم وجود این همه راه آمده ایم-رهرو منزل عشقیم وز سرحد عدم

"As love followers we are coming from nay- looking for substance we have come a long way" (Hafiz, 1370:320)

از هر طرف که رفتم جز وحشتم نیفزود- زنهار ازاین بیابان وین راه بی نهایت

"Turning to everything made me fear more- this horrible desert I can bear no more" (1370:120)

دور است سرآب از این بادیه هش دار   تا غول بیابان نفریبت به سرابت

"There is no water in this desert take care- the monstrous mirage may betray"

 (1992:118)

Following that the Antony Saint-Exupery says "on the first night I lay down on the sands a thousand miles away from residential places. I was far lonelier than a survivor in the sea clinging on a piece of wood board" (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:15)

His loneliness in the vast arid desert and the wilderness following it, and to top it up his desperation recalled him the "state of amazement". This is a state known as "thrill", feared by the theosophists, who cannot traverse it without the aid of their master. Amazement is defined as follows based on theosophical viewpoint.

"Amazement is defined as wilderness and being petrified out of surprise."

(Dehkhoda, 1961)

According to Goharin (1990:321), based on theosophical terminology amazement is a sort of sudden state entering a thoughtful theosophist's heart and hindering him from any further reflection. In the book "Nafahatolons" one can read "the author of Fotoohat saying "I was traveling in the west suddenly I felt bitterly amazed. As I was utterly alone over there I felt overwhelmingly scared and I couldn't realize what a feeling it was." (Jaami, 1992: 316).

In the book "Mantego Teir" by Attār we see the amazement state comes fifth after the state of request, love, knowledge and unity defined as,

بعد از این وادی حیرت آیدت   –   کار دایم درد و حسرت آیدت ...

"Following this deep amazement-suffer you see as the only statement"

... مرد حیران چون رسد این جایگاه   در تحیر مانده وگم کرده راه

 "Though bewildered you may get to it- take care not to get lost in this bewildering circuit"

گر بدو گویند مستی یا نه ای   -   نیستی گویی که هستی یا نه ای...

"If asked whether you're drunk or not- you would say 'yes' even if you're not"

گوید اصلاً می ندانم چیز من   -   وان ندانم هم ندانم نیز من

"Or you may say *I know nothing at all*- even that nothing at all, you may not know nothing at all"

(Attār, 2009:407)

This dreadful desert cannot be traversed without the instructions of the theosophist. And he has to be a true reflection of the almighty and uncontaminated with any sort of impurity. He is the only one to be depended on. As already noticed above since based on the viewpoint of Antony Saint-Exupery children can recognize the facts far better than the adults we see that the rest of the story is devoted to child who has already descended from the space. This child, within this story, plays the role of a theosophist who embodies theosophical convictions. By the way this child is in the customs of prince which again denotes the kingly status of the theosophist.

It is also worth mentioning to state that this indeed seems to be the reason why this prince has been named so. The reason seems to be nothing but the fact that he is the prince of his own self, who can afford to manage his ego. Otherwise there was no commonality between his self and this title. In addition we can clearly see that there was no other entity living on his small planet. He neither had any peasants nor a castle to live in. Rather he was only living on a tiny planet in a tiny house which could accommodate only him and nobody else.

Using these literal tactics Antony Saint-Exupery has made it to both preserve the status of the theosophist as well as the superiority of children over the adults. So he goes on to write, "You see why I got drastically surprised when at the sunrise a childlike voice woke me up calling for me to draw a sheep."

"What?"

"Draw a sheep for me". (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011: 16)

Implementing the terms "at the sunrise" and "waking up" and their coincidence with the arrival of the prince is most likely a symbol of prospect and hope and getting rid of the issues engulfing him. The same point can be traced in the Persian literature. Hafiz says:

زبخت خفته ملولم بود که بیداری   -   به وقت فاتحه ی صبح دعایی بکند

"With my misfortune I was terribly depressed- waiting for someone to wake me up and having me blessed" (Hafiz, 1992:222)

گوییا خواهد گشود از دولتم کاری که دوش   من همی کردم دعا و صبح صادق می دمید

"Sure he is gonna come by to awake my core- as I truly prayed for it the day before"

(Hafiz, ibid, 226)

دوش وقت سحر از غصه نجاتم دادند ـ وندر آن ظلمت شب آب حیاتم دادند

"The night before I was fully awakened due to that bother- they came along and got me the holy water" (Hafiz, ibid, 221)

سحرم دولت بیدار به بالین آمد   گفت برخیز که آن خسرو شیرین آمد

"My consciousness came along on my bed- *wake up* it said no need to wait more for your beloved"

(Hafiz, ibid, 119)

This sort of simple interaction, with no greetings, is a symbol of the stainless souls of the interlocutors; A kind of intimacy at the first sight. As Saadi states:

دو کس را که باهم بود جان وهوش   ـ حکایت کنانند وایشان خموش

"Two guys purely in love- need no words to get involved" (Saadi, 1991:48)

In his book "Golestan" (the Flower Garden) he also states, "Farfetched friends look indeed so close whereas close friends look too far away." (Saadi, 1996:90)

In the first story of the book "Masnavi", written by Rumi, which is indeed on the life story of the author himself, the encounter between the king and the holy man also refers to the same point.

دید شخصی فاضلی پر مایه ای   ـ آفتابی در میان سایه ای...

"He saw a truly man of wisdom-as if he was the sun of the whole kingdom"

هر دو بحری آشنا آموخته   -   هر دو جان بی دوختن بر دوخته

"They looked as if they belonged to the same cosmos –surely they were both made of the same canvas". (Rumi, 1991:1/75).

Such a sharing of the same cloth also took place over the first meeting between Shams and Rumi. Where Shams, with no greetings to him, took the reins of Rumi's horse and asked him "you the

majesty let me know who was the greatest, Mohammed or Bayzid." Rumi replied "no, no, the prophet Mohammed was way greater than him indeed." Shams asked" So why is that the prophet Mohammed said: Bayzid is of an exalted status and I am the king of kings?"(Aflaki, 1984: 87)

To top it off, we can also point out the untypical meeting between Shams and Ohadin Kermani which also points to his theosophical position. Shams asked him "what are you pondering over? He answered "I am watching the reflection of the moon on the water in the vessel". Shams asked him "have you ever thought if you have a rash on the back of your neck why is that you cannot see it from the above?" and he went on and said "you should go and see a doctor to examine you to tell you precisely if you have a problem." (Aflaki, 1984: 2/616).

Accordingly, when the prince asked the pilot to draw him a sheep, it was indeed a childish demand encompassed with such desires. In addition, it's also a noticeable fact that the sheep itself is a symbol of being highly obedient and docile.

In the rest of the story we see that the pilot got so amazed by the child's behavior and says "I stared at this phantom mesmerized, and don't forget I was in the middle of the nowhere thousands of miles away from any living place. It did not look that this little child had lost his way or too tired or too thirsty or exhausted…..finally when I managed to talk to him I said "hey what the hell are you doing here?" As solemnly as possible he repeated himself "would you mind drawing me a sheep?" (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:17)

His being there in the middle of nowhere merely out of the blue also converges on the point that a pious man is indeed not a lonely one. It is the same as the prophet khezr who is not considered to be a lonely one in the Persian literature. [5]Khezr has invariably been taken as the guide assisting the wayfarers who desperately are challenging with the fear of the desert and count on his assistance. The same trend of thought can be traced as to the wayfarers of the land of love. There are a number of travelers got lost in that desert calling out for Khezr. On the same lines Hafiz says:

تو دستگیر شو ای خضر پی خجسته که من   پیاده می روم وهمرهان سوارانند

"Oh Khezr come to my assistance please – don't you see me being on foot while having no release"

گذار بر ظلمات است خضر راهی کو ـ مباد کاتش محرومی آب ما ببرد

"There is darkness everywhere oh Khezr show me the way- spare my life and don't let anyone take my sustenance away".

Antony Saint-Exupery also refers to a similar notion by saying "where there is a huge impact of a conundrum on one there is no way to escape from it." This sentence can be compared to the principle of surrendering to the supernatural almighty. The status of this mighty power may stem from the intention of the Lord or the intention of the major theosophist. It is often seen that the instructions of the theosophist oftentimes rub the followers from their volition to the effect that there is no way for them other than complying with his orders. Throughout the Sufi instructions such orders look widely frequent.

به می سجاده رنگین کن گرت پیر مغان گوید ـ که سالک بی خبر نبود ز راه ورسم منزلها

"Whatever ordered by the holy man, comply with it- don't worry, he knows well how to avoid bandits"

زنده معشوق است و عاشق مرده ای ـجمله معشوق است و عاشق پرده ای

"Everyone is a lover, however love is nothing but an illusion- the beloved is there but there's no sign of her passion".

(Rumi, 1991: 1/30)

"Surrender" has been defined as complying with the God's order and giving up any sort of complaint on any kind of suffering (Goharin, 1990: 81).

ای رفیقان راهها را بست یار ـ آهوی لنگیم و او شیر شکار

"My beloved has closed all the paths to us - we look like crippling baits and she's causing the chaos"

در کف شیر نری خونخواره ای- جز که تسلیم ورضا کو چاره ای

1- The prophet Khezr is the symbol of everlasting life in the Persian literature that had access to the holy water.

"There is no way out other than giving up to her- don't you see this beast is trying to tear". (Rumi, 1991: 6/577).

The conundrum mentioned by the author in fact is a representation of a massive reality, a reality which is beyond the limits of human thought. This reality is insurmountable by the theosophy disciples or even the theosophists themselves. At this point there is no way to turn but to surrender to the almighty. In the rest of the story we see that the prince kept insisting the pilot on his own demand of getting a sheep drawn. As the pilot could not do it so he decided to draw the same drawing he used to do as a child, i.e. a boa having an elephant in its belly. Quite amazingly he figured out that the prince quite immediately recognized it. The prince told him "no, no, I don't need an elephant inside a boa's belly. My home is too small for it. I want a sheep instead, draw me a sheep." (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011: 18)

According to these sentences on the part of the prince one can infer that this prince should indeed be the same person already point out earlier. That is he managed to see the things which were invisible to the adult eyes, and whish was merely observable by the children. Put differently the prince managed to see it with no background knowledge. This childish demand in depth is indicative of a grand truth to the effect that the pious and holy men are satisfied with the most trivial things in the universe. A demand for the drawing of a sheep at the first glance my look quite a childish one nevertheless it represents the kindheartedness of prince.

Having drawn a few sheep, none of which appealing to the little prince, finally ends up with merely drawing a box claiming "it's a box and the sheep you looking for in inside it." Quite astonishingly he found out that that picture was quite appealing to the little price who said "that's exactly what I was looking for …. Hey you see he is asleep." (ibid, 118)

Once again we can easily see that this sentence is reflective of the prince's visionary. As previously he had discerned the elephant inside the boa's belly and this time again he managed to see the sheep in the box. Whereas we see that box was absolutely nothing more than a box to common people. Even the pilot himself in the proceeding pages refers to the fact that he could not do what the prince did. Turning to the prince he told him "mot regrettably I cannot see the sheep inside the box. I guess I am getting grown up like adults. Or maybe I am getting old." (ibid, 28)

The very fact that the theosophists are capable of seeing the real truth and the internal space of anything is called the unknowing knowledge or the science of the holy men according to Rumi. He states,

علمهای اهل دل حمالشان   –   علمهای اهل تن احمالشان

"Knowledge serving one's spirit is sure to one's benefit- the one to serve the body is sure to kill one's spirit."

علم چون بر دل زند یاری شود   – علم چون بر تن زند باری شود

"Knowledge not backed by spiritual endorsement- will not stand any chance of enjoyment"
(Rumi, 1991:3449)

In the book "Asrarotohid fi Magamate Sheikh Abusaeid" Abusaeid speaks about a holy man who taught him the science of righteousness as a child. He said "the great theosophist have said that the truth of science will not be deciphered just by one's strive. And we didn't know this point until more than sixty years later the almighty himself made that point clear."

In the rest of Antony Saint-Exupery's book we see the pilot say that the prince didn't say much about himself "merely a few sporadic words from which I could infer everything about him." This point also is reflective of the ambiguity in Sufis practices in general and the theosophists in particular. Most often than not, they speak ambiguously by trying to say solemn things by using the least number of words. The reason behind it could have been motivating the listener to cognize more deeply so that to make sure they were the right followers looking for the truth. Hamzed Alavi once said "keep hidden the things you dare to publicly uncover." (Khadjeh Abdollah Ansari, 1984:156)

Ansari (the holy man from Harat) also implies the same point by stating "beware of talking with the strangers, first try to know them well and then open up a conversation with them." (ibid, 707).A little further in the little prince story the pilot offers the prince to tie up the sheep so that it will not manage to get out of the box. The prince replies;

"Tie it up. What do you mean by that?" (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:23).

The fact of the matter is that the prince got astounded hearing that suggestion since he knew that it was to be a too harsh treatment to the animal. The trace of treating animals well is frequently found in old theosophical texts. In the book "Tazkeratol Olia" we read that the reindeers gathered around a nun. As soon as Hassan Basri came over, all of them scared away. Basri asked her why it was so. She said "what did you eat today?" He answered "the fat of reindeer". The nun said "You have had the fat of them and you expect them not. In a story in the book "Nafahatol Nafs" written by Abdollah Alghalnesi it has been stated that although he was starving to death he could not eat the flesh of an elephant cub nearby. (Jaami, 1992:69)

The point that the little prince was so pleased to have a sheep in a box is surely indicative of the salient point that the theosophist is highly careful to pay attention to his self-control. The reluctance of the prince to tying the sheep who was bound to the box is also representative of the inside part of one's body within which the self needs to be controlled. Seeing the sheep doing nothing but grazing is also a representation of controlling one's beast-like self. This self needs to be detached from the outside world if one is to be satisfied with his own possessions. Even once the pilot tells him "if you don't tie it up it may run on the loose and get lost." the prince replies "where on earth can it go? My home is extremely a tiny one and there is sure no way to go too far away as it looks like a straight path." (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011: 23)

It seems as if the little planet of his is also indicative of this sort of limitation and satisfaction and being annoyed with poverty. This final utterance comprises two distinct parts. On one hand it refers to the straight path (to prosperity) and on the other it refers to self-satisfaction and being pleased with one's possessions. These principles have been widely practiced and acknowledged by the theosophists. The last sentence precisely reminds us of Hafiz saying,

درطریقت هر چه پیش سالک آید خیر اوست بر صراط مستقیم ای دل کسی گمراه نیست

"Everything is on your benefit on this path- sure no one gets lost on a straight path".
(Hafiz, 1992:68)

This statement is also reflective of another grain of truth i.e. reaching out to the true reality. This point is not specific to a certain type of religion. This point also converges upon the indications of the holy prophet saying "there are as many paths to get to the holy divine as the number of the people on the earth." (Lahiji, 1993:132). This sentence has overwhelmingly been referred to by the Sufis. Hafiz has also referred to the same notion in the following sonnet.

همه جا خانه ی عشق است چه مسجد چه کنشت ـ همه کس طالب یار است چه هشیار و چه مست

"Looking for him is everyone from all walks of life- love is everywhere no matter how much you strive."
(Hafiz, 1992: 68)

The fact of the matter is that the holy men should keep to the right path irrespective of what your belief is. Bidel referred to the same notion stating,

هر جا سری به سجده رسید آستانه ایست ـ مخصوص نیست کعبه به تعظیم اعتبار

"Mecca is no special spot for its glory- every worshiping place is truly holy."
(Bidel, 2006:358)

Also in the rest of the story we see the pilot saying "I got the second point which was widely significant. And it was the fact that the home planet of the prince was only a little bit larger than an ordinary house." (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:23)

Put differently the world constructed by the human beings, no matter how enormous it is, is limited to two points. Either the life scope of theirs is widely limited but they are of high hopes and unattainable desires which would consume all their energy without experiencing the pleasure of their lives, i.e. the same as a couple of worlds the little prince would observe within which the human beings had imprisoned themselves and were engulfed by their mundane aspirations. Or the life scope of theirs looks like the one possessed by the little prince in the sense that it is a quite tiny one but the hedges surrounding it are limited merely to it. Rather such a world is the basis for the uncovering of its surrounding world. In fact the little prince acts the same as a range of theosophists do from Ebrahim Aham to Hallaj, to Shebli and many others.

Such an utterance also implies another sort of truth as well. It seems that this utterance also refers to the sense of self satisfaction and self-control of the prince as well. We can apparently observe that the

prince is quite happy with what he owns. We can clearly see that if he takes a journey it's just to add something to his knowledge not to enlarge his material dwelling. We can also see the same point frequently referred to in the holy Quran. This book has invariably encouraged the human beings to take a trip to various spots to glean more experience and to see what has happened to the unbelievers. "Tell them take on a trip on the earth and see what has happened to the unbelievers prior to you." (Quran, 20/ 29).

In the same lines we can clearly see that he is living in his own tiny house, dominating his own self and territory. In the story we see that the pilot recognized the prince's planet and told him it was called "B-612" reminding him that it had been discovered by a Turkish astronomer who had announced it at the international astrology seminar. However, he said no one trusted him as he was quite poorly dressed. Many years later dressed in very smart clothes he had announced the same point and that time around everyone had accepted his words.

As we see the worth mentioning point that the appearance of human beings is the scale of measurement for the laymen has been widely criticized by Antony Saint-Exupery. The same scale of measurement has also been criticized by Aboushokour Balkhi in the following sonnets.

سخن گر چه باشد گرانمایه تر   فرو مایه گردد زکم پایه تر

"Even if the words be so precious- used by a lay person they'd be utterly seem mendacious"

سخن کز دهان بزرگان رود   -   چو نیکو بود داستانی شود

"If said by the great scholars- the words formed are worth millions of dollars"

نگین بدخشی بر انگشتری   -   ز کمتر به کمتر خرد مشتری

"The jewel stone on a scholar's ring- will be worth nothing on a poor man's ring"

وز انگشت شاهان سفالین نگین   -   بدخشانی آید به چشم کهین

"Even if the king wears a typical ring- the laymen will take it as a costly ring"

(Safa, 1989:26)

To prove the falsity of the grown up human beings' scale of measurement Exupery adds "the grownups dislike the figures. Whenever you talk to them about a new friend they never ask you about the most salient issues. For instance they never ask you what his sound looks like or what he likes best. Or whether he collects butterflies or not" "rather they ask you how old he is. How many brothers does he have? Or how much does his father earn a month? The little prince seemed so funny since he was always smiling and seeking to get a sheep. It stands on reason that anybody looking for a sheep surely is of true existence. This prince used to shrug his shoulders while answering you and would take you as a child. But if you (as a grownup) tell him that he has come from the planet B- 612 he would immediately believe you (as the grownups do). This is the way, at any rate, the grownups do things." (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:25)

This way of measurement and understanding of the grownups which is basically a quantitative rather than a qualitative one is in fact indicative of their willingness to experience the world materially and rationally. But what needs to be borne in mind is that the quantity and the numerical figures are merely external measurement scales whereas quality is an internal one. When one is asked "how many?" it brings to the forefront the concept of "more" or "less". And indeed the same concepts reflect the concepts of "invalidity" and "mortality". But if the "desires" and "aspirations" of one are taken as the criterion of knowledge then the concealed aspects of his self are likely to be far more uncovered. Furthermore, we should not forget the fact that such characteristics are far more lasting ones. The distinction between such two measurement scales (criteria) has long been detected in the Persian literature either in the realm of the theological studies or the human psychological ones.

احد است و شمار از او معزول   -   صمد است و نیاز از او مخذول

"He's only one, there's no God but him- He's the almighty don't seek anyone but him"

آن احد نی که عقل داند و فهم   -   وان صمد نی که حس شناسد و وهم

"He's the omniscient, there's no one like him- all mortals look to him, don't seek anyone but him"

نه فراوان نه اندکی باشد   -   یکی اندر یکی یکی باشد...

"There is no much or less believe my words- He's unique in all sense, there are no lords"

تا ترا در درون شمار و شکیست   چه یکی دان ،چه دو،که هر دو یکیست

"No figure shows you the real essence of his- neither one nor two that's what all it is"

به چراگاه دیو بر زیقین   چه و چند و چرا و چون را هین

"In the world of devil, run away and don't ask why- questioning why, be sure, is a futile cry" (Sanaie, 1981:64)

بباید گسست از او و چون و چند   ازاو شادمانی ازاو دردمند

"Whether you're happy with him or not- is a query you should ask not"

(Dehkhoda, 1961: Cited from Ferdowsi)

As noted earlier the pilot believed that the most important reason for the existence of the prince was his sweet talking and asking for a sheep. He once said "the most salient reason for the subsistence of the prince was his being a smiling child and asking for a sheep. It is for certain that any one asking for a sheep surely exists." (Exupery, 2011:26).

Two distinct concepts at the first glance can be noticed here, firstly the morals and secondly the naïve aspiration of the prince. Surprisingly both these points are characteristic of a true theosophist constantly getting away from the material world. Both of these traits are definitely within the confinements of quality leading to the way one would recognize a true human being. These two points which according to the author (Antony Saint-Exupery) are reflective of true human beings are entirely in opposition with the Cartesian perspective stating "I think, so I exist." who is recognized as the father of the superiority of thought and mind in the modern philosophy dominating the Europe. (Will Durant, 1998:139)

The dubiousness of the Cartesian perspective is left unresolved when it comes to such insights of such folks as the prince looking for the sheep in the box. By the way it seems quite undeniable to say even this aspiration on the part of the prince is itself a sign of his being thoughtful. But as you see this sort of thought is not of the same fabric as Descartes advocates as it is not predicated upon the originality of thought. On the contrary this sort of thought looks pretty simple and at the same quite advanced. An indication of a similar example can be found in the story of the Moses and the peasant by Rumi. In that poem the peasant keeps saying prayers to the God which remind us the sweet language used by the prince.

چارقت دوزم کنم شانه سرت   -   تو کجایی تا شوم من چاکرت

"I wish I would find your place – so that I could comb your tress"

شیر پیشت آورم ای محتشم   جامه ات شویم شپشهایت کُشم

"I wish I would take care of you oh my desire – bringing you whatever you want or require"

وقت خواب آیم بروبم جایکت   دستکت بوسم بمالم پایکت

"I wish I could hold your hands forever – taking care of you is all I desire"

ای به یادت هی هی و هیهای من   ای فدای تو همه بزهای من

"I wish I could sacrifice everything I dare- on my mind there's only you who I care"

(Rumi, 1991:2/1724)

Blaming the peasant by the Moses also reflects the way grownups usually think. They are used to see everything quite quantitatively. In this poem we see Moses addressing the poor man;

پنبه ای اندر دهان خود فشار   -   این چه ژاژ است و چه کفرست و فشار

"Why did you offend the Lord so much- muzzle your mouth so that not to bother him such"

کفر تو دیبای دین را ژنده کرد   گَند کفر تو جهان را گنده کرد...

"You messed up everything by acting like a trash bin- don't you see the purity of my faith undermined by your sin."

آتشی آید بسوزد خلق را   گر نبندی زین سخن تو حلق را

"If the tongue of yours is not harnessed any more- sure there'll be a rise in my folks abhor." (ibid, 2/1731)

The God's blaming Moses also depicts the same point (i.e. being qualitative and simple in one's aspirations). The Lord addressed Moses in the following terms.

ما درون را بنگریم و حال را   ما زبان را ننگریم و قال را

"No attention we pay to our folks' words- we figure out their passionate hearts toward their holy lords."

پس طفیل آمد عرض،جوهر غرض   زانکه دل جوهر بود گفتن عرض

"All that matters is one's hearty desire- words have nothing to do with one's aspire"

گرچه گفت لفظ نا خاضع بود   ناظر قلبیم اگر خاشع بود

"Seek for the self-satisfied hearts in this world of path- care not about the tongues dipped in wrath."

سوز خواهم سوز با آن سوز ساز   چند از این الفاظ و اضمار ومجاز

"Enough is enough with all this stuff of verbiage- the heart is what matters to me not a stuff of unworthy foliage."

آتشی از عشق بر جان بر فروز...   سر به سر فکر و عبارت را بسوز

"Seek love wherever you may - keep in mind words are worth only nay"

ملت عشق از همه دینها جداست   عاشقان را ملت و مذهب خداست

"True love seekers are the folks of affection- the religion of theirs is only led by His compassion" (ibid, 2/1770)

This story (i.e. the Moses and the peasant) is indicative of the fact that the satisfaction of the God is not to be obtained merely by following the rituals rather it is to be attained through having a sacred love and an eager heart. (Zarrinkoub, 1990:51)

In the rest of the story the author states "this is how the grownups are. One should not take it to heart. The children should be far more forgivers than the adults are," (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:26)

As it was noted earlier the children, as far as their purity and honesty are concerned, are the very theosophists and true believers. Forgiving, which is taken as one of the characteristic properties of the holy men, appears to realize in their bodies. The theosophical literature is abundant with such points.

In one of the stories of Boustan (Flower Garden) written by Saadi we read about one who was engulfed in a very tense situation. Finding himself in those circumstances he started to insult the king. Quite coincidently the king was walking pass him. Once the king realized the miserable condition of the man not only he did not punish him but also he gave him a lot of money as well.

ببخشود بر حال مسکین مرد   فرو خورد خشم سخنهای سرد

"He forgave the miserable lad– trying to hide his enormous wrath"

زرش داد و اسب و قبا پوستین...   چه نیکو بود مهر در وقت کین

"He gave him as much money as he could- try to have passion when you're not in the right mood"

بدی را بدی سهل باشد جزا   اگر مردی احسن الی من اسا

"It's so easy to punish the culprit- keep in mind; however, forgiving one is more concrete" (Saadi, 1991:93)

A short while following making friends with each other the pilot noticed that were some plants growing on the prince's planet. He stated that point in the following terms,

"On the planet of the little prince, like every other planet, there are good and bad plants."

Accordingly a good plant is grown out of a good seed and a bad plant is grown out of a bad one. However, the seed of them cannot be seen." (Antony Saint-Exupery, 2011:29). The seed here, which a symbol of the origin and the faith of the human beings, in fact refers to the foundation and root based on which the morals stand. If the behavior of humans converges upon one's heavenliness it's a result of the heavenly foundation of it. If, however, there is dirt and mischievousness resulting from it then it reflects the devilish spirit of its foundation. This point has been overwhelmingly echoed in Persian poetry and theosophy. Hafiz states,

دهقان سالخورده چه خوش گفت با پسر   کای نور دیده به جز از کشته ندروی

"The old peasant told his teenage son - you harvest what you have already grown" (Hafiz, 1992:506)

گر جان بدهد سنگ سیه لعل نگردد   با طینت اصلی چه کند بد گهر افتاد

"Never a black stone turns into a piece of gem- there's no way to help, its nature sounds like a terrible fen" (Hafiz, 1992:232)

Saadi also refers to the same point by stating:

پرتو نیکان نگیرد هر که بنیادش بد است...   تربیت نا اهل را چون گردکان بر گنبد است

"There's no way to change one's awful origin- treating the bad guys is way beyond one's religion"

ابر اگر آب زندگی بارد   هرگز از شاخ بید بر نخوری

"If there are downpours from the clouds- there is no need to seek water from the crowds"

He goes on to say:

با فرومایه روزگار مبر   کز نی بوریا شکر نخوری

"Never partner with a miserable guy- he leads you nowhere but to give you a cry" (Saadi, 1989:61)

Also he points out:

اگر در سرای سعادت کس است   -   زگفتار سعدیش حرفی بس است

"If you want to be highly efficient   -   a single word from Saadi is sufficient"

همینت بسنده است اگر بشنوی   که گر خار کاری سمن ندروی

"Mind my word and listen up to me- if you want not to be drown alongside the levee"

(Saadi, 1989:59)

Nearly the same point has been brought to forefront in a poem of Aboushokour Balkhi:

به دشمن برت استواری مباد   که دشمن درختی است تلخ از نهاد

"Take it for granted you won't ever overcome the opponent- his animosity is surely a part of his component"

درختی که تلخش بود گوهرا   اگر چرب و شیرین دهی مر ورا

"Won't bear sweet ones a plant of bitter fruits- no matter how much clean water you give it to use"

(Safa, 1979:24)

When he says "however, the seeds of them cannot be seen" it can be interpreted as the point that most often the intentions of human beings are not vividly visible which is analogous to the invisible seed hidden underneath earth. The quality or the quality remains as a secret until it has grown up. As Saadi says,

زبان در دهان ای خردمند چیست   کلید در گنج صاحب هنر

"You know the role played by one's wise language- that's a key to ones treasure vantage"

چو در بسته باشد چه داند کسی   که جوهر فروش است یا پیله ور

"If you keep mute in the public and don't show your tenor- no one would be aware of your real honor"

(Saadi, 1989:53)

Even at times what is said is not compatible with one's true intention. As necessarily one's intention and language may not be in harmony. As Sohrab Sepeheri says:

من اناری را می کنم دانه؛ به دل می گویم خوب بود این مردم دانه های دلشان پیدا بود

"At times I cut a pomegranate in halves and think to myself I wish the hearts of the folks were as transparent as the pomegranate seeds."

(Sepehri, 1998:343)

Conclusion

What has been accomplished in the present paper is a comparison of a few pages of the book "the little prince" with a number of theosophical points in the Persian literature. Within this widely limited scope the authors have managed to take a deeper look at such concepts as purity of the heart, the exalted vision of the children, the opinions of the theosophists, the holy men, the concept of surrender, the words of Sufi's, self-satisfaction, the immaterial knowledge vs. the material knowledge from the perspectives of theosophists and Antony Saint-Exupery. It goes without saying the current discussion needs to go far beyond the scope of its present status. The authors hopefully will try to do their best to cover the pertinent points in their upcoming articles.

References

Aflaki, S. (1983). The Outcomes of being a Sufi. Tehran: The World of Books Publications.

Ansari, K. (1983). Sufism Categories. Tehran: Tous Publications.

Antony Saint-Exupery (2010). The Little Prince. Tehran: The Pocket Books Publications.

Attar, F. (2007). The Letter of Mourn. Tehran: Sokhan Publications.

Attar, F. (2008). The Words of the Greats. Tehran: Sokhan Publications.

Dehkhoda, A. (1960). Dehkhoda Dictionary. Tehran: The Dictionary Organization.

Dehlavi, B. (2005). Bidel Poetry Book. Tehran: Simaye Danesh Publications.

Dorant, W. (1997). The History of Philosophy. Tehran: Scientific-Cultural Publications.

Ghazali, M. (1992). The Key to Prosperity. Tehran: Ganjineh Publications.

Goharin, S. (1989). Sufis' Terminology. Tehran: Zavvar Publications.

Hajviri, A. (2010). Revealing the Unrevealed. Tehran: Soroush Publications.

Jaami, N. (1991). The Smell of the Closeness to the Almighty. Tehran: Ettelaat Publications.

Monvvar, M. (2007). The Secrets of Unity over the course of the life of Abousaiid Abolkhair.Tehran: Tehran: Agah Publications.

Razi, N. (1995). The Venue of the Pious. Tehran: Scientific-Cultural Publications.

Saadi, M. (1995). The Flower Garden. Tehran: Kharazmi Publications.

Sepehri, S. (1997). The Eight Books. Tehran: Tahouri Publications.
Zamani, K. (1989). The Drawer of Love. Tehran: Nei Publications.
Zarrinkoub, A. (1989). Tehran: Scientific Publications.
The Holy Quran

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE APOLOGY STRATEGIES USED BY ADVANCED IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS AND NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH

[1]Parya Fakhri, *[2]Alireza Bonyadi
[1]English Department Islamic Azad University, Urmia Branch, Urmia, Iran
[2]English Department Islamic Azad University, Urmia Branch, Urmia, Iran

ABSTRACT
INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS IS "THE STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF STRATEGIES FOR LINGUISTIC ACTION BY NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS" (KASPER & SCHMIDT, 1996, P. 150). KASPER AND SCHMIDT (1996) ARGUED THAT, THE AIM OF INTERLANGUAGE PRAGMATICS RESEARCH IS THE STUDY OF THE STRATEGY USE OF THE NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF A CERTAIN LANGUAGE. SO, THE PRESENT STUDY INVESTIGATED THE MOST FREQUENT APOLOGY STRATEGIES USED BY THE ADVANCED IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS, AND THEN COMPARED THEM WITH THOSE USED BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH. THE DATA OF ESLAMI-RASEKH'S (2004) STUDY ON APOLOGY STRATEGIES OF NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH WERE CHOSEN AS FOR NATIVE DATA. THIRTY ADVANCED IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS (15 MALE &15 FEMALE) FROM TWO PRIVATE LANGUAGE INSTITUTES WERE SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY TO ELICIT STRATEGIES USED BY EFL TEACHERS. THE DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASK (DCT) OF ESLAMI-RASEKH'S (2004) STUDY WAS ADMINISTERED TO THE PARTICIPANTS ASKING TO WRITE THEIR ANSWERS TO THE DCT SITUATIONS. THEN, THE PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES TO THE DCT SITUATIONS WERE ANALYZED BASED ON THE APOLOGY STRATEGY CODING SCHEME OF ESLAMI-RASEKH'S (2004) STUDY. FINALLY, A CHI-SQUARE TEST WAS CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE WERE ANY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE APOLOGY STRATEGIES OF THESE TEACHERS AND THE NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY REVEALED THAT, ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE INDICATING DEVICE (IFID) AND OFFER OF REPAIR WERE RESPECTIVELY THE FIRST AND THE SECOND MOST FREQUENT APOLOGY STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY THE EFL TEACHERS. ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL PREFERENCES OF THE EMPLOYED STRATEGIES WERE SIMILAR FOR BOTH THE NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH AND THE EFL TEACHERS, THERE WERE CERTAIN SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN THE FREQUENCY OF THE INDIVIDUAL APOLOGY STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY THESE GROUPS.

KEYWORDS: APOLOGY, PRAGMATICS, PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE, SPEECH ACTS

1. Introduction

Language use necessitates knowledge of both the grammatical and pragmatic aspects of the language (Bachman, 1990). Pragmatic aspects are "those principles that will account for why a certain set of sentences are anomalous or not possible utterances" (Levinson, 1983, p. 5). According to Ellis (2008), the study of speech acts has been one of the central issues in pragmatics research. Speech acts "constitute attempts by language users to perform specific actions, in particular interpersonal functions such as compliments, apologies, requests, or complaints" (Ellis, 2008, p. 159). Among different speech acts, apologies have been extensively investigated by second language researchers. According to Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998, p. 234), research regarding the pragmatic competence of second language learners has demonstrated that "grammatical development does not

guarantee a corresponding level of pragmatic development". Therefore, there is a clear need for research regarding the pragmatic competence of second language learners in both second and foreign language contexts.

As Ellis (2008) noted, a large number of empirical studies have provided mixed results regarding the effects of language learners' proficiency level on their speech act performance. According to him, there is a need for more research studies to illuminate the correlation between language learners' proficiency and their speech acts performance. A review of literature reveals that the apology strategy use of English language teachers in foreign language contexts has not been investigated in any empirical study. Since language teachers, especially in foreign language contexts, have a noticeable role in the development of learners' language knowledge, they should be in an acceptable level regarding both the grammatical and pragmatic aspects of the language. Therefore, there is a clear need to investigate these teachers' pragmatic competence including their performance of speech acts in foreign language contexts.

The present study was an attempt to account for the inadequacies of the previous research regarding EFL teachers' performance of apology strategies. Hence, the study tried to determine the similarities and differences between advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English in the use of apology strategies. Moreover, the study aimed to determine whether the grammatical competence of these teachers guarantees their pragmatic competence.

2. Review of Literature
2.1 Theoretical Issues

Different definitions of *pragmatics* have been proposed by various linguists and philosophers of language. Leech (1983, p. 6) defined pragmatics as "the study of meaning in relation to situations" and emphasized the intention of language users in the use of language. According to Bachman (1990, p. 89), pragmatic competence involves the ability of language users in understanding "the relationships between utterances and the acts or functions that speakers or writers intend to perform through these utterances". Pragmatic competence of language users has been investigated in both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics studies (Ellis, 2008). According to Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984, p. 196), cross-cultural pragmatics research tries to determine the extent to which it "is possible to determine the degree to which the rules that govern the use of language in context vary from culture to culture and from language to language". According to Ellis (2008), previously second language acquisition (SLA) researchers were concerned with the structural and formal properties of language learners' knowledge of the second language (i.e. their interlanguage). However, as he noted, recently there has been a change of focus in the study of second language acquisition, and researchers have paid more attention to the language learners' pragmatic ability. According to Kasper and Schmidt (1996, p. 150), interlanguage pragmatics is "the study of the development and use of strategies for linguistic action by non-native speakers".

Austin's (1962) *speech act* theory is based on his discussion of *performative utterances*. According to him, by saying something, a speaker not only utters something, but also performs an action under real word conditions. As he further argued, any utterance which has a performative function can be regarded as a speech act. According to Ellis (2008), in the performance of speech acts speakers should take account of a certain number of considerations in order to ensure a positive relationship with their interlocutors. As he further noted, *politeness* is one of the most important considerations in the performance of speech acts. As he concluded, Brown and Levinson's (1987) *politeness theory* is based on Goffman's (1967) sociological studies of face work.

Apology has been among the mostly investigated speech acts in both cross-cultural and interlanguage pragmatics studies (Ellis, 2008). In Austin' (1962) classification of speech acts, apology is categorized in the class of behabitives, and is defined based on its required felicity conditions, that is, the expression of an apologetic performative verb which aims to show the speaker's regret (Wardhaugh, 2010). Searle (1969) placed apology in the class of expressives, and argued that, this speech act has the illocutionary force of showing the speaker's sincerity in expressing his/her regret.

Olshtain and Cohen (1983) defined apology as a speech act set, and proposed a framework of apology strategies which was based on the results of a large number of empirical studies of apologies.

Furthermore, they claimed that, this framework was universally applicable to a variety of different languages and covered all of the apology categories.

According to Ellis (2008), the most important and comprehensive empirical study of the speech act of apology is the Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) which was reported by Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984). According to Blum-kulka and Olshtain (1984, p. 196), this project aimed to "compare across languages the realization patterns of two speech acts—requests and apologies —and to establish the similarities and differences between native and non-native speakers' realization patterns in these two acts in each of the languages studied within the project".

2.2. Empirical studies

2.2.1. Cross-Cultural Studies

Bergman and Kasper (1993) in a survey-based study investigated the employed apology strategies of native speakers of American English and Thai. Suszcyznska (1999) in a survey-based study employed a DCT in order to examine the preferred linguistic form of the apology strategies across native speakers of Polish, English, and Hungarian. Eslami-Rasekh (2004) in a comparative study employed a researcher-made DCT in order to investigate the similarities in the employed apologetic face-keeping strategies between native speakers of Persian and American English.

2.2.2. Mono-Cultural Studies

 Afgari (2007) in a survey-based study investigated the apology strategy use of native speakers of Persian. Shariati and Chamani (2010) in an ethnographic study investigated the apology strategies of Persian speakers. Karimnia and Afgari (2012) in a survey-based study examined the apology strategy types of native speakers of Persian.

2.2.3 Interlanguage Pragmatics Studies

Al-Zumor (2011) in a comparative study examined the apology strategy use of Arab EFL learners. Jebahi (2011) in a comparative study examined the apology strategy use of Tunisian EFL learners. Farhangian, Behjat, and Kargar (2013) in a comparative study investigated Iranian EFL learners' apology strategies across three different proficiency levels. Tamimi Sa'd and Mohammadi (2014) in a comparative study investigated male and female Iranian EFL learners' use of apology strategies.

2.3. The Gap in the Literature

A review of the mentioned interlanguage pragmatics studies (e.g. Al-Zumor, 2011; Farhangian, Behjat, & Kargar, 2013; Jebahi, 2011) reveals that, most of these interlanguage pragmatics studies have investigated EFL learners' apology strategy use and have not dealt with other groups of non-native speakers. That is, language learners in instructional settings like public or private language classrooms have been the focus of attention in these studies. However, language learners are not the only group of non-native speakers and the pragmatic competence of the other groups of non-native speakers needs to be investigated to provide a more complete understanding of this area of pragmatics.

Non-native EFL teachers are one of these groups of non-native speakers and the review of literature reveals that, the apology strategy use of English language teachers in foreign language contexts has not been investigated in any empirical study. Since language teachers, especially in foreign language contexts, have a noticeable role in the development of learners' language knowledge, they should be in an acceptable level regarding both the grammatical and pragmatic aspects of the language. Therefore, there is a clear need to investigate these teachers' pragmatic competence including their performance of speech acts in foreign language contexts. The present study by investigating advanced Iranian EFL teachers' performance of apology strategies tried to provide more information regarding this issue and by doing so aimed to provide guiding principles for teacher-training courses in similar contexts.

2.4. Research Questions and Hypothesis

The present study tried to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the most frequent apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers?

Research Question2: Are there any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English?

Based on the second research question of the study, the following null hypothesis was proposed:
Null Hypothesis: There are not any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

In this study, the data of the research study entitled "*Face-keeping Strategies in Reaction to Complaints*" by Eslami-Rasekh (2004) which was published in *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* was selected for this study. Since all of the methodological aspects of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study were compatible with the present study, its data which described the apology strategies of native speakers of English could be directly compared with the data of the present study which described the apology strategies of the advanced Iranian EFL teachers. The participants of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study were 30 native speakers of American English (15 male &15 female) who were adults and ranged in age from 20 to 25. Since the researcher of the present study aimed to compare the data of the advanced Iranian EFL teachers' apology strategies with the data of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study, she had to follow the same methodological choices of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study including the choice of participants. Therefore, 30 advanced Iranian EFL teachers (15 male &15 female) from two private language institutes were selected to participate in this study. All of these participants were adults and ranged in age from 26 to 31. Most of them had either a B.A. or an M.A. degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), and some of them were doing their M.A. studies in TEFL. Since the study aimed to compare advanced EFL teachers' apology strategies with the apology strategies of the native speakers of English, these participants were selected based on the levels that they were teaching in their language institutes, that is, all of these teachers were selected from among the teachers who were teaching English at the advanced proficiency level.

3.2. Instruments

The following instruments were employed in this study:

3.2.1. Discourse Completion Task (DCT)

As it was mentioned previously, the researcher of this study had to employ the same methodological instruments of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study in order to be able to compare the data of the EFL teachers with the data of native speakers of English. In her study, Eslami-Rasekh employed a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) in order to investigate the apology strategies of native speakers of English. The researcher of the present study employed the same DCT in Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study in order to investigate the apology strategies of the advanced Iranian EFL teachers.

3.2.2. Coding Scheme

In order to analyze the data of the apology strategies of native speakers of English, Eslami-Rasekh (2004) adapted and modified 5 coding schemes of apology strategies from previous research and developed a coding scheme based on all of them.

These frameworks were the coding schemes by Frescura (1995), Cohen and Olshtain (1981, p. 113–134), Olshtain and Cohen (1983, p. 22–23), the CCSARP coding manual (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989, p. 289), and Bergman and Kasper (1993).

1. Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs)

1. An expression of regret, for example: *I'm sorry*
2. An offer of apology, for example: *I apologize*
3. A request for forgiveness, for example: *Excuse me/Forgive me/Pardon me*

2. Explanation or Account

Any external mitigating circumstances, 'objective' reasons for the violation (excuses & justifications), for example: *There was an accident/My watch had stopped*

3. Acceptance of Responsibility

1. Explicit self-blame, for example: *It is my fault*
2. Lack of intent, for example: *I didn't mean to do this*
3. Expression of self-deficiency, for example: *I was confused/I didn't see you/I forgot*
4. Expression of embarrassment, for example: *I feel awful about it*

5. Self-dispraise, for example: *I'm such a dimwit!*

6. Justify hearer, for example: *You're right to be angry*

7. Admission of fact, for example: *I know I promised*

4. Expression of Appeal

1. Appeal to Understanding, for example: *I hope you will understand/ You know how it is/ Sometimes these things happen*

2. Appeal to Leniency, for example: *Usually I am never late/ I never missed a meeting before/I am only 10 minutes late* (utterance reducing severity of offense)

3. Appeal to Self-control, for example: *Relax/There is no need to shout*

5. Refusing Responsibility

1. Denial of responsibility, for example: *It wasn't my fault/I didn't do it/We weren't Supposed to meet before* (problematizing a precondition)/*I didn't know you were expecting me* (claiming ignorance)

2. Blame the hearer, for example: *It's your own fault*

3. Pretend to be offended, for example: *I'm the one to be offended*

6. Concern for the hearer, for example: *I hope I didn't upset you/ Are you all right?*

7. Offer of Repair, for example: *I'll pay for it/Let me buy you a drink* (effort to appease)

8. Promise of forbearance, for example: *It won't happen again*

9. Emotional Exclamations, for example: *oh, oh my God, Lord, Oh, no!*

The researcher of the present study employed the same coding scheme in Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study in order to analyze the advanced Iranian EFL teachers' apology strategies.

3.3. Procedure

In this study, first, 30 advanced Iranian EFL teachers (15 male & 15 female) were selected from two private language institutes as the participants of the present study. All of these participants were adults who ranged in age from 26 to 31. Most of them had either a B.A. or an M.A. degree in TEFL, and some of them were doing their M.A. studies in TEFL. All of these participants were selected from among the teachers who were teaching at the advanced proficiency level. Next, the DCT of Eslami-Rasekh'(2004) study was distributed among the participants of the study, and these participants were asked to write their answers to the DCT situations. After that, the participants' responses to the DCT situations were analyzed based on the apology strategy coding scheme of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study, and the frequency and percentage of the apology strategies of the participants were determined by SPSS 20. Finally, a Chi-Square test was conducted in order to determine whether there were any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers of the present study and the native speakers of English in Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study.

3.4. Design of the study

Considering the procedures of the data collection and data analysis of the present study, it can be argued that, it involved a survey design. According to Creswell (2011), questionnaires are regarded to be one of the main instruments of survey designs. As he further explained, in quantitative research, survey design studies involve procedures which aim to describe the attitudes, behaviors, opinions, and characteristics of a population by administering a survey to a sample of that population.

4. Result

The present study tried to determine whether there were any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English. Based on this objective, the data of Eslami-Rasekh's (2004) study regarding the apology strategies of native speakers of English was used in this study. Moreover, the first research question of the study focused on the most frequent apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers. The frequency and percentage of the apology strategies of the native speakers of English (adopted from Eslami-Rasekh, 2004) and advanced Iranian EFL teachers are provided in Table 1.

Table1. Frequency and Percentage of the Apology Strategies of Native Speakers of English and Advanced Iranian EFL Teachers

Strategy Type	Native Speakers of English F (%)	EFL Teachers f (%)
IFID	149 (3404)	129 (27/6)

Explanation	73 (16.9)	46 (9/9)
Acceptance of Responsibility	72 (16.6)	84 (18/0)
Expression of Appeal	9 (2.1)	31 (6/6)
Refusing Responsibility	24 (5.5)	30 (6/4)
Concern for the Hearer	9 (2.1)	5 (1/1)
Offer of Repair	74 (17.0)	94 (20/1)
Promise of forbearance	11 (2.5)	17 (3/6)
Exclamations	12 (2.8)	31 (6/6)
Total	433 (100)	467 (100)

According to Table 1, IFID with 149 times of occurrence (34.4%) was the most frequent apology strategy employed by the native speakers of English. The second most frequent strategy employed by this group was offer of repair with 74 times of occurrence (17.0%). Finally, expression of appeal and concern for the hearer, each with 9 times of occurrence (2.1%), were the least frequent apology strategies employed by these speakers.

Moreover, an examination of the results of the advanced EFL teachers reveals that, similar to the native speakers of English, IFID with 129 times of occurrence (27.6%), and offer of repair with 94 times of occurrence (20.1%) were respectively the first and the second most frequent apology strategies employed by this group. On the other hand, concern for the hearer with 5 times of occurrence (1.1%) was the least frequent strategy used by the EFL teachers.

The second research question of the study tried to determine whether there were any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English. A closer look at Table 4.1 reveals that, although the overall preferences of the employed strategies are similar for both the native speakers of English and the advanced Iranian EFL teachers, there are certain differences in the frequency of the individual apology strategies employed by these groups. Therefore, in order to determine whether these differences were statistically significant, a two-way group independence chi-square test was employed. The results of this test are provided in Table2.

Table 2. Chi-Square Test of the Apology Strategies of the Native Speakers of English and the Advanced EFL Teachers

	value	df	Sig
Chi-Square	33.222	8	.000

According to Table 2, the differences between the apology strategies of the native speakers of English and the advanced EFL teachers were statistically significant since the p-value .000 (marked as *Sig*) was less than the level of significance .05. Based on these results, the null hypothesis of the study was rejected. The significant differences between the apology strategies of these groups are visually shown in Figure 1.
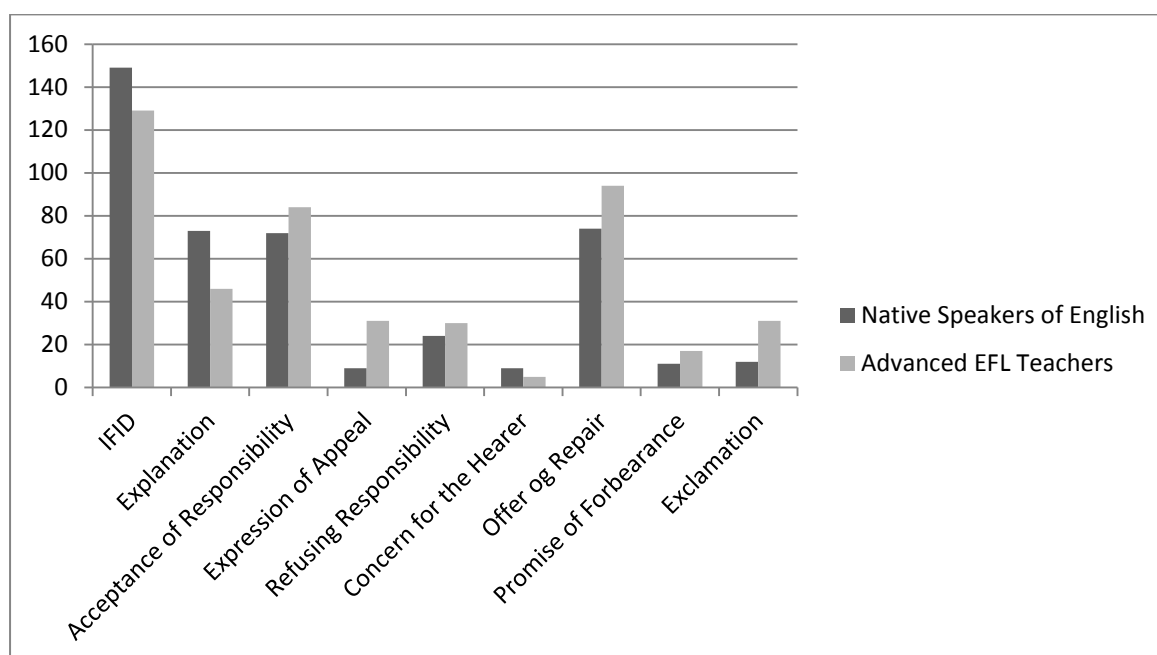
Figure 1. Comparison between the apology strategies employed by the native speakers of English and the advanced EFL teachers

5. Discussion

An investigation of the results of different studies which have investigated the apology strategy use of the native speakers (e.g. House, 1988; Olshtain, 1989) reveals that, these speakers mostly prefer to employ IFID in a variety of situations. As Ellis (2008) noted, the preference of native speakers for this strategy shows their concern for the negative face of their interlocutors, that is, by employing different IFIDs which are the most direct form of the realization of the apology speech act, these speakers show deference to the face needs of the hearer.

The results of the present study showed that, Iranian advanced EFL teachers employed IFID more frequently in comparison with the other apology realization strategies. That is, similar to the native speakers of English, these speakers were more concerned about the negative face of their hearer in performing apology strategies in English. It seems that, the advanced proficiency level of these non-native speakers is the reason behind their native-like use of apology strategies, and therefore, as Ellis (2008, p. 186) stated, it can be argued that, in general "advanced learners are more native-like" in performing different speech acts.

Furthermore, the results reveals that, offer of repair was the second most frequent apology realization strategy for both the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English. According to Blum-Kulka and Olashtain (1984), native speakers employ this strategy in order to compensate the damage or inconvenience which affected their interlocutor. As House (1988) noted, offering repair is a negative face-saving strategy which aims to minimize the effect of the committed offence to the face of the hearer. Therefore, it can be argued that, the preference for this strategy further supports the idea that, both of these groups were concerned about the negative face of their hearer in different social situations.

The second research question of the study tried to determine whether there were any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English. The results of the study showed that, although the overall preferences of the employed strategies were similar for both the native speakers of English and the advanced Iranian EFL teachers, there were statistically significant differences in the frequency of the individual apology strategies employed by these groups.

As Wierzbicka (1985) argued, speech acts are regarded to be culture-specific communicative routines, that is, the realization of different speech acts within a certain language depends on its specific

cultural norms and assumptions. Moreover, as Ellis (2008, p. 186) stated, "The sociocultural norms of learners'L1 influence how they apologize in an L2. The extent to which transfer takes place can be influenced by the learners' perception of the universality of how to apologize, transfer being less likely if learners recognize the language-specify of the apologies".

Based on the results of the study, it can be argued that, the difference between the apology strategy use of the advanced EFL teachers and native speakers of English may be related to the sociocultural norms of the advanced EFL teachers 'native language. That is, the results revealed that, the advanced EFL teachers may transfer some of the realization patterns of the apologies in their native language to the English apology strategies. Moreover, based on the results, it can be noted that, the advanced EFL teachers were not aware of the language-specific preferences of the native speakers of English in the use of different apology strategies since according to Ellis (2008), transfer is more likely to take place if the non-native speakers have incorrect perceptions about the universal nature of apologies in the target language.

6. Conclusion

The present study tried to determine the most frequent apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers. Moreover, it tried to examine whether there were any significant differences between the apology strategies used by the advanced Iranian EFL teachers and native speakers of English. The results of the study revealed that, IFID and offer of repair were respectively the first and the second most frequent apology strategies employed by this group. On the other hand, concern for the hearer was the least frequent strategy used by the EFL teachers. Moreover, the results revealed that, although the overall preferences of the employed strategies were similar for both the native speakers of English and the advanced Iranian EFL teachers, there were certain significant differences in the frequency of the individual apology strategies employed by these groups.

Based on the results of the present study, it is recommended that, teacher training courses should provide explicit training regarding the performance of the different speech acts including apologies in the second language. Moreover, it was recommended that, the pragmatic instruction in teacher training courses should try to provide the language teachers with sufficient knowledge about the sociocultural norms of the second language, and also should try to increase the teachers' knowledge about the language-specific or the universal nature of the speech acts in the second language.

Furthermore, it was recommended that, Iranian EFL teachers should try to improve their English pragmatic knowledge in any possible way including: the study of the results of the studies which have investigated the speech act use of the English native speakers, the use of the different written materials which focus on the pragmatic aspects of English , the use of the different types of audiovisual materials which focus on the performance of different speech acts including the apologies, and the communication with native speakers of English.

It was noted that, the main limitation of the study was that it did not take account of the participants' age. Finally, it was suggested that, the future studies can focus on the differences between the beginner EFL teachers and the native speakers in the performance of the apology strategies. Moreover, they can investigate the effects of the EFL teachers' age and gender on their apology performance.

References

Afghari, A. (2007). A sociopragmatic study of apology speech act realization patterns in Persian. *Speech Communication, 49*, 177–185.

Al-Zumor, A. W. Q. Gh. (2011). Apologies in Arabic and English: An interlanguage and cross-cultural study. *Journal of King Saud University – Languages and Translation, 23*(1), 19-28.

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Dornyei, Z. (1998). Do learners recognize pragmatic violations? Pragmatic versus grammatical awareness in instructed L2 learning. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(2), 42-71.

Bergman, M. L., & Kasper, G. (1993). Perception and performance in native and nonnative apology. In S. Blum-Kulka & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Interlanguage pragmatics* (pp. 82–107). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Blum-Kulka, S., & Olshtain, E. (1984). Requests and apologies: A cross-cultural study of speech act realization patterns (CCSARP). *Applied Linguistics, 5*, 196-213.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, A. D., & Olshtain, E. (1981). Developing a measure of sociocultural competence: The case of apology. *Language Learning, 31*(1), 113-134.

Creswell, J. W. (2011). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th Ed.). New York: Pearson Education.

Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2004). Face-keeping strategies in reaction to complaints: English and Persian. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 14*(1), 179–195.

Farhangian, S., Behjat, F., & Kargar, A. A. (2013). Investigating Iranian EFL learners' apology speech act strategies and their L2 productions. *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 3* (1), 35-45.

Frescura, M. (1995). Face orientation in reacting to accusatory complaints: Italian L1, English L1 and Italian as a community language. *Pragmatics and Language Learning, 6, 65–83.*

Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face behavior*. New York: Doubleday.

House, J. (1988). Oh excuse me please: Apologizing in a foreign language. In B. Kettemann, P. Bierbaumer, A. Fill, & A. Karpf Hrsg (Eds.), *Englisch als zweitsprache* (pp. 303–327). Tübingen: Narr.

Jebahi, Kh. (2011). Tunisian university students' choice of apology strategies in a discourse completion task. *Journal of Pragmatics, 43* (2), 648–662.

Karimnia, A., & Afgari, A. (2012). On apologizing in Persian: A socio-cultural inquiry. *Jezikoslovlje, 13* (3), 697-734.

Kasper, G., & Schmidt, R. (1996). Developmental issues in interlanguage pragmatics. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18,* 149-169.

Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics.* New York: Longman.

Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Olshtain, E. (1989). Apologies across languages. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House, & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies* (pp. 155-174). Ablex: Norwood.

Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. D. (1983). Apology: A speech act set. In N. Wolfson, & E. Judd, (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language acquisition* (pp. 18-35). Newbury, Rowley: MA.

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shariati, M., & Chamani, F. (2010). Apology strategies in Persian. *Journal of Pragmatics, 42*, 1689-1699.

Suszczynska, M. (1999). Apologizing in English, Polish and Hungarian: Different languages, different strategies. *Journal of Pragmatics, 31*, 1053-1065.

Tamimi Sa'd, S. H., & Mohammadi, M. (2014). A cross-sectional study of Iranian EFL learners' polite and impolite apologies. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 10*(1), 119-136.

Wardhaugh, R. (2010). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

Wierzbicka, A. (1985). Different cultures, different languages, different speech acts. *Journal of Pragmatics, 9,* 145-178.

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION OF EFL LEARNERS?

Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani

Department of English Language Translation, Lahijan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Lahijan, Iran

abbas.pourhossein@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

MANY ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) LEARNERS FACE A LOT OF DIFFICULTIES WHEN THEY SPEAK ENGLISH AND THEY ARE SOMETIMES DISAPPOINTED WHEN THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND OR BE UNDERSTOOD BY NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH. THIS PAPER EXPLAINS JUST ONE ISSUE THAT CONFRONTS EFL LEARNERS WHEN THEY SPEAK ENGLISH WHICH IS ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION. WHEN EFL LEARNERS COMMUNICATE WITH NATIVE SPEAKERS, THEY SHOULD NOT ONLY HAVE GOOD GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE BUT ALSO ACCEPTABLE PRONUNCIATION IN ORDER TO BE UNDERSTOOD BY NATIVE SPEAKERS. IF THEY DO NOT SPEAK CLEARLY, OTHER PEOPLE ESPECIALLY NATIVE SPEAKERS WILL NOT UNDERSTAND THEM AND THIS MAY STOP COMMUNICATION. THEREFORE, PRONUNCIATION IS A VERY DIFFICULT ASPECT IN LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR EFL LEARNERS WHICH LEADS TO REAL OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION AND CAN CONTRIBUTE TO MOTIVATION WITH NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS. THIS PAPER DEFINES PRONUNCIATION, REVIEWS THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE PRONUNCIATION OF EFL LEARNERS OF ENGLISH, AND FINALLY DISCUSSES GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING EFL LEARNERS' ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION.

KEYWORDS: PRONUNCIATION, EFL LEARNERS, FACTORS, SUGGESTIONS

1. Introduction

Martínez-Flor et al. (2006) and Aliaga García (2007) stated that English pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and develop. This is because of a number of factors such as age, motivation, and amount of exposure to the L2. Learners should spend lots of time to make better their pronunciation. According to Abbas Pourhossein Gilakjani (2012), understandable pronunciation is one of the basic needs for learners' competence. Pronunciation is one of the most important attributes of language teaching and learning and some English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and learners have serious problems with pronunciation. Acceptable pronunciation leads to learning while bad pronunciation promotes to a lot of problems in language learning.

Abbas Pourhossein Gilakjani and Mohammad Reza Ahmadi (2011) stated that the way learners pronounce words should be changed according to the way of thinking about both the component sounds of those words and the larger parts of speech like syllables, stress patterns, and rhythm. However, some EFL learners have great difficulties in learning pronunciation due to some affecting factors. According to Esling and Wong (1983), phonetic symbols and rules are not the only factors that affect pronunciation. There are some other factors that impact pronunciation learning. They include the production of sounds, voice, aspiration, stress, intonation, and rhythm.

Pennington and Richards (1986) stated that there are some factors in pronunciation like native language interference and age and these factors should be particularly considered in pronunciation. Therefore, if teachers and learners want to teach and learn pronunciation effectively, they should consider these affecting factors in their instruction and learning. According to Kenworthy (1987),

there are six factors that affect pronunciation learning. These are the native language, age, amount of exposure, phonetic ability, attitude, and motivation. In this paper, the researcher defines pronunciation, reviews the factors that influence pronunciation in EFL situation, and then mentions some suggestions for improving learners' English pronunciation.

2. What Is Pronunciation?

According to Cook (1996), pronunciation is the production of English sounds. This is learnt by repeating them and by being corrected when they are produced incorrectly. When learners start learning pronunciation they make new habits and overcome the difficulties resulting from the first language. Yates (2002) stated that pronunciation is the production of sounds that is used for making meaning. It involves segmental, suprasegmental features, and voice quality.

3. Factors That Influence on Pronunciation Learning

While teaching English pronunciation, EFL teachers should consider the factors that have an impact on the pronunciation learning of their learners. In this section, the most significant factors that influence on the pronunciation learning of EFL learners are thoroughly examined.

3.1. Age

Age has a great impact on English pronunciation. Persons who have native-like pronunciation, they have probably begun learning it in their childhood. Individuals who start learning pronunciation in adulthood, will rarely gain a native-like accent (Šebestová, 2007). According to Kenworthy (1987), learning of pronunciation hinges on age; that is, language learning has a sensitive period and that after that persons lose some capabilities. This certain age is between ten and thirteen years.

Snow (1992) supported this claim and said that pronunciation is one of the skills that the young people will be able to gain better pronunciation. Piske, MacKay, and Flege (2001) demonstrated that age is an important element in acquiring a foreign accent. Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) can explain this reason. According to CPH, learners will face some difficulties to learn a language at late ages particularly after puberty for the first language (Lenneberg, 1967).

Several studies have been done about the relationship between age and learning pronunciation. Oyama (1976) and Kassaian (2011) stated that learning of pronunciation can be obtained better at the earlier ages. According to Cochrane and Sachs (1979) and Kassaian (2011), children are superior in imitative activities and they have some particular aptitudes for phonological acquisition.

Oyama (1976) pointed out that learners who start learning a second language would have native-like accent. According to Šebestová (2007), age is a vital element for learners to learn pronunciation because they are less timid and more eagerness to do activities which the adult learners will find it peculiar. Age is one of the basic factors in English pronunciation learning. If learners want to pronounce English words like native speakers of English, they should start learning it during their childhood. That is, children who learn language in an English speaking environment have more benefits than those who learn it in their native countries.

According to Krashen (1988), people who learn a language during their childhood can get higher mastery than those who start learning it in their adulthood. Thus age is an important factor that affects adults' pronunciation and it is recommend that learners learn it in the short run and it should be also began in puberty. Granena and Long (2012) said that the age of learners is an important factor that has an effect on the true pronunciation and it is regarded as a predictor of learning English pronunciation.

According to Kenworthy (1990), children who learn a second language and have sufficient exposure to the target language are able to attain near native-like pronunciation. This statement supports the fact that teachers should start teaching pronunciation in the beginning of learning a second language because it would be very easy for children to attain near native-like pronunciation. Oyama (1976) performed a study. She examined 60 male newcomers who entered the United States at the age of 6 to 20 years. According to the results of this study, the youngest arrivals could speak like native-speakers of English. Asher and Garcia (1969) and Tahta, Wood, and Loewenthal (1981) also

investigated the impact of age on English pronunciation and confirmed that those who are younger will have a better position in learning pronunciation.

Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) said that critical period can explain the ease through which children acquire pronunciation which is determined period of life during which maximal conditions for acquiring the language exist. Children who begin learning a second language after this critical period cannot easily attain pronunciation since the brain loses its flexibility (Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 1996). That is, acquiring a second language would be very easy during this period because the brain has more flexibility. Therefore, learning pronunciation would be very difficult for adults after this period and it would be also very difficult for them to produce various sounds in words so that they can correctly pronounce them.

Based on the above findings, it is concluded that age has an important role in second language acquisition particularly in pronunciation learning and the young learners are able to acquire English pronunciation better than adults who try to learn L2 pronunciation.

3.2. Motivation

Šebestová (2007) expressed that some learners pay attention to pronunciation more than the other learners. Those who think that pronunciation is very momentous for their learning show more eagerness to be corrected and are worried about their pronunciation. When they are not sure about their pronunciation they prefer not to talk in English. Teachers should recognize aims and give their learners enough motivation so that both of them are conscious of some improvement. Teachers should take the responsibility for motivating their learners; therefore, motivation should not be overlooked because it is one of the most important factors that has an impact on the learning of pronunciation.

Motivation is one of the most important elements that explain individual characteristics in language learning (Dornyei, 2001; Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Seyedeh Masoumeh Ahmadi, 2011). According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani and Seyedeh Masoumeh Ahmadi (2011), there are two types of motivations in second language learning: intrinsic and extrinsic. Learners' motivation influences how much learners desire to take part in the learning process.

Intrinsic motivation refers to inside influences that cause persons to learn. One´s self-concept, self-respect, self-admiration, and personal principles are the examples of this motivation (Bomia et al., 1997; Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Seyedeh Masoumeh Ahmadi, 2011). Extrinsic motivation is the outside sources that affect learners' learning. Prizes, positive or negative consequences, and tranquility or lack of tranquility are the instances of this kind of motivation (Bomia et al., 1997; Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Seyedeh Masoumeh Ahmadi, 2011).

Motivation helps learners to attain comprehensible pronunciation. This sentence has been supported by Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1991). They said that if learners have strong motivation to learn and if they have enough time and effort, they will have substantial improvement. Learners who are integratively motivated try to attain a native accent in English and those who are not integratively motivated try to maintain a distinctive accent since speakers use phonological features to create a sense of identity (Pennington & Richards, 1986).

According to Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012), motivation determines whether the learner develops native-like pronunciation. Marinova-Todd et al. (2000) and Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012) said that adults can become skillful speakers of second languages, particularly if motivated to do so. Moyer (2007) and Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012) stated that positive orientation to the language can develop native-like pronunciation. It is concluded that if learners have high motivation, they will eagerly participate in the learning activities related to pronunciation learning.

Yousofi and Naderifarjad (2015) carried out a study. They wanted to find the relationship between integrative and instrumental motivation and learners' pronunciation skill. The findings showed that both types of motivation correlated significantly with learners' pronunciation skill. According to Elliot (1995) and Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012), learners who were more concerned about their English pronunciation liked to have better pronunciation.

Suter (1976) also said that learners who were worried about their English pronunciation had good pronunciation. Learners should pay attention to the correct production of words and try to improve their pronunciation skills. In order to achieve this purpose, they should be urged and motivated. According to the obtained findings from the above studies, it can be stated that if learners do not like the target language, they unconsciously create negative attitudes toward the language that will stop them not only to achieve comprehensible pronunciation but also to learn the language itself.

3.3. Mother Tongue

Mother language is one of the factors that influences pronunciation learning. L2 precision of non-native speakers somehow depends on their LI. Suter (1976) indicated that LI background is considered as one of the most important factors of L2 foreign accent.If the native and target language have significant differences, pronunciation learning of the target language would be more difficult.

According to Šebestová (2007), if there are more differences between the native and the target language, learners will face a lot of difficulties. The sources of learner's errors are different. When there isn't a specific sound in the learners' mother tongue, they try to substitute it by the nearest equivalent from their native language. For example, the sound [ð] is substituted by [d] or [z] as these are the nearest.

Mother tongue affects the acquisition of the foreign language. Learners' native language shares some of the sound features with the target language; that is, learners will have some difficulties with the pronunciation of those phonemes that are similar to those happening in their mother tongue. These features can easily differentiate the origins of untrained and trained persons (Kenworthy, 1990).

According to Lado (1957), learners who enter a foreign country understand that some features of that language are easy and some others are very difficult. Those features that are similar to their native language will be very simple for them to learn and those that are different will be very difficult. Keshavarz (2012) also said that when there are greater differences between the target language and the native language, learners will face a lot of learning difficulties.

There is a relationship between learner's L1 and the acquisition of L2 pronunciation. The effect of L1 transfer on learning pronunciation is more than its effect on other aspects of language. Teachers should have enough information about the sound system of the learners' language to understand the sources of their errors (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Celce-Murcia and Goodwin (1991) said that the second language filters through the learner's first language facilitates acquisition when the target pronunciation features are similar and interferes with acquisition when the features are not similar or are not existed.

According to Akram and Qureshi (2012), negative transfer from the first language causes errors in aspiration, intonation, and rhythm in the target language. Odlin (1989) and Akram and Qureshi (2012) stated that native language phonetics and phonology affect the pronunciation of second language. Learners learn the mother tongue naturally but they learn the second language artificially. Therefore, speech habits of the mother tongue are imposed on the speech habits of the foreign language.

According to MacKay (1967), pronunciation errors may be due to a transfer from the native language. Transfer from the native language is the most common one. These errors that are made by learners are due to the difference in sound systems and the misinterpretation of spelling symbols. The ability to pronounce the English words is very important and if the simple words are not correctly produced, they will stop people from effective communication.

The change of a sound can change the meaning of a word and so communication can be stopped. Teachers as the true model of speech can introduce the accurate speaking skill in the classrooms. Learners usually choose this skill from their classroom environment and if teachers have poor pronunciation, learners will not be able to learn this important skill in spoken English. The other reason is that by the time learners are introduced to the sound system of the second language they have a fossilized sound system of their mother tongue which stops them to acquire the L2 sound system (Pal, 2013).

According to Nunan (1999), the best time for learners to learn native-like pronunciation is before the beginning of puberty. Nunan (1999) emphasized the critical period as 'a biologically determined

period of life' when language is easily acquired and beyond that language learning would be very difficult. According to the above findings, it is concluded that EFL teachers should know the phonology of their learners' mother tongue to help their learners attain understandable pronunciation.

According to Corder (1992), Demirezen (2010), Liu (2011), and Çakır, Baytar, (2014), due to the mother tongue and negative transfer, Turkish learners found it very difficult to learn English pronunciation. According to Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996), student's native language (L1) has a key role in second language acquisition and it is the center of many theories concerning the phonological development of a new language. Contrastive analysis theory states that the student's L1 helps SLA where the two languages have similar structures and interferes where those structures are either different or are not existed in L1.

Avery and Ehrlich (1992) expressed that a student's L1 influences pronunciation in three fundamental ways: 1) if the L1 sound system is different from English, 2) if the rules for combining sounds into words are different, and 3) if the patterns of stress and intonation are different. The above findings pertinent to the effect of mother tongue on the EFL learners' pronunciation learning indicate that teachers should be conscious of the pronunciation of their EFL learners' mother tongue so that they can help them to gain understandable pronunciation.

3.4. Instruction

Some researchers, teachers, and students think that English pronunciation is not very significant. They said that teachers consider pronunciation as the least useful of the language skills and they do not teach pronunciation in order to spend time on other parts of language. They also believe that it is very difficult to achieve pronunciation skill than other aspects of second language acquisition (Elliot, 1995; Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Mohammad Reza Ahmadi, 2012).

The important matter of pronunciation instruction is how to increase the positive outcomes of instruction for learners. One feature of this subject is what should be taught in class. Early teaching methods emphasized on the segmental features of pronunciation, while more recent approaches have stressed suprasegmental aspects like sentence rhythm and intonation. The increasing tendency in today's pronunciation syllabus design is to combine both segmentals and suprasegmentals in one course (Liu, 2008).

The other part of this subject matter is how to teach pronunciation. Traditional teaching methods or techniques have been supported or challenged during different times while new methods and techniques have been created (Liu, 2008). Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) represented a more balanced view. They said that traditional pronunciation techniques can be used as a starting point for class and later learners can use communicative activities.

Empirical research on the efficacy of pronunciation instruction has been carried out by a number of researchers (Abbasian & Bahmanie, 2013; Hayati, 2010; Hosseini Fatemi & Shahriari Ahmadi, 2010; Nosratinia & Zaker, 2014; Silveira, 2002). Positive impacts have been reported for different teaching methods on different pronunciation qualities. Silveira (2002) tested the effects of pronunciation instruction on the acquisition of the contrast /D/~/T/ by French learners of English. There were three kinds of training: (a) acoustic training appropriate for normal speech; (b) identification training with immediate feedback; and (c) acoustic uncertainty provided by increasing variability in the acoustic signal. The findings showed that the kind of training contributed to the subjects' improvement in the discrimination of both synthetic and natural speech signs.

Hosseini Fatemi and Shahriari Ahmadi (2010) examined the priorities of 112 Iranian learners from various proficiency fields about English accents. Researchers inferred that teachers should attend learners' needs and personal preferences when teaching pronunciation. Hayati (2010) distributed a 38-item questionnaire to 230 Iranian English teachers to investigate their problems in teaching pronunciation. The findings indicated that the lack of enough time and the problems related to the textbooks were two serious concerns in pronunciation instruction.

Abbasian and Bahmanie (2013) examined the relationship between the Iranian EFL teachers' views about pronunciation in teaching-learning process. 30 EFL teachers answered a pronunciation knowledge questionnaire. The results indicated that EFL teachers' pronunciation was significantly

reflected upon by both EFL teachers and learners. It was also indicated that the Iranian teachers should pay serious attention to their pronunciation while teaching it to their learners.

Nosratinia and Zaker (2014) investigated the phonological transfers and the pronunciation errors of Iranian EFL learners. Researchers chose 300 male and female EFL learners for this study. Researchers collected learners' errors involving the definition of the errors and the recognition of those errors. The results revealed that there is a positive connection between the teachers' pronunciation knowledge and that of learners. It was also indicated that pronunciation instruction needs a serious attention by the Iranian EFL teachers.

According to Arteaga (2000), pronunciation instruction to learners enables them to analyze the oral utterances of native speakers of English. She continued that while bad pronunciation may not totally stop communication, it can cause discomfort and negative ideas on the part of hearers. Khamkhien (2010) and Ahangari, Rahbar, and Entezari Maleki (2015) stated that pronunciation instruction would make learners more conscious of their English pronunciation in EFL situations where English is contextually decreased and learners do not have access to real communication with the native speakers of English.

To sum up, pronunciation instruction is a significant feature of L2 instruction that can have positive impacts on learners as they learn a second language. Pronunciation instruction is a good way of improving EFL learners' English pronunciation. EFL learners can change the quality of their pronunciation through teachers' pronunciation instruction.

3.5. Attitude

Attitude plays a vital role in the learning of English pronunciation. Attitude is a personality-determined factor and it is very difficult for us to predict whether people who enter an environment with various accents change their own accents. Different accents indicate different attitudes towards people. When people imitate the accents of the speakers of a foreign country, they indicate their positive relation to their language and culture and respect them as the native speakers of English. In this situation, people like to integrate themselves to the new environment. The attitude factor is connected with motivation factor in the learning of pronunciation (Simona Šebestová, 2007).

Kenwothy (1990) said that personal commitment to a community and an eagerness to be identified with the members of that community can be indicated through the way people choose to speak. The group affirmation factor can be transferred onto non-native speakers because their positive feelings toward the target language lead to the development of understandable pronunciation. If learners have negative attitudes toward the target language, their community views the target language negatively they unconsciously create obstacles that stop them acquiring understandable pronunciation (Sharkey, 2003).

According to Barrera Pardo (2004), a lot of learners who were studying English phonetics and phonology course stated that phonology was useful in learning pronunciation. Madden and Moore (1997) carried out a study at the university level. They realized that learners considered pronunciation as an important skill and emphasized that a particular attention should be placed on its instruction. Vitanova and Miller (2002) said that learners related the learning of pronunciation to communicative abilities and they also expressed that pronunciation can help learners to gain confidence in communication.

Burgess and Spencer (2000) carried out a study towards the attitudes of teachers in the United Kingdom (UK). The findings revealed that pronunciation instruction was very difficult for teachers and learners had difficulties about the sounds that were not existent in their mother tongue. In addition, Nowacka (2012) performed a study about the views of learners towards pronunciation. Learners said that it is very important for them to have an acceptable pronunciation particularly native-like accent. Learners believed that their pronunciation improved due to listening to authentic materials, practical pronunciation instruction, and contacts with native speakers.

Stevick (I978) asserted that the learner's attitude towards the target language is a significant factor in the pronunciation learning. Stevick also emphasized that pronunciation is regarded as the primary means through which we can draw the attention of people to our use of language. Thus it is fundamentally beneficial and all-important. According to Timmis (2007), when learners select a

special accent this is affected by their attitudes towards it. Therefore, learners who have more positive attitudes towards a particular accent are more motivated to comply with it.

A qualitative study was done by Seyedabadi (2014). It was about the Iranian EFL learners' attitudes towards the importance of pronunciation. The obtained results showed that pronunciation impacted the four language skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Furthermore, it was indicated that pronunciation plays a vital role in language learners' self-complacency and eagerness to speak English.

The findings obtained from the above studies show that in order to promote positive attitudes towards learning pronunciation among learners, it is very important to pay attention to what they think about pronunciation and its usefulness for their language, what their knowledge and skills are or what skills they need to further develop. It is also concluded that the more positive learners' attitudes are towards pronunciation, the more likely they are to use it in their talks. In addition, learners' positive attitudes towards learning pronunciation can arouse their motivation to learn the different aspects of pronunciation.

3.6. Language Exposure

Šebestová (2007) said that the term exposure may have different meanings. The meanings are different from living in the country where the language is spoken to talking to native-speakers. Living in the country of the target language does not always mean the real application of the language. Many people may live in a non-English-speaking environment and use their mother tongue with their families. Many learners who live in a non-English speaking country may use English in daily situations such as school or work; thus, the amount of exposure depends on its quality and quantity.

According to Snow (1992), being exposed to English in an English-speaking environment can have a positive impact on the learner's pronunciation and oral skills. According to Singer (2006), the length of time persons spend with the language influence the quantity and quality of English interaction in day-to-day activities. Languages are acquired by receiving large amounts of comprehensible input.

Müfit Şenel (2006) expressed that learners who live in an English-speaking country will have a lot of opportunities to use the target language. But learners who live in a non-English speaking country won't have any chance to use it. These learners are exposed to focused-listening and they do not have any time to use the target language in the real situation. That is, there isn't any communication and if there is no communication, there isn't any language learning. Since these learners do not have any English-speaking environment, they will be satisfied with listening. Teachers cannot teach correct pronunciation by just asking learners to listen to artificial listening materials in the class.

Müfit Şenel (2006) continued that there are many people who live in an English speaking country and spend much of their time in a non-English speaking environment and these people probably use other languages at their homes. For this reason, it is not enough to just focus on exposure, but how people use the opportunities should be specifically paid attention. Kenworthy (1987) emphasized that exposure is a significant factor for developing learners' pronunciation. Learners should use opportunities if they know the need of being exposed to the second language. If the learners do that they will be more successful in improving their English pronunciation.

3.7. General Suggestions for Improving EFL Learners' English Pronunciation

There are a lot of general suggestions that can help EFL learners improve their English pronunciation. They are as follows:

1. EFL teachers should speak clearly and slowly in pronunciation class and they should convince their learners that their language is understandable. Learners can also improve their English pronunciation by listening to their teachers carefully. Listening is the key to good pronunciation, but listening should be into the contexts that are both understandable to the learners and pertinent to their lives beyond the classes. Learners should be exposed to various voices. Learners who just hear their teachers' voices in classrooms would not be able to differentiate sounds or get meaning when they listen to native speakers on a tape (Bradley-Bennett, 2007).

2. EFL teachers should be properly trained in English pronunciation especially in Phonetics and Phonology. EFL learners should be motivated to listen to different news channels and to watch English programs in order to improve their English pronunciation (Shahzada, 2012).

3. EFL teachers should be conscious about their learners' needs and should give proper attention to their learners' needs and problems in pronunciation. Based on the needs of their learners, teachers should develop some appropriate materials to present in the class to decrease their learners' pronunciation problems (Shahzada, 2012).

4. Learners sometimes like to speak very quickly to show their fluency and this may impact the clarity of their English pronunciation and also make it very difficult for people to understand them. And we should know that many native speakers do not speak so fast but are very fluent. If learners speak too fast, they will not be able to pronounce some words completely. Therefore, learners should speak slowly and clearly to be easily understood by their listeners. Learners should know that in slow and careful speech, they can have control over their English pronunciation. Teachers should teach their learners that slow speech with correct pronunciation is much better than fast speech with wrong pronunciation. Learners should understand that understandability is more important than fast speech (Rasekhi Kolokdaragh, 2010).

5. Lack of confidence can be a serious difficulty for EFL learners in English pronunciation. Production of sounds of English language can be stressful for learners. Teachers should include pronunciation in other language activities because it will help learners to adapt themselves to the sound system of a new language and overcome their affective problems pertinent to the learning and pronouncing of English language (Rasekhi Kolokdaragh, 2010).

6. When EFL learners do not know how to pronounce English words they like to ask native speakers and if they are not available, they will learn them through radio, TV, and computer technologies like different kinds of computer software. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to use them in their classes to help learners improve their pronunciation by exposing them to authentic materials. Teachers should familiarize their learners to both American and British English and learners should be able to understand both varieties of pronunciation (Rasekhi Kolokdaragh, 2010).

7. Learners can easily learn English pronunciation if they and their teachers take part in the learning process. If teaching and learning goals are correctly arranged, success can be obtained. Pronunciation is not viewed just the precise production of phonemes. It is regarded in the same light as grammar, syntax, and discourse, that is, a significant component of communication. Understandable pronunciation is an important part of communicative competence (Morley, 1991).

8. Teachers should set obtainable goals that are appropriate for the communication needs of the learners. The learners should be active in the learning process. The content of the course should be integrated into the communication class that emphasizes the teaching of segmental and suprasegmental aspects, connects pronunciation with listening comprehension, and allows for meaningful pronunciation practice. Teachers act as the speech coach of pronunciation, give feedback to their learners, and urge them to improve their English pronunciation (Thanasoulas, 2002).

9. Teachers should play a key role in pronunciation learning by producing speech rather than teaching the rules of pronunciation. This is one of the important ways of transferring explicit knowledge of pronunciation into practice. Teachers should design activities that put the learners at the center of practicing pronunciation (Geylanioğlu & Dikilitaş, 2012).

10. Careful attention should be given to this point that the pronunciation of EFL learners can be influenced by the combination of many factors like age (Asher & Garcia, 1969; Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 1996; Granena & Long, 2012; Kenworthy,1990; Krashen, 1998; Oyama, 1976; Tahta, Wood, & Loewenthal, 1981), motivation (Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Seyedeh Masoumeh Ahmadi, 2011; Bomia et. al., 1997; Celce-Murcia & Goodwin, 1991; Dornyei, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Marinova-Todd et al., 2000; Moyer, 2007; Pennington & Richards, 1986; Yousofi & Naderifarjad, 2015), mother tongue (Akram, and Qureshi, 2012 ; Celce-Murcia & Goodwin, 1991; Demirezen, 2010; Kenworthy, 1990; MacKay, 1967; Nunan, 1999; Odlin, 1989; Pal, 2013), instruction (Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Mohammad Reza Ahmadi, 2012; Abbasian & Bahmanie, 2013; Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; Elliot, 1995; Hayati, 2010; Hosseini Fatemi & Shahriari Ahmadi, 2010; Liu, 2008; Nosratinia & Zaker, 2014; Silveira, 2002), attitude (Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani (2012; Elliot, 1995; Kenwothy, 1990;

Sharkey, 2003; Simona Šebestová, 2007; Suter, 1976), and language exposure (Kenworthy, 1987; Müfit Şenel, 2006; Singer, 2006). The key point is that we should pay attention to the importance of the above factors in making practical pronunciation goals and needs for the EFL learners.

3.8. Conclusion

This paper explained some important factors that influence the pronunciation of EFL learners of English. Having a good pronunciation can help learners to effectively communicate to each other. The better learners pronounce the English words, the better people can understand them. The factors discussed above help EFL teachers notice what learners are probably to encounter when learning pronunciation. These factors would enable the teachers to recognize the problems in the English pronunciation experienced by their learners in order to aid them eliminate these difficulties and improve their pronunciation. These factors can have different influences on English pronunciation. It is believed that the younger the learners begin to learn English pronunciation, the better they can master it. Positive attitudes can help learners develop accurate pronunciation and have a native-like accent. Learners who have high motivation for learning pronunciation will be easily able to learn English pronunciation. Exposure is the other significant factor that involves the attitude that learners have toward the opportunities using the target language. Based on the review of literature, it can be stated that pronunciation is an important part of English language teaching and teachers have serious job in helping their learners to accurately master it. In order to do their job successfully, teachers should have acceptable pronunciation. If they do not have comprehensible pronunciation, they will mislead their learners.

REFERENCES

Abbasian, G., & Bahmanie, A. (2013). EFL Teachers and Learners Reflection on Pronunciation Factor in Teaching-Learning Process and Its Effects on Learners' Motivation. *ELT-Voices Journal, 3*(2), 62-79.

Ahangari, S., Rahbar, S., & Entezari Maleki, S. (2015). Pronunciation or listening Enhancement: Two Birds with One Stone. *International Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, *1*(2), 13-19. http://www.ijlal.ir

Akram, M., & Qureshi, A. H. (2012). Problems in Learning and Teaching English Pronunciation in Pakistan. *Int. J. of Res. in Linguistics & Lexicography: INTJR-LL*, *1*(4), 43-48.

Aliaga García, C. (2007). The role of phonetic training in L2 speech learning. *Proceedings of the Phonetics Teaching and Learning Conference (PTLC2007), University College, London.* Available at http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/ptlc/ptlc2007_web_procindex.html

Asher, J., & Garcia. R. (1969). The optimal age to learn a foreign language. *Modern Language Journal*, *53*, 334-341. 10.1111/j.1540-4781.1969.tb04603.

Arteaga, D. L. (2000). Articulatory phonetics in the first-year Spanish classroom. *The Modern Language Journal, 84*(3), 339-354. doi: 10.1111/0026-7902.00073

Avery, P., & Ehrlich, S. (1992). *Teaching American English Pronunciation*. New York, Oxford University Press.

Barrera Pardo, D. (2004). Can pronunciation be taught? A review of research and implications for teaching. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses, 17*, 31-44.

Bomia, L., Beluzo, L., Demeester, D., Elander, K., Johnson, M., & Sheldon, B. (1997). *The impact of teaching strategies on intrinsic motivation*. 1st edition. Champaign, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. 28s ISBN not stated.

Bradley-Bennett, K. (2007). *Teaching Pronunciation: and independent course study for adult English as a second language learners.* Retrieved from: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/download/NCPDRC/TeachingPronunciation.pdf

Burgess, J., & Spencer, S. (2000). Phonology and pronunciation in integrated language teaching and teacher education. *System*, 28, 191–215. doi: 10.1016/S0346-251X(00)00007-5

Çakır, I., & Baytar, B. (2014). Foreign language learners' views on the importance of learning the target language pronunciation. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 10*(1), 99-110. doi: 10.1017/S026144480001315X

Celce-Murcia, N., Brinton, M. D., & Goodwin, J. M. (1996). *Teaching Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.* Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Celce-Murcia, M., & Goodwin, J. M. (1991). Teaching pronunciation. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 136-153). New York: Newbury House.

Cochrane, R., & Sachs, J. (1979). Phonological learning by children and adults in a laboratory setting. *Language and Speech*, 22(2), 145-149.

Cook, V. (1996). *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. London: Arnold.

Corder, S. P. (1992). A role for the mother tongue. In L. Selinker & S. M. Gass (Eds.), *Language transfer in language learning* (Revised ed., pp. 18-31). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Demirezen, M. (2010). The causes of the schwa phoneme as a fossilized pronunciation problem for Turks. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2, 1567-1571. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.237

Dornyei, Z. (2001). *Teaching and Researching Motivation*. London: Longman.

Elliott, A. R. (1995). Field independence/dependence, hemispheric specialization, and attitude in relation to pronunciation accuracy in Spanish as a foreign language. *Modern Language Journal, 79* (3), 356-371. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb01112.x

Elliott, A. R. (1995). Foreign language phonology: Field independence, attitude, and the success of formal instruction in Spanish pronunciation. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79(4), 530-542. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb05456.x

Esling, J. H., & Wong, R. F. (1983). Voice quality settings and the teaching of pronunciation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, 89-95. doi: 10.2307/3586426

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning.* Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Geylanioğlu, S., & Dikilitaş, K. (2012). Pronunciation Errors of Turkish Learners of English: Conceptualization Theory as a Teaching Method. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 2*(1), 38-50.

Granena, G., & Long, M. H. (2012). Age of onset, length of residence, language aptitude, and ultimate L2 attainment in three linguistic domains. *Second Language Research*, 29(3), 311-343. doi: 10.1177/0267658312461497

Hayati, A. M. (2010). Notes on Teaching English Pronunciation to EFL Learners: A Case of Iranian High School Students. *Canadian Center of Science and Education, ELT*, 3(4), 121-126. doi: 10.5539/*elt*.v3n4p121

Hoseini Fatemi, A., & Shahriari Ahmadi, H. (2010). To teach or not to teach: On the didactic aspect of accent training in the EFL classroom. *Iranian EFL Journal*, 6(3), 28-44.

Kenworthy, J. (1987). *Teaching English Pronunciation*. London: Longman.

Kenworthy, J. (1990). *Teaching English Pronunciation*. Harlow: Longman.

Keshavarz, M. H. (2012).*Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis*. Rahnama Press, Tehran, Iran.

Krashen, S. D. (1988). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning.* Prentice-Hall International.

Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures: Applied linguistics for language teachers*. University of Michigan Press.

Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. New York: Wiley.

Liu, Y. (2008). *The effectiveness of integrating commercial pronunciation software into an ESL pronunciation class.* Graduate Theses and Dissertations. Paper 11716. http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/11716.

Liu, Q. (2011). Factors influencing pronunciation accuracy: L1 negative transfer, task variables and individual aptitude. *English Language Teaching*, 4(4), 115-120. doi: 10.5539/elt.v4n4p115

MacKay, W. F. (1967). *Language teaching analysis.* Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Madden, M., & Moore, Z. (1997). ESL Students' opinions about instruction in pronunciation. *Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education*, 3(1), 15-32.

Marinova-Todd, S. H., Marshall, D. B., & Snow, C. E. (2000). Three misconceptions about age and L2 learning. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*(1), 9-34. doi: 10.2307/3588095, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3588095

Martínez-Flor, A., Usó-Juan, E., & Alcón Soler, E. (2006). Towards acquiring communicative competence through speaking. In Usó-Juan, E., & Martínez-Flor, A. (eds) *Current Trends in the Development and Teaching of the Four Language Skills.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 139-157.

Morley, J. (1991). The pronunciation component in teaching English to speakers of other languages. *TESOL Quarterly*, *25*(1), 51-74. doi: 10.2307/3586981

Moyer, A. (2007). Do language attitudes determine accent? A study of bilinguals in the USA. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *28*(6), 502-518. doi:10.2167/jmmd514.0, http://dx.doi.org10.2167/jmmd514.0

Nosratinia, M., & Zaker, A. (2014). An Analysis of Iranian EFL Learners' Pronunciation Errors. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW), 5*(3), 97-108.

Nowacka, M. (2012). Questionnaire-based pronunciation studies: Italian, Spanish and Polish students' views on their English pronunciation. *Research in Language* 10, 43-61.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning.* Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Oldin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oyama, S. (1976). A sensitive period in the acquisition of a non-native phonological system. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *5*, 261-85. doi: 10.1017/S0142716415000259

Pal, S. (2013). *A study on the impact of the mother tongue on spoken English in a government school in the NCR region of Delhi.* Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

Pennington, M. C., & Richards, J. C. (1986). Pronunciation revisited. *TESOL Quarterly*, *20*(2), 207-225. doi: 10.2307/3586541

Piske, T., MacKay, I. R. A., & Flege, J. E. (2001). Factors affecting degree of foreign accent in an l2: a review. *Journal of Phonetics*, *29*, 191-215. doi: 10.006/jpho.2001.0134

Pourhossein Gilakjani, A. (2011). A Study on the Situation of Pronunciation Instruction in ESL/EFL Classrooms. *Journal of Studies in Education*, *1*(1), 1-15. http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/jse.v1i1.924

Pourhosein Gilakjani, A. (2012). A Study of Factors Affecting EFL Learners' English Pronunciation Learning and the Strategies for Instruction. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *2*(3), 119-128.

Pourhossein Gilakjani, A., & Ahmadi, M. R. (2011). Why is Pronunciation So Difficult to Learn? *English Language Teaching, 4*(3), 74-83. doi:10.5539/elt.v4n3p74

Pourhossein Gilakjani, A., & Ahmadi, S. M. (2011). The Effect of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation on Iranian EFL Learners' Language Learning. *Iranian EFL Journal, 7*(2), *89-97.*

Rasekhi Kolokdaragh, V. (2010). *ESL/EFL Learners' Perception of their Pronunciation Needs and Strategies.* 41st Annual State CATESOL Conference in Santa Clara, CA, April 23, 2010.

Šebestová, S. (2007). *Some aspects of assessing pronunciation in EFL classes.* Diploma thesis. Masaryk University, Faculty of Education, Department of English Language and Literature.

Senel, M. (2006). Suggestions for Beautifying the Pronunciation of EFL Learners in Turkey. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *2*(1), 111-125.

Seyedabadi, S. (2014). *Iranian EFL learners' attitudes toward the Cinderella of language teaching, construction and validation of LATEP scale: A mixed-method study.* Master's dissertation, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran.

Sharkey, R. (2003). *Facilitating Communicative Competence for Adult Non-native English Speakers.* Minnesota: Hamline University. doi: 10.2307/3586981

Shahzada, G. (2012). Views of the Teachers Regarding the Students' Poor Pronunciation in English Language. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 2*(1), 309-316. doi: 10.5901/jesr.2012.02.01.309

Silveira, R. (2002). Pronunciation instruction classroom practice and empirical research. *Linguagem and Ensino*, *5*(1), 93-126.

Singer, J. (2006). *Uncovering factors that influence English pronunciation of native Somali speakers.* Unpublished Master's Thesis. Hamline University, St. Paul, MN. doi: 10.1515/iral.1971.9.2.147

Snow, D. (1992). *Myths and Misconceptions About Second Language Learning* [online]. Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics. Retrieved from http://www.cal.org/recources/digest/myths.html

Stevick, E. W. (1978). Towards a Practical Philosophy of Pronunciation. Another View. *TESOL Quarterly*, *12*(2), 145-50.

Suter, R. (1976). Predicators of pronunciation accuracy in second language learning, *Language Learning, 26*, 233-253. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-1770.1976.tb00275.x.

Tahta, S., Wood, M., & Loewenthal. K. (1981). Age changes in the ability to replicate foreign pronunciation and intonation. *Language and Speech*, *24*, 363-272. doi: 10.1177/002383098102400405

Thanasoulas, D. (2002). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *The internet TESL journal, 8*(11), retrieved from August 2015, http://iteslj.org/Articles/Thanasoulas-Motivation.html.

Timmis, I. (2007). The attitudes of language learners towards target varieties of the language. In B. Tomlinson (ed.), *Language acquisition and development: Studies of learners of first and other languages*. London: Continuum, 122-139.

Vitanova, G., & Miller, A. (2002). Reflective practice in pronunciation learning, *The Internet TESL Journal, 8*(1). Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Vitanova-Pronunciation.html.

Yates, L. (2002). *Fact sheet – What is pronunciation?* Adult Migrant English Program Research Centre, La Trobe University, 1- 8. http://www.nceltr.mq.edu.au/pdamep

Yousofi, N., & Naderi Farjad, Z. (2015). The Relationship between Motivation and Pronunciation: A case of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *2*(4), 249-262.

ACTION VERB PICTURES AND LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE IMPROVEMENT AMONG ELEMENTARY LEVEL STUDENTS

Masumeh Habibi
Science and research university of Guilan,
Rasht, language teaching department
Masumeh_habibi@yahoo.com

Hamed Babaei
Science and research university of Guilan,
Rasht,Language teaching department
hamed.babaie@gmail.com

Fatemeh Sadat Hashemi
Science and research university of Guilan,
Rasht, language teaching department
Alumina_6h@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY AIMED TO EXPLORE THE EFFECT OF ACTION VERB PICTURES ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF ELEMENTARY- LEVEL EFL LEARNERS' LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE IN IRAN. THE LEARNERS WERE CHOSEN FROM A CONSTELLATION OF STUDENTS WHO RANGED IN AGE BETWEEN 9 TO 12 YEARS. THE PARTICIPANTS COMPRISED 120 ELEMENTARY LEVEL EFL LEARNERS WHO WERE STUDYING AT A PRIVATE INSTITUTE. EMPLOYING AN EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH DESIGN, THE RESEARCHER INVESTIGATED THE ISSUE THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT OF TWO GROUPS OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL. THE RESEARCHER SOUGHT TO EXAMINE WHETHER SHOWING PICTURES OF ACTION VERBS COULD PRODUCE ANY PROMISING EFFECT ON EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY LEARNING, AS WELL AS TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER PRESENTING THE PICTURES OF ACTION VERBS WHEN COUPLED WITH L2 DEFINITIONS COULD COMPARATIVELY PROVE MORE EFFECTIVE IN AIDING VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT. THE QUESTIONS ACCORDING TO THE EFFECTIVENESS TREATMENT IN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY LEARNING WERE GOING TO BE ANSWERED IN THIS STUDY. OVERALL, RESULTS OF THE CURRENT STUDY SHOWED THAT SHOWING PICTURES TOGETHER WITH DEFINITIONS GREATLY CONTRIBUTED TO L2 VOCABULARY LEARNING AMONG ELEMENTARY LEVEL STUDENTS AND THAT THE COMBINATION OF VISUALS AND TEXTUALS PROVED EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE IN EXPANDING THE PARTICIPANT' VOCABULARY REPERTOIRE.

KEY TERMS: ACTION VERB, LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE, MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEM, MULTIMODALITY, VISUAL PERCEPTION.

1. Introduction

Learning a language is always tied to learning its vocabulary. From this proposal govern this view, vocabulary learning is considered to be an important skill among educators. This study tries to theoretically introduce a new strategy to teach the vocabulary of the L2 language. This paper is to investigate the effect of action verbs picture on Iranian elementary EFL learners' vocabulary learning compared to the researches who worked on using pictures for teaching nouns. The present study investigates not only the positive effects of using pictures in vocabulary learning but also the effects of using definitions together with visuals on the vocabulary learning of EFL learners.

Compared to the researches which worked on the using the pictures for nouns in vocabulary learning of a second language, researches which investigates not only the benefit of pictures but the teacher's acts on the action verb vocabulary learning is hardly enough. The significance of this study can be explained from perspective that in fact no experimental studies to date have examined the effects using pictures in the Iranian context of action verb learning. The researcher found that most of the researches have focused on teaching nouns rather than verbs and especially action verbs through showing pictures and also picture and definition together. Besides, in the light of the research results, some recommendations, suggestions, and pedagogical implications are expounded for: 1) Teachers who are teaching vocabulary to elementary level students, 2) All EFL learners, and 3) Publishers and syllabus designers.

2. Review of the Related Literature

There are essential steps of learning vocabulary (Hatch and Brown 1995): Having source for encountering new words, getting a clear image for the form of new words, learning the meaning of new words, making a strong memory connection between the form and the meaning of the words and using the word.

According to Wadsworth (2003), a child at the age of 7-10 years is always interesting in recognizing and knowing new words, he stands to repeat new words repeatedly so that he will memorize them. Theorists now place considerable stress on the importance of foreign language students' developing autonomous learning strategies, and books aimed at teachers provide practical advice on teaching vocabulary and encourage student language-learning strategies (e.g., McCarthy, 1990; Nation, 1990).

According to Paivio (1971, 1986, 1991), Dual Coding Theory contends that pictures and words activate different visual codes known as images and verbal codes called logogens in visual and verbal memories, respectively. Dual coding might then aid in vocabulary learning, as pictures are more readily retrieved from memory than words and the likelihood of recalling words from verbal memory increases due to their being associated with relevant images in visual memory (Unnava & Burnkrant, 1991).

As memorization had proven less effective since long time among Iranian EFL learners but it is not as effective as it is expected to learn vocabulary for students, the present study aims to examine the role of the visuals in the development of lexical knowledge.

Zarei and Khazaie (2011) conducted a study in which they investigated how Iranian EFL learners learn L2 vocabulary through multimodal representations. The learners were evaluated on their recognition and recall of vocabulary items by using visual and verbal short-term memory test. The results indicated that the groups treated with vocabulary items with pictorial or written annotations performed significantly better on the tests. The findings also revealed that the learners with their special learning styles were most likely to enjoy the related represented modality, i.e. verbal learners and visual learners showed a better performance through the verbal modality and visual modality respectively.

Two types of cognitive load have been identified in particular: intrinsic cognitive load and extraneous cognitive load (Sweller et al., 1998). Intrinsic cognitive load refers to the load placed on working memory by "difficult to- learn" content. Extraneous cognitive load is the working memory load resulting from poorly designed instructional message materials and poor instructional designs.

Levin, Anglin, and Carney (1987) conducted a meta-analysis of the pictures in prose studies. The reviewers concluded that for pictures (not mental images), serving a representation, organization,

interpretation, or transformation function yielded at least moderate degrees of facilitation. A substantial effect size was identified for the transformation function. One of the most significant programs of research on visual learning has been conducted by Dwyer and his associates (Dwyer, 1972, 1978, 1987; Levie & Lentz, 1982; Rieber, 1994).

Levie and Lentz (1982) conducted a meta-analysis using the treatments developed by Dwyer and presented in a text format or programmed booklet. All studies included in the meta-analysis included a text-only condition. Based on 41 comparisons of treatments with text plus prose vs. with text only using four criterion measures (drawing test, identification test, terminology test, comprehension test), Levie and Lentz (1982) reported that 36 comparisons favored illustrated text and 4 favored text alone.

3. Methods of research
3.1 Research questions:
The following research questions were formulated for this study:
- Is there any statistically significant difference between the performances of elementary le vel children who receive treatment on English action verb through visuals and the perfo rmance of those who receive treatment on action verbs through textual definitions?

- Is there any statistically significant difference between the performance of elementary le vel children who receive treatment on action verbs through a combination of visual and textual definitions and definition of those who receive treatment on action verbs through visuals only?

3.2 Research Hypotheses:
The following research hypotheses were formulated for this study:
- There is no statistically significance difference between the performances of elementary l evel children who receive treatment on English action verb through visuals and the perf ormance of those who receive treatment on action verbs through textual definition.

- There is no statistically significance difference between the performance of elementary le vel children who receive treatment on action verbs through a combination of visual and textual definitions and definition of those who receive treatment on action verbs through visuals only.

3.3 Participants:
120 elementary-level students who were attending English classes at an English institute, Rasht, Iran were chosen as participants. They were ranged between 9 to 12 years old. All participants shared the same L1 background, i.e., Persian.

3.4 Instrument:
Oxford Proficiency Test (QPT) was used to make sure the participants were homogeneous in terms of their language proficiency. During the treatment, 40 pictures were used to teach the learners action verbs. Each session 5 of action verbs were selected to be taught. The action verbs were taught through story telling. 10 story books suitable for elementary level has been chosen by the researcher. The teacher used a video projector in order to show the pictures.

3.5 Procedure:
Prior to taking any step in doing the present research, participants were required to take a proficiency test. Based on the scores obtained, participants whose scores ranged from 35 to 50 were identified as elementary level students and were randomly assigned into three groups. Randomization was done by the use of software "supper cool random number generator". In order to make sure that there was no statistically significant difference among three groups, data were analyzed, which confirmed that there was no significant difference across the four groups.

Following the ethics of research, after the participant recruitment, the researcher informed all the participants orally of the general purpose and procedure of the study of the research. A consent form was filled by the children's parents.

The initial draft of the vocabulary test administered to the pilot group comprised 80 items. Once the group took the test, their exam papers were scored and item statistics were calculated through TAP. The analysis revealed that there were 40 items with IF indexes below 0.50. These items then appeared in the final draft of the test and the children's exam papers were re-scored. The reliability index of the test was then calculated through a Cronbach's Alpha.

Two days before the treatment sessions, the three participating groups took the final draft. Three series of test would be taken from the students. Each test includes 30 multiple choice items test. The data analysis of the scores obtained from the pretest revealed no statistically significant difference among the three groups.

The two experimental groups received vocabulary instruction through showing pictures. The first experiment group called pictorial group (group B) were taught action verbs through only pictures of the 5 intended action verbs, the second experimental group known as picto-textual group (group C) received picture and definition of the action verb together, and the control group (group A) received definitions only.

The whole research project spread out over eight sessions. Two days in a week, and totally four weeks. The classes were met for 30 minutes. The teacher in the experimental group showed the prepared pictures of action verb she was to teach the students. The selected action verbs were 5 in each session. The researcher chose only 5 action verbs to teach in each session because of the children's limited memory capacity. The teacher in pictorial group (B) used story telling besides showing the intended picture used in the story on the video projector in order to teach the students the specific action verbs of each session. The same procedure was taken in the picto-textual group (C) by adding the text containing the intended action verb below the picture. The pictures and the texts were shown to the learners by the use of a video projector.

The instructional syllabus was the same for group B and C. All groups' instructor followed the material provided by the researcher. All recognition tasks were at the level of the learners. The difference between group B and C was only that the teacher in the first group used pictures of the intended five action verbs in each session. But in group C, the teacher represented both picture and the example text within witch the action verb was used. Story telling was used in both groups. All the action verbs extracted from story books.

In order to practice more on the taught action verbs, the teacher used the same action verbs and more examples chosen from online dictionaries of Webster, Oxford, and Longman.

Teacher in each session firstly practice on the verbs which were taught in the last session by showing the picture and asking the learners guess the meaning.

After the treatment has been completed, the researcher administered the post-test which was another recognition test. The learners were asked to choose the best answer among four choices. The number of the items in post-test were 40.

4. Result and discussion:

The normality check of scores is presented in Table 1 All the obtained from sample were put into SPSS. To ensure that the sample participants are equivalent in their previous English language vocabulary proficiency, the researcher applied the pretest before starting the experiment. The results of the participants were recorded and statistically analyzed by using ANOVA test.

According to pre-test which were administered among 3 groups of learners; the mean score for the control group (group A) equaled 13.8, the mean score of the first experimental which received treatment on vocabulary through pictures (group B) equaled 15.5 and the mean score of the second experimental group which received treatment on vocabulary through both pictures and definition equaled 16.7. The mean scores show no significant differences among three groups in pre-test. The number of students in each group was 30 and total number was 90.

Table 1 Scores on pre-test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
A	30	13.8667	9.40188	1.71654	10.3559	17.3774	.00	36.00
B	30	15.5667	9.86000	1.80018	11.8849	19.2485	.00	40.00
C	30	16.7000	9.74556	1.77929	13.0609	20.3391	.00	40.00
Total	90	15.3778	9.63325	1.01543	13.3601	17.3954	.00	40.00

The sig value for the Levene's test exceeded 0.05 α level; the assumption of homogeneity of variances was justified as it is shown in table 2.

Table 2 Leven's test Scores on Pre-test

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.108	2	87	.898

An ANOVA test then was run to measure the three groups' level, between and within groups. Table 3 shows the sig. value for the ANOVA's test that exceeded 0.05 α level; the groups were homogenized at the beginning of the study.

Table 3 ANOVA test for inferential data analysis

Scores on Pre-test

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	122.022	2	61.011	.652	.523
Within Groups	8137.133	87	93.530		
Total	8259.156	89			

Like pre-test, first the mean scores were checked. As in table 4 there was a significant different between group A (control group) with the mean score of 18.2 and two experimental groups' post-test result. According to the results the mean score of picto-textual group with the mean score of 37.0 showed eye-catching difference in compare with the pictorial group with the mean score of 26.7.

Table 4 Descriptive statistics for the post-test

Scores n post-test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
A	30	18.2333	6.87165	1.25459	15.6674	20.7992	7.00	36.00
B	30	26.7000	7.42387	1.35541	23.9279	29.4721	12.00	40.00
C	30	37.0667	3.13966	.57322	35.8943	38.2390	30.00	40.00
Total	90	27.3333	9.82544	1.03569	25.2754	29.3912	7.00	40.00

The sig value for the Levene's test exceeded 0.05 α level; the assumption of homogeneity of variances was justified as in table 5.

Table 5 Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
sopost			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
7.353	2	87	.841

According to table 6 the sig. value for the ANOVA analysis is lower than 0.05 level of significance; the groups belong to different populations.

Table 6 ANOVA result for the post-test					
Scores on post-test					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5338.467	2	2669.233	71.376	.000
Within Groups	3253.533	87	37.397		
Total	8592.000	89			

No confidence interval in table 7 contained zero; moreover, the sig. value for each compare set was beyond 0.05.

Table 7 Multiple Comparisons results						
Dependent Variable: scores on post-test						
Scheffe						
(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
A	B	-8.46667*	1.57896	.000	-12.3991	-4.5343
	C	-18.83333*	1.57896	.000	-22.7657	-14.9009
B	A	8.46667*	1.57896	.000	4.5343	12.3991
	C	-10.36667*	1.57896	.000	-14.2991	-6.4343
C	A	18.83333*	1.57896	.000	14.9009	22.7657
	B	10.36667*	1.57896	.000	6.4343	14.2991
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Table 8 showed that the groups belong to three different populations. Three subset shows that all the three groups are significantly different.

Table 8 Scores on post-test homogeneous subset				
Scheffe[a]				
Groups	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		A	B	C
A	30	18.2333		
B	30		26.7000	
C	30			37.0667
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000
Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.				
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 30.000.				

4.1 Variables:

In this study, action verb pictures were considered the independent variable and vocabulary scores was the dependent variable.

4.2 RESULT

Based on the results the students in Picto-textual group who received both picture and definition interestingly averaged higher scores even in compare with the students in pictorial group. This suggests that the action verb pictures used in pictorial groups and picto-textual group was effective to increase vocabulary knowledge.

The research results also showed that the students learned the vocabulary faster with the use of pictures. Quantitative analyses, more or less skewed toward the positive impacts of integrating action verb pictures in Elementary language classes.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the current study, though not generalizable to all settings of teaching vocabulary in EFL classes, have valuable implications on the role of action verb pictures in improving L2 learners' vocabulary knowledge. The findings of this study have the following pedagogical implications for the teachers, material designers, curriculum developers, and teacher-training bodies.

REFERENCE

Dwyer, F. M. (1972). *A guide for improving visualized instruction*. State College, PA: Learning Services.

Dwyer, F. M. (1978). *Strategies for improving visual learning*. State College, PA: Learning Services.

Dwyer, F. M. (Ed.). (1987). *Enhancing visualized instruction – Recommendations for practitioners*. State College, PA: Learning Services.

Hatch, E., & Brown, C. (1995). *Vocabulary, Semantics, and Language Education*. New York: Cambridge Univercity Press.

Levie, W. H., & Lentz, R. (1982). Effects of text illustrations: A review of research. Educational Communication and Technology Journal, 30(4), 195–232.

Levin, J. R., Anglin, G. J., & Carney, R. N. (1987). On empirically validating functions of pictures in prose. In D. M. Willows & H. A. Houghton (Eds.), *The psychology of illustration* (pp. 51–80). New York: Springer-Verlag.

McCarthy, M. (1990). *Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nation, I. S. P. (1990). *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary.* New York: Newbury House.

Paivio, A. (1971). *Imagery and verbal processes*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Paivio, A. (1986). Mental representations: A dual coding approach. New York: Oxford University Press.

Paivio, A. (1991). Dual coding theory: Retrospect and current status. *Canadian Journal of Psychology, 45,* 255–287.

Rieber, L. P. (1994). Computers, graphics, and learning. Madison, WI: WCB Brown & Benchmark.

Sweller, J. (1988). Cognitive load during problem solving: Effects on learning. *Cognitive Science, 12*, 257–285.

Unnava, H.R., Burnkrant, R.E, (1991). *An imagery-processing view of the role of pictures in print advertisements*. Journal of marketing research, 28, 226-231.

Zarei, G. R., & Khazaie, S. (2011). L2 Vocabulary Learning through multimodal representations. *Procedoa: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 15, 369-375.*

THE EFFECT OF EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION ON THE LEARNERS' EMPLOYMENT OF COMPLEX SENTENCE STRUCTURES IN WRITING

Ramin Rahimy[1]
[1]Department of English, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University,Tonekabon, Iran
rahimy49@yahoo.com

Ramin Asadi Jamnani[2]
[2]Department of English, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran
raminasadi48@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY INVESTIGATED THE EFFECT OF EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION OF COMPLEX SENTENCE STRUCTURES ON THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF THE LEARNERS. . IT HAS TRIED TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE EFFECT OF THE DEGREE OF EXPLICITNESS ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF COMPLEX STRUCTURES IN THE WRITINGS OF LEARNERS. IN OTHER WORDS, IT AIMED TO ANSWER THE QUESTION AS WHETHER EXPLICIT OR IMPLICIT TEACHING OF COMPLEX PATTERNS OF SENTENCES COULD BE LEADING TO A MORE EFFICIENT USE OF THESE PATTERNS IN WRITINGS. TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION, AT FIRST TWO HOMOGENEOUS GROUPS WERE FORMED USING AN INTERMEDIATE NELSON TEST. THEN THE SUBJECTS IN THESE TWO GROUPS FOLLOWED TWO DIFFERENT TREATMENTS. IN ONE GROUP THE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION OF COMPLEX SENTENCE PATTERNS WAS IMPLEMENTED, AND IN THE OTHER ONE THE IMPLICIT FORM OF SUCH INSTRUCTION WAS PURSUED. AFTER THE TREATMENT, THE PARTICIPANTS WERE REQUESTED TO WRITE PASSAGES TO SEE THE EFFECT OF INSTRUCTION ON THEIR EMPLOYMENT OF COMPLEX STRUCTURES. THE DATA OF THIS STUDY WERE ANALYZED USING AN INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T- TEST. THE RESULTS WERE EXPRESSIVE OF EFFECTIVENESS OF EXPLICIT METHOD AT MORE ADVANCED LEVEL WRITING. THE IMPLICATION OF THIS STUDY FOR THETEACHERS CAN BE THAT THE MORE CONSCIOUS ATTENTION OF LEARNERS MUST BE GIVEN ON THESENTENCE STRUCTURES AT MORE ADVANCED LEVELS.

KEY WORDS: COMPLEX SENTENCE, EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION, IMPLICIT INSTRUCTION

1. Introduction
In the remarkable changes in approaches to language teaching that have happened in recent years, the status of grammar instruction is a topic that language teachers still have to solve (Ellis 2002, 2006). Cullen (2012) contrasted two basic positions, and mentioned that one was the opinion that the most influential form of instruction was no overt instruction:learners would acquire the grammar of the language in an implicit way through being exposed to comprehensible input strictly in compliance with their level and involvement in meaning-focusedtasks', and the other,the idea that some sort of concentration on form in the language classroom is necessary both to speed up the process of grammar acquisition and raise final stages of attainment. The practical realities of classroom language teaching; however, usually present teachers few options. They may face frequent problems with grammar in their students' written or spoken English that require some kind of

response, and they may also need to make students ready for tests in which precise use of grammar plays a significant role.

It is asserted that writing is a complicated process both in L1 and L2. It is too difficult to achieve the norms involved in writing. Many teachers of English have noted learning writing skill sounds to be more troublesome than learning any other language skills. A lot of research has been done to understand various factors that influence writing skill and create problems for language learners. Angelova's study (as cited in Congjun, 2005) has shown a range of variables influencing the process and product of language learners' writing as language proficiency, competence in L1 writing, employing cohesive devices, meta-cognitive knowledge about writing task, writing strategies and personal characteristics of writers. We need to pay more close attention to some remarkable features of writing such as organization, fragment, mechanism, and word order in addition to less salient components like spelling, punctuation, vocabulary knowledge and so on.Lotsof factors are contained in this issue, like grammatical inaccuracies taking a toll on the overall quality of students' writing. (Macaro, Masterman, 2006)..

In the same track of argument, some studies indicate that implicit instructions are appropriate for specific complex grammatical rules. In accordance with the aforesaid idea, Rod Ellis (2008) demonstrated that implicit knowledge suited learning particular complicated grammatical points successfully. Furthermore , Ellis (2008) mentioned that learners could get better grades on the tests of explicit knowledge by employing specific grammatical rules. Conversely, he considered a positive role for explicit instruction and proposed that explicit instruction excelled implicit instruction on both simple and complex rules. Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001) apprehended that learners who were involved in communicative, focus on- form activities improved their grammatical accuracy and their employment of new forms. On the acquisition of a certain forms by means of form-focused instruction, Celce- Murcia (2001) mentions that repeated consciousness encountering with a specific form raises the learners'consciousness. This helps the learners to pay attention to the formation of forms and rebuilds learners' hypotheses about forms; and this leads to its acquisition. Focus on form, partially shows the lack of efficiency of the current approaches having communicative orientation in teaching a language. Celce-Murcia (2001) asserted, " Considerable research shows that when students receive only communicative lessons, without instruction on grammar points, their level of accuracy surfers"(p. 268). This, in part, indicates the importance of grammar and the concentration on it. In addition, Larsen- Freeman (cited in Brown, 2001) stressed, "Grammar is one of the dimensions of language that are interrelated. Grammar gives the forms or the structures of language but those forms are literally meaningless without a second dimension of semantics, and a third dimension, pragmatics" (p.362).

Based on our discussion we came to this conclusion that a large number of researchers have expressed that explicit grammatical instruction is better than implicit ones on complex rules(Bowles & Montrule,2008, Ellis, 2008) Hulstijn&Graaff's(1994) debate was that explicit teaching of grammar was more effective on complex rules than simple ones. This paper tried to clarify this concept through investigating the possible effects of using such explicit method on the writing performance of learners at college level.

2. Review of the Literature

We have had a debate on the significance of of explicit grammar teaching in language classrooms whether second or foreign ones since the time language specialists and linguists advocated the principles of naturalistic language learning. Actually this debate has come into vogue since the Direct Method was introduced in the late – nineteen century (Richards and Rogers, 1986) that raised some questions about the real influence of such explicit instruction. In spite of the doubt about its effectiveness, explicit grammar has continued in different forms during the twentieth century despite pedagogies of 1980s and 1990s which continued their conservative views on explicit grammar teaching (Prabhu, 1987; Rivers, 1983; Widdowson, 1978). In 1884, German scholar Franke asked for the concentration on the direct employment of foreign language in language classrooms to describe grammar rules. He believed that it can help learners induce the rules of grammar for themselves. (Franke, 1984, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In spite of the fact that the status of grammar has gained considerable attention in recent years, few studies have attempted to recognize the place of explicit grammar in writing, even with regard to L1 writing. Andrews (2005) mentions that "there is still a dearth of evidence for the effective use of grammar teaching of any kind in the development of writing" (p. 74). Actually when we probe the different research on the role that explicit grammar plays in second language instruction, we realize that the studies examining this link have mainly concentrated on the instruction of grammar regarding error feedback and correction. Few studies have been conducted to show the contribution of explicit grammar in second language teaching and they have mainly been restricted to investigate the learner perception. Zhou (2009) investigated learner perceptions with respect to the significance of progress in grammar and vocabulary in their writing activities. The study indicated that these learners attributed considerable progress in grammar and vocabulary in their writing to a significant personal aim being achieved in language study. Another study probing the learner perceptions was carried out with relation to French as a foreign language. Manley and Calk (1997) argued that the majority of their interactants perceived explicit, grammar teaching to be helpful for the development of their writing skills. Finally, Klapper (1997, 1998) requests more explicit attention to grammar in the teaching and learning of German as a foreign language that is taught in high schools of the United States.

The other sort of studies wanted to investigate the capability of input and interaction to acquire the rule system with no explicit grammar (Krashen, 1985; Long, 1981; 1983; Swain, 1985). Contrary to these research studies, we find evidence that in spite of complete involvement in language, making grammatical errors by learners does not stop (Harley, 1989), Comprehensible input alone cannot be the foundation on which specific grammatical rules can be acquired (White, 1987). There has also been the idea that students gifted at academic level may take advantage of a teaching method where there is an attempt to analyze the second language grammar explicitly (e.g. Cook, 2001). In fact, some authors raise the view that gifted students may possess a certain aptitude for analyzing language.

Scott (1989) conducted a research in which two classes at university level were taught French relative clauses and subjunctive. Explicit and implicit methods were used alternately. Testing these subjects was through gap-filling exercises both in aural and written forms. The post-tests demonstrated that these two classes advanced more when explicit style was used for teaching.

Doughty (1991) studied the connection between rule-oriented instruction and meaning-oriented on and acquiring of English relative clause. She realized that under these instructions, subjects in both groups improved significantly in contrast withthe group that had not been exposed to such rule – oriented instruction. Still, marked relativization instruction showed to generalize to the acquisition of less marked dimensions of the form, indicating somepriority for focus on form.Second language acquisition research has paid attention to the role of consciousness inlanguage learning, and particularly to the role of *noticing* (Schmidt, 1986).Consciousness of characteristics of the input can serve as a trigger to activate the first level in the process of incorporating new linguistic characteristics into one's language competence.The degree to which items are 'noticed' may rely on the frequency of encounter with items, the perceptual significance of items, instructional strategies that can concentrate on thelearner's attention in addition to the type of task the learner is participating in. Norris and Ortega (2000) drew a conclusion, according to their meta-analysis of the relative effectiveness of various instructional methods, that Focus on form and Focus on meaning are both equally impressive and long-lasting. However, they confirmed the restrictions of conclusions founded on a meta-analysis that incorporated extensively different contexts and different consequence measures. They also refered to variations in the way particular instructional approaches were getting operational, the inclination of explicit treatments to incorporate more instructional elements, thereby giving interactants in explicit group more exposure to the target form than the ones in implicit treatment groups, the need for longer post-intervention observation periods to discover remarkable changes that are likely to result from implicit treatments.

Some studies have been conducted in Iran with respect to the instruction of grammar. Parviz and Gorjian (2013) studied the effects of form-focused instruction (FFI) on teaching grammar of English to intermediate level Iranian learners. Form-focused instruction (FFI) developed by R. Ellis (2004) and Spada and Lightbown (2008)   was taught both implicitly and explicitly . Each group included 20

participants. The explicit FFI group werefollowing instructions about the way to use the grammar structures and immediate feedback from the peers and the teachers in the classroom. The analysis of data through Independent Sample *t*-test exhibited that there was an important difference between the two groups. In other words, the explicit FFI group had a better performance than the implicit FFI one. Implications of the study for teachers who practice English grammar could be the use of explicit instruction on forms and then put them into practice contextually.

Rajabi1and Dezhkam2 (2014)investigated the effect of explicit grammar instruction on improving writing accuracy improvement by using four task-focused exercises in order to understand grammatical difficulties of EFL learners. Seventy Participants in this study were majoring in computer science who studied English as a general English syllabus at undergraduate level. To evaluate thestandard of being homogenous, a TOEFL proficiency test was conducted at the outset of the research. A pretest and posttest of grammar included story telling (written, orally), pictorial material, reading aloud free composition, filling blanks were coducted. They had the random selection of two groups as a control and experimental ones. The Experimental group received grammar by means of using four task-focused exercises while control one did not have any such treatment. The results acknowledged that the experimental group excelled the control one, and, in the long run, introduced explicit grammar instruction as a scaffolding instrument that can supply a rich ground for students to improve writing accuracy.

3. Methodology
3. 1. Participants
Participants were drawn from the population of first-year students studying General English at the university. They were sixty students of various majors at science and applied university in Bbol at the age range of 19 to 25. They had the same nationality and cultural background, and were willing to take part in the research. They were given Nelson's proficiency test (Fowler &Coe, 1976) and the ones whose scores were one standard deviation (SD) above or below the mean were chosen as participants of the research. In the following stage, they were divided into two experimental and control groups. The group that followed explicit method of grammar instruction and the group that is taught based on implicit method.

3.2. Instrumentation and Materials
Active Skills for Reading Book. 3 by Neil J. Anderson and Michael, Jr. Anderson (2oo7)was used for this study. The reason for the choice of this book was that it contained the structures at complex level. The structures chosen to be taught based on implicit and explicit instructions mainly focused on subordinate clauses namely adjectiveclauses, noun clauses and adverbial ones. To ensure the homogeneity of the groups, the researchers employed a piloting Nelson's proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976). It comprised 50 multiple-choice items on grammatical structures at the intermediate level. Its reliability index was computed through KR-21 formula as (r=0.923). Having completed the treatment, the teacher assigned the participants in these two experimental groups to write passages to exhibit their application of complex structures. The topic for writing task was of narrative kind since it sounds that learners require less background knowledge and reasoning ability in producing narrative texts.

Narration requires less reasoning ability and the writer have enough knowledge about what s/hewants to write.The topics of this narrative task werenearly the same. The aim of selecting nearly the same topic was to ensure that thekind of thetext and topic will not affect the learners' use of complex sentence structures. The students were requestedto keep the size of theircomposition at around 150 words to eliminate the effect of thesize of text on the number of complex structures.

3.3. Procedure
To have homogeneous groups, Nelson proficiency test was used and the participants who had the scores of one degree around the mean were chosen. The participants received two different types of treatments regarding their grammar. In explicit grammar instruction, the goal was to create a condition in which learners would focus on the structures of complex sentences. In this group the instruction on the use of grammatical structures was offered explicitly by the teacher. Then learners were exposed to lots of examples to practice the rule, while immediate feedback would accompany

this overt presentation of the rules mainly by teachers in the classroom. In the other class, participants studied the grammar points implicitly by focusing on the use of structures in the context and the discussions on reading passages. As far as possible, direct explanations of the rules would be avoided. At the end of the course, after passing the treatment, both experimental and control groups were asked to write a narrative text. The testing session was monitored by the instructor and they were not let to use a dictionary.

3.4. Design

This study was to investigate whether implicit or explicit instruction of complex sentence structures would yield more complex structures in students' writings. To do this study, a comparison group design which is a typical sort of experimental study was adopted. Here, implicit and explicit instructions of complex sentence structures were used as independent variables (treatments) to differ between these two groups. To measure the effect of treatment a pretest/ posttest design was used. To ascertain the participants' homogeneity prior to their treatment, Nelson's proficiency test was given to them. To measure the effect of treatment, writing passages was used as posttest. The number of complex structures (adverb, adjective, and noun clauses) in their writings would be indicative of the effect of instruction on the participants.

3.5. Data Analysis

To have the comparability of two groups, Nelson proficiency test was used. The findings were used to place learners in two homogeneous groups. Following the treatment, students were assigned to write narrative writings. The aim was to evaluate the effectiveness of complex sentence structures on the learners**.**

4. Results

Since this study sought the complex sentence structures in the writings of the participants, the frequencies of the given structures in narrative passages were counted carefully. The obtained scores from students' writing task were compared using Independent Samples *t*-test in order to check whether the instruction could improve the learners' writing score with regard to the use of complex structures.

Table one: Group statistics

Group Statistics

	instruction	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
writing	explicit	30	2.6667	1.24106	.22659
	2	30	1.3000	1.08755	.19856

Table one shows that the mean of these two groups are different.To find out the significance of this difference, Independent Samples *t*-test was run. The findings are shown in the following table. Based on the findings in table 2 we see that the observed (ot=4.536) is greater than the critical t (0.679), so there is a significant difference between these two groups.

Table two. Independent Samples *t*-test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
writing	Equal variances assumed	.481	.491	4.536	58	.000	1.36667	.30127	.76360	1.96973
	Equal variances not assumed			4.536	57.017	.000	1.36667	.30127	.76338	1.96995

5. Discussion

Focusing on complex sentence structures, this study wanted to examine the effectiveness of explicit and implicit instruction on the Iranian college learners' use of complex structures and the extent to which the course can improve the learners' employment of these structures in their writing tasks.

Although both groups were taught using the same materials and time limit, the results showed the better performance of the learners who had received explicit instruction on complex structures at sentential level.

The research question dealt with in this study was whether teaching complex sentence structures explicitly or implicitly could have a better effect on learners' writing performance. The findings demonstrated an increase in students' performance in writing complex forms due to the effect of explicit instruction of complex structures. This suggests that EFL learners who possess more conscious knowledge of various grammar patterns through explicit methods may be more prepared to comprehend more complicated structures. The outcome of this investigtion advocates Frantzen's (1995) investigation about the improvement of explicit instruction of grammatical knowledge and accuracy and fluency of writing through the employment of explicit grammar. The conclusion that may be drawn from the above statistical analysis is that the participants who were taught the techniques of grammar explicitly generally tended to score higher in the writing proficiency.

6. Conclusion

There have been some debates as whether conscious, central attention is essential for acquiring language. The degree of attention given on the form determines two basic approaches.Each approach has its own influence in making language acquisition easier.

The two approaches are implicit concentration on form and explicit teaching. Implicit focus on form wants to attract the attention of the subjects and to stay away from meta linguistic discussion, to always reduce any interruption to the communication of meaning to the smallest possible level.(Doughty & Williams, 1998). Explicit teaching wants to direct the attention of the learner and to employ pedagogical grammar in respect (Doughty &Williams, 1998). In other words, implicit concentrationon form is to offer learners' unconscious attention to form and explicit teaching is to concentrate learners'conscious attention to form.

The present study has two contributions. Firstly, it has demonstrated that teaching grammar in a conscious way with a focus on complex structures can be advantageous, at least, at advanced levels where the explicit knowledge of structures sounds necessary for using those patterns in writing. In this approach, we can have transparent guidance and pattern practice of structures in a context which is made clear and modified by the teacher. Secondly, it offers more insights into the grammatical patterns and associated exercises that are to be embedded in textbooks where the role of eliciting

conscious attention of learners on the forms must be taken into account. Thus the EFL learners consciously learn sentence structures and then employ them in a real context created mainlyby the teacher.Itseems in EFL contexts like Iran , where language exposure outside the classroom is rare, learners have to learn formal structures in the classroom . The structures at elementary stages are not so problematic, but when we come to upper stages of language learning, the conscious and explicit knowledge of more complex sentence patterns gets more urgent. The conscious knowledge of these patterns both in the form of teachers' instruction and their presentations in textbooks must be taken into account.

REFERENCES

Andrews,R. (2005).Knowledge about the teaching of [sentence] grammar: The state of play. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, *4, 3, 69–76.*

Bowles, M., &Montrul, S**.** (2008). The Role of Explicit Instruction in the L2 Acquisition of the a-personal. Joyce Bruhn de Garavito and Elena Valenzuela, 25-35.*Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.*

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Form focused instruction: Teaching by principles.* New York: Pearson Education.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001).*Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Thomson Learning Inc.

Congjun, Mu. (2005). A Taxonomy of ESL Writing Strategies.*Proceedings redesigning pedagogy: research, policy, practice*, 1-10.

Cook, V.2001: *Second language learning and language teaching*, thirdedition. Arnold.

Cullen, R. (2012).Grammar instruction. In: Burns A, Richards JC (eds) *The Cambridge Guide to Pedagogy and Practice in Second Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 258–66.

Doughty, C. (1991).Second language instruction does make a difference.*Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 13*(4), 431–69.

Doughty, C. and Williams, J., editors, (1998): *Focus on form in classroomsecond language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2002). The place of grammar instruction in the second/foreign language curriculum. In S. FotosE. Hinkel (Eds.), *New perspectives on grammar teaching in second language classrooms* (pp. 17-34)&. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Ellis, R. (2004). The definition and measurement of L2 explicit knowledge.*Language Learning,* 54(2), 227–75.

Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*, 83-107.

Ellis, N. (2008). Implicit and explicit knowledge about language. In J. Cenoz& N. H. Hornberger (eds), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education, 2nd Edition*.

Ellis, R., Basturkmen, H., &Loewen, S. (2001). Learner uptake in communicativeESL lessons.*Language Learning, 51,* 281–318.

Franke, F.(1884). *Die PraktischeSpracherlernung auf Grund der Psychologicundder Physiologic der SpracheDargestellt [Practical Language Learning, described on the Basis of the Psychology and Physiology of Language]*,O. R. Reisland, Leipzig,

Fowler, W.S. & Coe, N. (1976).*Nelson proficiency tests*. London: Butler & Tanner Ltd.

Frantzen, D. (1995). The effect of grammar supplementation on written accuracy in an intermediate Spanish content course.*Modern language journal*.329-55.

Harley, B**. (**1989) Functional grammar in French immersion: a classroomexperiment. *Applied Linguistics ,*10, 331–59.

Harley, B. (1998). The role of focus-on-form tasks in promoting child L2 acquisition.In C. Doughty & J. Williams, (eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition. (*pp. 156–174). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hulstijn, J. & de Graaff, R.(1994). Under what conditions does explicit Knowledge of a second language facilitate the acquisition of implicit Knowledge? *AILA Review, 11, 97–112.*

Klapper, j.(1997). Language learning at school and university: The great grammar debate continues (I*). Language Learning Journal*, 16, 1, 22–27

Klapper,J. (1998). Language learning at school and university: The great grammar debate continues (I). *Language Learning Journal*, 18, 1, 22–28

Krashen, S. D. (1985) _.*The input hypothesis: issues and implications*.Longman.

Loewen, S. (2005).Incidental focus on form and second language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27(3), 361-386.

Long, M. (1981).Input, interaction and second language acquisition.InWinitz, H., editor, *Native language and foreign language acquisition.Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences,* Vol. 379. New York. Academy of Sciences, 259–78.

Long, M.(1983).Native speaker/non-native speaker conversation and thenegotiation of comprehensible input. *Applied Linguistics,* 4,126–41.

Macaro, E. &Masterman , L. (2006). Does intensive explicit grammar instruction make all difference? *Language Teaching Research*, 297-327.

Manley, J. H. &Calk, L.(2006) Grammar instruction for writing skills: Do students perceive grammar as useful? *Foreign Language Annals*, 30, 1, 73–83 .

Norris, J.M.& Ortega, L. (2000).Effectiveness of L2 instruction: a research synthesis and qualitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning,* 50, 417–528.

Parviz, M. &Gorjian, B. (2013).The Effect of Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) on Teaching English Grammar to Iranian Learners at the Intermediate Level.*International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW),*4, (4), 450---462

Prabhu, N.S.(1987). *Second language pedagogy*.Oxford University Press.

Rajabi1, P. &Dezhkam, E. (2014).The Effect of Explicit Grammar Instruction on Improving Writing Accuracy of Iranian EFL Learners. *Journal of ELT and Applied Linguistics (JELTAL)* . 2, 1, 61-76.

Richards, J.C. &Rogers, T.S. (eds.). (1986). *Approaches and methods inlanguage teaching*.Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. and Rodgers, T. S. (2001*).Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.Cambridge University* Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Rivers, W.M. (1983). *Communicating naturally in a second language: theoryand practice in language teaching*.Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning.*Applied Linguistics,* 11, 129–58.

Scott, V. (1989).An empirical study of explicit and implicit teaching strategiesin French.*Modern Language Journal, 72*, 14–22.

Spada, N., &Lightbown, P. M. (2008). Form-focused instruction: Isolated or integrated? *TESOLQuarterly*, *42*(2), 181- 207.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In Gass, S.&Madden, C.,(eds.), *Input and second language acquisition*. Random House, 235–53.

White, L. (1987).Against comprehensible input: the input hypothesis and the development of second language competence. *Applied Linguistics, 8*, 95–110.

Widdowson, H.G. (1978).*Teaching language as communication*. OxfordUniversity Press

Zhou, A.A. (2009). What adult ESL learners say about improving grammar and vocabulary in their writing for academic purposes?*Language Awareness*, 18, 1, 31–46.

FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN CHILDREN WITH DOWN SYNDROME

Akram Kazemi (Corresponding Author)
Ph.D. Student
Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
aky.kazemi@gmail.com

Rezvan Shojaei
Ph.D. Student
Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
r_shojaei80@yahoo.com

Firooz Sadighi
Ph.D. Professor
Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
firoozsadighi@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
ON AVERAGE, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DOWN SYNDROME (THE MOST USUAL GENETIC CAUSE OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY) FOLLOW A CONSISTENT PROFILE. DESPITE CONSIDERABLE INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES, RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE IS NORMALLY STRONGER THAN EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE, WITH SPECIAL CHALLENGES IN PHONOLOGY AND SYNTAX. THIS ARTICLE REVIEWS THE LITERATURE ON DOWN SYNDROME, WITH EMPHASIS ON THE AREAS OF PHONOLOGY, VOCABULARY, SYNTAX, AND PRAGMATICS.

KEY WORD: DOWN SYNDROME

1. Introduction

Descriptive accounts of the development of children with Down's syndrome (DS) usually draw attention to their speech and language development with delay. Despite a wide range of individual differences, most children are late in saying their first words, their vocabulary grows more slowly than in normal children and although they use the same range of two-word phrases as all children, they have difficulty in mastering the many rules for talking in grammatically correct sentences (Rondal 1988, Miller 1988). This leads to the speech of many teenagers and adults with DS being limited to short telegraphic utterances (keywords without the function words, for example "went shopping Dad" rather than "I went shopping last night with my Dad"). They also tend to have difficulty in pronouncing words clearly (Bray & Woolnough 1988). The combined effect of talking in telegraphic utterances and poor pronunciations often makes young people with DS difficult to be understood, especially if they are trying to talk to strangers out in the community rather than to those familiar with them at home or in school (Buckley & Sacks 1987). There is a specific pattern of cognitive and behavioral features that are observed among children with DS that differs from that

seen in normally developing children and children with other causes of intellectual disability. Children with DS are usually good communicators, meaning that they can get their message across and interact well with other people. However, clear speech is more difficult and therefore, speech can be a challenge. We can talk to the child about everything we do; we can talk about what we are going to do and what we did yesterday or last week. We can talk about many things that are outside the child's range of actual experience, such as what the postman does at the sorting office or the doctor at the hospital, what astronauts do or why the wind blows. Many psychologists have emphasized the importance of language for teaching concepts and ideas, the tools for thinking, to children (Vygotsky 1986, Bruner 1983). Any child with a delay in learning to communicate in a language is going to be seriously disadvantaged in being able to gain knowledge about the world. Children with Down's syndrome are expected to show cognitive delay, to be slower in developing their awareness and understanding of the world and to think reason and remember. This cognitive delay may be in part the consequence of the language learning difficulties. Any serious language delay will inevitably result in increasing cognitive delay, as language is such a powerful tool for gaining knowledge and for understanding, thinking, reasoning and remembering. Conversely the more we can do to overcome the children's language learning and speech difficulties then the better equipped they will be to learn and improve their cognitive abilities

2. Backgrounds of Down Syndrome

In 1866 British physician, John Langdon Down, for whom the syndrome is now named, first described DS, as "Mongolism." The term DS did not become the accepted term until the early 1970s. More was learned about the condition in 1959 when French Pediatrician/Geneticist Professor Jerome Jejune discovered that individuals with DS have an extra chromosome—just one year before NADS (National Association for Down Syndrome) was founded. Shortly thereafter, chromosome studies were developed to confirm the diagnosis of DS. The National Association for Down syndrome (NADS) is the oldest organization in the United States serving children and adults with DS and their families. It was first started in Chicago in 1960 by Kay McGee shortly after her daughter Tricia was born with DS. In those days, the standard operating procedure in hospitals was for doctors to advise parents to institutionalize their newborn infants with DS. Parents who did not go after this advice took their babies home without help or services. Kay and Marty McGee chose to neglect the advice of their pediatrician and they took Tricia home. After the initial shock of learning that their baby had DS, Kay, with the support of Marty, began to reach out to professionals and other parents of children with DS, and it was the beginning of an organization that would always recognize the great value of people with DS and of parents helping parents. In the sixties and early seventies, the condition was not known as DS but "Mongolism," and the first name of the institute was Mongoloid Development Council (MDC). With the help of a few other parents, Kay formed an informal board, and for many years their meetings were held in the home of Kay and Marty McGee. Kay finally became the Executive Secretary, and she was the driving force behind the organization from 1960 to 1975.

In addition to the day-to-day running of the organization—managing all phone calls in her home, doing the clerical work and information flyers (keep in mind that NADS didn't begin using computers until 1989)—Kay arranged regular meetings for parents in downtown Chicago, bringing in speakers from Germany. All the DS conferences in the 1960's and early 1970's were held in the Chicago area. Kay and the other parent founders of NADS were truly pioneers as they developed support systems for each other and especially for new parents. In the 1960's there were no mandated programs or services for children with special needs, so many parents started programs in church basements and in other community buildings. Many of the private agencies that currently serve adults with developmental disabilities throughout the Chicago area were started in this way. They not only built a strong foundation for this organization, but they also fought vigorously for early intervention and education services locally and nationally. We will be forever indebted to those courageous parents.

3. Language Development

Expressive language skills present special challenges and are generally more impaired than receptive skills in young people with DS (Caselli et al., 1998; Chapman, Hesketh, & Kistler, 2002; Laws &

Bishop, 2003). In this section, the receptive and expressive language of children, adolescents, and young adults with DS (DS) in the areas of phonology, vocabulary, syntax, and pragmatics is described.

3.1. Phonology

Before school and during school-age years, children with DS show phonological errors as a usual feature. Although errors resemble those made by younger typically developing children (Dodd, 1976; Rosin et al., 1988), inconsistency of errors may be especially characteristic of the phonological disorder in DS (Dodd & Thompson, 2001). Furthermore, children with DS keep on using phonological processes (systematic sound error and simplification patterns) for longer periods than typically developing children would do (Bleile & Schwartz, 1984; Dodd, 1976; Roberts et al., 2005; Smith & Stoel-Gammon, 1983; Stoel-Gammon, 1980). Based on a standardized test of single word articulation, Roberts and colleagues (2005) found that boys with DS produced fewer consonants correctly and more syllable structure phonological processes (e.g., cluster reduction, final consonant deletion) than younger typically developing boys of similar nonverbal mental age. Barnes et al. (in press) reported similar findings for connected speech samples. A consistent finding is that children with DS have weaker speech intelligibility than younger normally developing children of similar nonverbal mental age (Chapman, Seung, Schwartz, & Kay-Raining Bird, 1998; Barnes et al., in press). In fact, nearly all individuals with DS may be difficult to understand at least some of the times (Kumin, 1994). The phonological factors described above, in addition to factors such as apraxia of speech, dysarthria, and voice quality, may impact speech intelligibility. It is also possible that poor speech intelligibility influence productive language performance (Bray & Woolnough, 1988; Miller & Leddy, 1998), which could help explain the discrepancy between expressive and receptive language levels seen in individuals with DS. For example, Bray and Woolnough (1988) reported that intelligibility decreased with increasing syntactic complexity for 11 children with DS. Perhaps using a simpler sentence structure and communicating mainly via key words is a more successful strategy for children with DS, making syntactic simplification an adaptive process. Price and Kent (2008) offer more details about speech intelligibility in individuals with DS.

3.2. Vocabulary

Children with DS usually experience considerable delay and difficulties when learning to talk, though they typically understand much more than they can express. Different findings have been reported related to the receptive vocabulary skills of people with DS. Several studies using standardized assessments show that children and adolescents with DS understand spoken words at levels similar to mental age-matched normally developing children (Chapman et al., 1991; Miller, 1995; Laws & Bishop, 2003). In one study, vocabulary comprehension exceeded nonverbal cognitive ability for adolescents and young adults with DS (Glenn & Cunningham, 2005). However, in several other studies, children with DS scored lower than younger nonverbal mental age-matched typically developing children on standardized measures of receptive vocabulary (Caselli, Monaco, Trasciani, & Vicari, 2008; Hick, Botting, & Conti-Ramsden, 2005; Price, Roberts, Vandergrift, & Martin, 2007; Roberts, Price et al., 2007). The acquisition of first words is delayed in children with DS, and subsequent growth in early expressive vocabulary is slow compared with expectations for normally developing children (Berglund, Eriksson, & Johansson, 2001; Caselli et al., 1998; Mervis & Robinson, 2000). For example, only 12% of one year-old Swedish children with DS included in a large-scale survey study produced at least one word (Berglund et al., 2001). The prognosis for spoken language acquisition is good, however. Ninety percent of 3 year-olds and 94% of 5 year-olds produced one or more words (with 73% of five year-olds having 50 or more words). Although there are similarities with vocabulary growth in typically developing children, lexical development in children with DS appears to lag behind their cognitive development.

3.3. Syntax

Syntax is the combination of words into phrases and sentences. It includes word inflections (''s'' in ''cars' 'to mark plurality), parts of speech (e.g., noun, adjective, verb), word order, and sentence constituents (e.g., noun phrase, verb phrase). Compared with vocabulary, syntax is a particular weakness for individuals with DS. Children with DS are generally delayed in transitioning from 1- to 2-word speech (Iverson et al., 2003). After production of multiword speech has begun, children and

adolescents with DS produce shorter utterances, as measured by mean length of utterance (MLU), than younger typically developing nonverbal mental age matches (Miller, 1988; Rosin et al., 1988; Chapman et al.1998) and mental age matches with mental retardation of unknown etiology (Rosin et al., 1988). Although individuals with DS acquire grammatical morphemes in the same order as typically developing children (Berglund et al., 2001), they have difficulty with grammatical morpheme production when compared with TD children matched for MLU. This difficulty includes the use of grammatical function words (such as copula and auxiliary be, articles, and prepositions) and tense and non-tense bound morphemes (such as past tense -ed and third person singular -s) (Chapman et al., 1998; Eadie et al., 2002). Children with DS also produce fewer grammatical verbs (auxiliary and copula do, be, and have) and lexical verbs (main verbs that do not include do, be, or have) per utterance than do MLU-matched controls (Hesketh and Chapman, 1998). Despite these morphosyntactic weaknesses, adolescents do not reach a ''syntactic ceiling'' or stop growing in their syntax (Fowler, 1990; Fowler et al., 1994) but continue to advance in utterance length and syntax complexity through at least 20 years of age (Chapman et al., 2002; Thordardottir et al., 2002). Interestingly, syntax appears to be affected by sampling context, in that adolescents with DS demonstrate more advanced syntax skills in narratives than in conversation (Chapman et al., 1998).

Eadie and colleagues (2002) reported that children with DS scored lower than normally developing children on tense (past tense –*ed*, third person singular –*s*, and modals) and non-tense (articles, present progressive -*ing*) morphemes. Importantly, unlike syntax comprehension, MLU and syntax complexity may not plateau for people with DS, but may continue to grow into late adolescence and young adulthood, making expressive syntax a fertile area for intervention (Chapman et al., 2002; Thordardottir, Chapman, & Wagner, 2002).

3.4. Pragmatics

Pragmatics refers to the use of language in social contexts for the purpose of communication. It includes the reason that someone talks (e.g., to request an object, to protest something), as well as the ability to take a turn in a conversation, to initiate or maintain a conversational topic, to modify speech for different listeners and situations such as to revise communication when clarification is requested, and to narrate events. In contrast to speech, vocabulary, and syntax skills, the pragmatic skills of children with DS appear to be a relative strength, although the findings in all areas of pragmatics are not consistent.

Adolescents with DS may be less likely than typically developing children of the same mental age to signal non-comprehension of another's message. Abbeduto et al. (2008) found that adolescents with DS signaled non-comprehension less often than typically developing children matched on nonverbal mental age during a task that required participants to request clarification or additional information. Another study showed that adolescents and young adults with DS expressed messages that were less clear when describing novel shapes during a non-face-to-face task than mental age-matched typically developing children (Abbeduto et al., 2006). However, responding to requests for clarification may be an area of strength. In an early study of four children with DS, Coggins and Stoel-Gammon (1982) found that all four responded to all clarification requests in order to repair communication breakdowns. Tannock (1988) also reported that 11 preschool-aged children with DS did not differ in the number of exchanges during mother–child interactions in which they stayed on topic when compared to children matched on mental age and communication level, yet the children with DS were less likely to introduce new topics. Beeghly et al. (1990) found that 17 boys and 11 girls with DS used fewer requests but did not differ in topic maintenance or in their use of answers, comments, and protests when compared to developmental age matched children. The children with DS, however, stayed on topic for more turns and responded more appropriately to adults than a group of language matched control children.

In narrative skills, adolescents with DS demonstrate relative strengths when visual supports are available. When telling stories with visual support (from either a wordless picture book or a wordless film), adolescents with DS narrated more story elements than did controls matched on syntax comprehension or syntax production (Boudreau and Chapman, 2000; Miles and Chapman, 2002), and they narrated the same number of story elements, but used fewer cohesive devices, than did typically

developing children matched on nonverbal cognitive level (Boudreau and Chapman, 2000). However, when stories were presented auditorily with no visual support, adolescents with DS recalled less information than did mental age matches (Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2004).

In summary, young individuals with DS, display a complex profile of strengths and weaknesses in pragmatic aspects of language. Challenges may include initiation and elaboration of topics, initiation of communicative repairs, and some linguistic aspects of narratives. Strengths tend to include use of a variety of communicative functions, ability to stay on topic, responses to requests for clarification, and storytelling with sufficient content when visual supports are used.

4. Intervention

There are considerable individual differences in the skill levels of individuals with DS. Each individual's profile of strengths and weaknesses will determine the specific strategies that should be assessed and targeted in intervention. Language intervention for individuals with DS should aim to improve functioning in communication, academic, social, and vocational areas (Asha, 2005). Prioritization of intervention targets should take into consideration family priorities, severity of the deficit, and importance for functionality in academic and social contexts (Crais, 1996; Dodge, 2004; McCauley & Fey, 2006; Paul, 2007). Knowledge of the cognitive-behavioral phenotype of DS, such as the neurocognitive profile and developmental trajectory, may also guide intervention practices (Fidler, 2005). For example, intervention strategies that capitalize on strengths in visual memory, such as the use of visually-oriented pictures and storybooks, may enhance learning in individuals with DS (Chapman, 2003; Hick et al., 2005; Roberts, Chapman, Martin, & Moskowitz, 2008).

Regardless of the particular intervention used, generalization of targeted skills is better to be considered from the beginning of any treatment program. Generalization is enhanced by providing different opportunities to practice targeted skills in various natural settings, such as the home, classroom, and community, and with a variety of communication partners, such as family members, teachers, and peers. Thus, collaboration among educators, speech-language pathologists, and families will be the most important ones for treatment success.

5. Conclusion

In spite of considerable individual differences, the language and communication characteristics of individuals with DS follow a common profile. Receptive language is typically stronger than expressive language, and vocabulary is stronger than syntax. Strong evidence suggests that phonology, expressive vocabulary, receptive and expressive syntax, and some pragmatic aspects of language are impaired beyond expectations for nonverbal cognitive level. Specifically, syllable structure phonological processes, such as cluster reduction and final consonant deletion, appear to be common in children with DS. Children and adolescents with DS produce shorter and less complex utterances than would be expected based on nonverbal mental age, although advances in syntax complexity may continue into late adolescence and young adulthood. They also may have difficulty initiating and elaborating on conversational topics, and initiating repairs of communicative breakdowns.

These areas of impairment exist together with areas of relative strength, such as the ability to stay on conversational topic, content-related narrative skills, and the ability to respond to requests for clarification in order to repair communicative breakdowns. This pattern of relative strengths and weaknesses remains apparent in adulthood. Later on, dementia in older adults with DS may compromise different aspects of language and communication. In fact, individuals with DS have relatively strong whole-word recognition skills (yet impaired phonological awareness skills). Intervention that is appropriate to each individual's profile and reflects family priorities should begin early and continue throughout adolescence and adulthood.

REFERENCES

Abbeduto, L., Hesketh, L.J. (1997) Pragmatic development in individuals with mental retardation: Learning to use language in social interactions. *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews, 3*, 323–333.

Abbeduto, L., Murphy M.M, Cawthon, S.W, Richmond, E.K, Weissman, M.D, & Karadottir, S. (2003). Receptive language skills of adolescents and young adults with Down or fragile X syndrome. *American Journal on Mental Retardation, 108*, 149–160.

Abbeduto, L., Murphy, M.M., Kover, S.T., Karadottir, S., Amman, A., & Bruno, L. (2008). Signaling non-comprehension of language: A comparison of fragile X syndrome and DS. *American Journal on Mental Retardation, 113*, 214–230.

Abbeduto, L., Murphy, M.M., Richmond, E., Amman, A., Beth, P., &Weissman, M.D. (2006). Collaboration in referential communication: Comparison of youth with Down syndrome or fragile X syndrome. *American Journal on Mental Retardation, 111*, 170–183.

Beeghly, M., Weiss-Perry, B., & Cicchetti, D. (1990). Beyond sensorimotor functioning: Early communicative and play development of children with DS. In: Cicchetti, D., Beeghly, M. *Children with Down syndrom: A developmental perspective* (pp. 329-368). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Berglund, E., Eriksson, M., & Johansson, I. (2001). Parental reports of spoken language skills in children with Down syndrome. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, *44*, 179–191.

Bleile, K., & Schwartz, I. (1984). Three perspectives on the speech of children with Down syndrome. *Journal of Communication Disorders, 17*, 87–94.

Boudreau, D., & Chapman, R. (2000). The relationship between event representation and linguistic skill in narratives of children and adolescents with Down syndrome. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 43*, 1146–1159.

Bray, M., & Woolnough, L. (1988). The language skills of children with Down's syndrome aged 12 to 16 years. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy, 4*, 311-324.

Bruner, J. (1983). *Child's Talk: Learning to use language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Buckley, S. & Sacks, B. (1987). *The Adolescent with Down's syndrome: Life for the teenager and for the family.* Port-smouth UK: Portsmouth Polytechnic.

Caselli, M., Vicari, S., Longobardi, E., Lami, L., Pizzoli, C., & Stella, G. (1998). Gestures and words in early development of children with Down syndrome. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 41*, 1125–1135.

Caselli, M.C., Monaco, L., Trasciani, M., & Vicari, S. (2008). Language in Italian children with Down syndrome and with specific language impairment. *Neuropsychology, 22*, 27–35.

Chapman, R.S., Hesketh, L.J., & Kistler, D.J. (2002). Predicting longitudinal change in language production and comprehension in individuals with Down syndrome: Hierarchical linear modeling. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 45*, 902–915.

Chapman, R.S., Schwartz, S.E., & Kay-Raining Bird, E. (1991). Language skills of children and adolescents with Down syndrome: I. Comprehension. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, *34*, 1106–1120.

Chapman, R.S., Seung, H.K., Schwartz, S.E., Kay-Raining Bird, E. (1998). Language skills of children and adolescents with Down syndrome: II Production deficits. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 41*, 861–873.

Chapman, R.S. (2003). Language and communication in individuals with Down syndrome. In: Glidden, L., & Abbeduto, L., (PP. 1-35). *Language and communication in mental retardation*. Vol. 27. San Diego: Academic Press.

Coggins, T.E., & Stoel-Gammon, C. (1982). Clarification strategies used by four Down syndrome children for maintaining normal conversational interaction. *Educ Train Ment Retard, 17*, 65–67.

Crais, E.R. (1996). Applying family-centered principles to child assessment. In: McWilliam, P.J., Winton, P., & Crais, E.R. *Practical strategies for family-centered early intervention*, (69-96). San Diego, CA: Singular.

Dodd, B., Thompson, L. (2001). Speech disorder in children with Down's syndrome. *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities Research, 45*(4), 308–316.

Dodd, B. (1976). A comparison of the phonological systems of mental age matched, normal, severely subnormal and Down's syndrome children. *British Journal of Disorders of Communication, 11*, 27–42.

Dodge, E.P. (2004). Communication skills: The foundation for meaningful group intervention in school-based programs. *Topics in Language Disorders, 24* (2), 141–150.

Fidler, D.L. (2005). The emerging Down syndrome behavioral phenotype in early childhood: Implications for practice. *Infants and Young Children, 18*, 83–103.

Glenn, S., & Cunningham, C. (2005). Performance of young people with Down syndrome on the Leiter-R and British Picture Vocabulary Scales. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 9*, 239–244.

Hesketh, L.J., & Chapman, R.S. (1998). Verb use by individuals with Down syndrome. *Am JMent Retard, 103*,288–304.

Hick, R.F., Botting, N., & Conti-Ramsden, G. (2005). Short-term memory and vocabulary development in children with DS and children with specific language impairment. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology. 47,* 532–538.

Kay-Raining Bird, E., & Chapman, R.S. (2004). Fast mapping of words and story recall by individuals with Down syndrome. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research. 47*(6), 1286–1300.

Kumin, L. (1994). Intelligibility of speech in children with Down syndrome in natural settings: parents' perspective. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 78*, 307–313.

Laws, G., & Bishop, D.V.M. (2003). A comparison of language abilities in adolescents with Down syndrome and children with specific language impairment. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 46,* 1324–1339.

McCauley, R.J., & Fey, M.E. (2006). *Treatment of language disorders in children*. Baltimore: Brooks.

Paul, R. (2007). *Language disorders from infancy through adolescence: Assessment and intervention*. Philadelphia: Elsevier.

Mervis, C., & Robinson, B. (2000). Expressive vocabulary ability of toddlers with Williams syndrome or Down syndrome: *A comparison. Developmental Neuropsychology, 17*, 111–126.

Miller, J.F., Leddy, M. (1998). DS: The impact of speech production on language development. In: Paul R., *Exploring the Speech-Language Connection*, (163-177). Baltimore: Brookes

Miller, J.F. (1995). Individual differences in vocabulary acquisition in children with Down syndrome. In: Epstein, C., Hassold, T., Lott, I., Nadel, L., & Patterson, D. *Etiology and pathogenesis of DS: Proceedings of the international Down syndrome research conference*, (pp. 93- 103). New York: Wiley-Liss.

Price, J.R., Kent, R.D. (2008). Increasing speech intelligibility in DS and fragile X syndrome. In: Roberts, J.E., Chapman, R.S., & Warren, S., *Speech and language development and intervention in Down syndrome and fragile X syndrome*, (pp. 219- 232). Baltimore: Brookes.

Price, J.R., Roberts, J.E., Vandergrift, N., & Martin, G. (2007). Language comprehension in boys with fragile X syndrome and boys with DS. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 51*, 318–326.

Roberts, J.E., Chapman, R.S., Martin, G.E., & Moskowitz, L. (2008). Language of preschool and school-age children with Down syndrome and fragile X syndrome. In: Roberts, J.E., Chapman, R.S., & Warren, S.F. *Speech and language development and intervention in Down syndrome and fragile X syndrome*, (pp. 77- 115). Baltimore: Brookes.

Roberts, J.E., Long, S. H., Malkin, C., Barnes, E., Skinner, & M., Hennon, E.A. (2005). A comparison of phonological skills of boys with fragile X syndrome and Down syndrome. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research. 48*, 980–995.

Roberts, J.E., Price, J.R., Barnes, E.F., Nelson, L., Burchinal, M., & Hennon, E. (2007). Receptive vocabulary, expressive vocabulary, and speech production of boys with fragile X syndrome and Down syndrome. *American Journal on Mental Retardation, 112*, 177–193.

Rosin, M., Swift, E., Bless, D., &Vetter, D. (1988). Communication profiles in adolescents with Down syndrome. *Journal of Childhood Communication Disorders, 12*, 49–64

Smith, B.L., Stoel-Gammon, C. (1983). A longitudinal study of the development of stop consonant production in normal and Down's syndrome children. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders, 48*,114–118.

Stoel-Gammon, C. (1980). Phonological analysis of four Down's syndrome children. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 1*, 31–48

Tannock, R. (1988). Mothers' directiveness in their interactions with their children with and without Down syndrome. *Am J Ment Retard, 93*,154–165.

Thordardottir, E.T., Chapman, R.S., & Wagner, L. (2002). Complex sentence production by adolescents with Ddown syndrome. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 23*, 163–183.

Vygotsky,L.(1986). *Thought and Language* (new ed.). Harvard: Harvard University Press.

THE EFFECT OF EFL LEARNERS SELF-EFFICACY AND TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES ON THEIR ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT

Elham Khakpoor Nur Mohammadi
(MA student, Department of English, Khorasan e Razavi Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Neyshabur , Iran)
Khakpoor @ hotmail, com

Seyed Mohammad Reza Amirian*
(Assistant Professor of TEFL, Hakim Sabzevari University)
Smr. amirian@gmail.com.

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY INVESTIGATED THE EFFECT OF SELF-EFFICACY AND TEST-TAKING STRATEGY OF EFL LEARNERS ON THEIR ENGLISH TEST ACHIEVEMENT. FURTHERMORE, THE STUDY EXAMINED WHETHER SELF-EFFICACY IS A BETTER PREDICTOR OF EFL LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT OR TEST-TAKING STRATEGY. PARTICIPANTS OF THIS STUDY WERE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS STUDYING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN WHICH HALF OF THEM WERE MALES AND HALF OF THEM WERE FEMALES. FOR THE AIM OF THIS STUDY ALL PARTICIPANTS COMPLETED TWO QUESTIONNAIRES: A SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE AND A TEST-TAKING STRATEGY QUESTIONNAIRE. THE ACHIEVEMENT OF LEARNERS WAS INVESTIGATED THROUGH THEIR PERFORMANCE ON FINAL EXAM. THE FINDINGS REVEALED THAT THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF- EFFICACY AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT. THERE WAS ALSO A SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEST-TAKING STRATEGY AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT. SO THE LEARNERS WHO HAVE THE HIGH LEVEL OF SELF-EFFICACY AND EMPLOY MORE TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES OUTPERFORM OTHER LEARNERS. MOREOVER, IT APPEARS THAT SELF-EFFICACY IS A BETTER PREDICTOR OF LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT THAN TEST-TAKING STRATEGY.

KEYWORDS: SELF-EFFICACY, TEST-TAKING STRATEGY, ACHIEVEMENT.

1. Introduction
One of the most controversial issues in language field which have recently attracted the attention of many researchers is learning processes. As defined by Oxford (1990) learning strategies are "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, moreself-directed and more transferable to new situations" (p.8). One of these learning strategies is test-taking strategy which enables learners to take advantage of the characteristics and the format of test to improve their performance and increase scores in test-taking situations (Rogers& Harley, 1999). Belcher (1985) states that test scores are indicators of not only the reader's knowledge and aptitude in a subject area but also the ability to take advantage of the characteristics and format of the test. According to katalin(2002) "Good language learners use a range of strategies during the process of learning, among them test-taking strategies, and it would help testees to do well on exams if they received some training in test-taking skills".

Self-efficacy is also one of those learning processes which seem to have effect on learners' performance.

As defined by Bandura (1986), self-efficacy is an individual's judgment of his or her capabilities to accomplish specific tasks. To quote Bandura (1986), "many students have difficulty in school not because they are incapable of performing successfully, but because they are incapable of believing that they can perform successfully, that they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic skills" (p. 390). Learners who have high level of self-efficacy beliefs are persistent when deal with challenging situations and are more successful in academic achievement (Wang &Pape, 2007). Self-efficacy beliefs vary between individuals and actually vary within an individual for different tasks.

This study by investigating the relationship the effect of these two factors (self-efficacy and test-taking strategies) on learners' achievement can help learners not only perform better in test situations, but also enhance these abilities and skills that can be helpful in other areas of learning specially those which need more profound attention. Being aware of these factors which play a role in learning process, seems to open a new window for learners to look differently and have more control over their learning and thinking process.

2. Review of the Related Literature
2.1. Test-taking Strategies
When students take a test - any test - they're really being tested on two things: how much they know about the subject (subject knowledge) and how much they know about taking a test (test-taking strategies). "Test-taking strategies are cognitive abilities to deal with any testing situation well independently of the knowledge of the test content. Examples are managing time effectively, surveying all questions before responding, dealing with difficult questions, dealing with multiple-choice questions, and underlying keywords questions" (Dodeen, 2015). Test-taking strategies are strategies that enable learners to use the characteristics and format of a test to increase scores in a test-taking situation (Rogers & Harley, 1999).

Rezaee (2006, p. 155) categorizes test-taking strategies into two types of "general and specific" strategies. General strategies are applicable to any tests and include some general guidelines such as preparing for the test, reading the directions, the use of time during a test, error avoidance strategies and so on, while specific strategies can be used in special kinds of tests such as multiple-choice, matching, fill-in-the-blanks, essay, true-false, and problem solving.

Dodeen and Abdelmabood (2005) conducted a study to investigate the effect of teaching test-taking skills on students' achievement and attitudes towards tests. Students were taught specific test-taking skills for multiple-choice items in English over a period of six weeks. The results revealed that students' attitudes towards tests were improved and level of their anxiety was decreased.

NarjesGhafournia(2013) in a study examined the significant interaction between using multiple-choice test-taking strategies and general English proficiency levels of Iranian EFL students. According to the results, more proficient test takers used total test-taking strategies as well as different subcategories of the strategies more frequently than less proficient test takers. So there was a significant relationship between using test-taking strategies and EFL student's English general frequency.

In a study carried out by Rezaee (2006) the relationship between the subjects' proficiency level and their tendency in using different types of strategies while taking a test of language proficiency was investigated. According to the result of this study, the advanced students usually focus on their knowledge of the language being tested so they don't utilize test-taking strategies a lot. Just in more challenging parts like reading comprehension section they resort to using these strategies in order to improve their performance. It was also found that the elementary students made the least use of test-taking strategies because they had to spend much of their time focusing on the content of the test. So, they did not have enough time to use these skills. Also, elementary students did not have enough test-taking strategies in their disposal.

Dodeen, Abdelfattah, and Alshumrani(2014) examined the relationship between students' test-taking skills and each of the following variables: motivation to learn mathematics; mathematics anxiety;

attitudes towards mathematics; and attitudes towards tests. Results indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between student test-taking skills and motivation to learn mathematics, attitudes towards mathematics, and attitudes towards tests; the relationship between test-taking skills and mathematics anxiety was found to be both negative and significant. The study concluded the improvement of secondary students' testing skills to be significantly correlated with variables that play a significant role in a student's level of achievement in mathematics.

Purpura (1997) conducted a study in order to examine the relationships between test-takers' cognitive and metacognitive strategy use and second language test performance. He used sophisticated statistical methods to investigate the relationships between test takers' reported strategy use and their performance on second language tests (SLTP). He found that 'strategies' beneficial effects depend both on the type of task in which test takers deploy them and on the combination of other strategies with which test takers use them" (p.315).

2.2. Self-efficacy

The self-efficacy construct first introduced by Bandura (1977) with the seminal publication of "Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change". Bandura(1986) introduced self-efficacy as one of the components of social-cognitive theory. According to Bandura(1998) self-efficacy is one's belief about one's capability to successfully accomplish a task.

"Self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources and courses of action needed to meet given situational demands" (Wood & Bandura, 1989,p. 408).

Baron (2004) introduces three types of self-efficacy: self-regulatory self-efficacy (ability to resist pressure, avoid high-risk activities); social self-efficacy (ability to form and maintain relationships); and academic self-efficacy (ability to do course work, and regulate learning activities).

According to Bandura (1997), there are four sources for self-efficacy: (a) Mastery experience; individuals judge the effects of their actions, successful experiences in a task increase self-efficacy but failing decrease it. (b) Various experiences; the effects produced by the others' action. (c) Social persuasion; exposure to the verbal judgments and encouragement that others provide. (d) Physical and emotional states; Emotions, moods, and stress levels influence your feeling about your own abilities. Feeling nervous and anxious weakens the sense of self-efficacy but feeling confident fosters sense of self-efficacy.

According to the Social Cognitive theory, self-efficacy is one of the most important variables that influence the academic performance and achievement. Collins (1982) indicated the importance of self-efficacy beliefs on academic performance. He found that people may perform poorly on tasks not necessarily because they lack the ability to succeed, but because they lack belief in their capabilities.

The relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement has been a topic of interest in social sciences researches. Many studies have indicated that regardless of age, gender, and countries, a student with higher sense of self-efficacy will achieve better academic performance. For example, in a research conducted in the United States, Louis and Mistele (2011) reported that although there were differences in level of self-efficacy by gender in young people taking mathematics and science, self-efficacy is still found to be a good predictor of the achievement scores.

ElahiMotlagh, Amrai, Yazdani, Abderahim, and Souri(2011) conducted a study to investigate the relation between self-efficacy and academic achievement in high school students. In this study, 250 students in the academic year 2010/2011 were selected by means of multistage cluster sampling among the girls' high schools in Tehran and completed self-efficacy scale. To measure achievement score grade point average in classes was used. Correlation coefficient and regression analysis was used to analyze the data. According to the results, self-efficacy is a considerable factor in academic achievement. Analysis of data showed that self-evaluation, self-directing and self-regulation are correlated with academic achievement. The findings also have shown that from among the self-efficacy sub-factors, self- evaluation and self-regulation are of the best prediction factors of academic achievement.

Various studies (e.g., Marie, K 2006; Lent, Brown & Larkin, 1987) have revealed that self-efficacy may be a good predictor of performance. If people don't believe in themselves and think that they are not able to do some particular tasks, they may not even try to do them, so their choices, behavior,

motivation, and perseverance are affected (Mager, 1992). For example, Hsieh (2008) found that self-efficacy was a good predictor of language learning achievement. In her study, students with high self-efficacy reported that they were more interested in learning foreign languages, had more positive attitude, and possessed higher integrative orientation.

Staikovic and Luthans (1988) through a research on 114 experimental studies which had aimed finding the relationship between self- efficacy and the performance found out that there is a strong and positive relationship between these two variables. In academic achievements, Multon Brown & Lent (1991) also through a research on 38 studies within the years 1977 to 1988 found the positive relationship between the self-efficacy and the academic achievements.

Rahemi (2007) studied humanities students' English self-efficacy beliefs and its relationship with their EFL achievement. According to this study, students majoring in humanities had very low English self-efficacy and had a negative belief about their own abilities as foreign language learners. Students' achievement indicated a positive correlation with their self-efficacy. It was demonstrated that high self-efficacy improves performance in executing a wide range of tasks.

Although most of the existing literature supported the view that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement, there were still few researches arguing the opposite. For example, Strelnieks (2005) in her study investigated that whether self-efficacy could influence one's academic achievement depended on some external factors, like gender and socio-economic status (p. 13). According to the result of this study, it was indicated that self-efficacy could only successfully predict females' academic achievement while it failed to precisely predict males' educational performance. Besides, it was also indicated that self-efficacy could only predict the academic achievement of students with higher socio-economic status.

So, although most of the existing studies supported there was a strong correlation between the two variables, there were still researches arguing the opposite. Therefore, further investigation is required to demonstrate a clearer understanding between the two constructs.

2.3. Research Questions
In order to achieve these purposes, the following research questions are designed:
Quantitative Questions:
1. Is there any relationship between the EFL learners' self-efficacy and their English achievements?
2. Is there any relationship between the EFL learners' use of test-taking strategies and their English achievements?
3. Is self-efficacy a better predictor of EFL learners' achievement than test-taking strategies?

3. Methodology
3.1. Participants
The participants of this study were 150 out of 500 EFL learners in four language institutes in Quchan, Iran which half of them were males and half of them were females. In order to homogenize learners, Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered and learners whose score was between -1 and +1 standard deviation were selected and the rest were ignored. All participants were at intermediate level with the ages between 16 and 20 .All the participants had successfully passed the placement tests designed and carried out by the institutes in order to be able to study at this level.

3.2. Design
This study intended to investigate the effect of EFL learners' self-efficacy and using test-taking strategies on their achievement. The current study employed quantitative research methods. The independent variables are self-efficacy and test-taking strategies, and the dependent variable is learners' achievement. To choose participants from among learners in institutes, researcher employed random sampling.

3.3. Instruments
3.3.1. Self-efficacy Questionnaire

In order to find the level of participants' self-efficacy, they were asked to fill a scale used by Rahemi (2007) in her study (Appendix A); a 5-point Likert-type questionnaire consist of 10 multiple choice items with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.82.

3.3.2. Test-taking strategy Questionnaire
Participants' test-taking strategy was measured by a 5-point Likert rating-scale adopted from Rezaei (2006) (Appendix B). The questionnaire includes 22 multiple choice items with the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.76.All statements were positively worded except for items 1 and 20.
3.3.3. Proficiency Test
At the outset of the study, Preliminary English Test (PET) was used as a proficiency test in order to assure the homogeneity of the learners and also to see what types of strategies EFL learners employed. PET is an English language examination provided by Cambridge English Language Assessment. It is an intermediate level qualification which demonstrates the ability to communicate using English for everyday purposes.
The test has these sections:
1. Reading and Writing are taken together - 90 minutes - has eight parts and 42 questions- 50% of total marks.
2. Listening - 30 minutes- 25% of total marks. The Listening paper has four parts comprising 25 questions.
3. Speaking - an interview, 10 minutes -25% of total marks. The Speaking paper has four parts.

3.3.4. Final Achievement Test
The achievement of learners was investigated through their performance on final exam of that semester. The scores were used as a criterion for their achievement and effectiveness of test-taking strategies they used in order to complete the test.

3.4. Procedure
3.4.1 Data Collection
To measure the level of participants' self-efficacy and test-taking strategy, they were asked to complete the related questionnaires. The final examtest was administered in the last session of that semester. The scores of final test were considered as a criterion for examining learners' achievements.
3.4.2. Data Analysis
Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 19 was used for analyzing the data collected from two questionnaires. In order to investigate any relationship between self-efficacy and test-taking strategies with achievement a Pearson product moment correlation was conducted. A multiple regression analysis was also conducted to determine which factor (self-efficacy or test taking-strategies) best predicts the learners' achievement. In order to check the learners' achievement, scores of their final exam were examined and used to find the above mentioned correlation.

4. Results
4.1. Quantitative Data
The first step in data analysis was providing a more comprehensive view of the sample. Descriptive statistics including mean, range, standard deviation, and minimum and maximum scores for self-efficacy scale and test-taking strategy questionnaire and final achievement are presented below (Table 1).

The full score for self-efficacy scale which was a 5-point Likert rating-scale questionnaire included 10 items with responses for each statements ranging from1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was 50. As can be seen in Table 4.1., the learners' self-efficacy beliefs in this study ranged from 28 to 48 with the mean score of 39.01.

The highest possible score for test-taking strategy which included 22 items with choices for each item ranging from 1(never) to 5 (always) was 110. As the table shows, the highest score for test-taking strategy in this study was 95 and the lowest score was 50 with the mean score of 75.69.

The highest score for final achievement was 100. According to table 4.1 the highest final achievement score in this study was 100 and the lowest was 46 with the mean score of 75.69.

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics for Age, Self-Efficacy, Test-Taking Strategy, and Final Achievement.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-efficacy	150	28.00	48.00	39.0100	4.83149
Test-taking Strategy	150	50.00	95.00	75.6900	9.33409
Final achievement	150	46.00	100.00	81.5800	12.39435
Valid N (listwise)	150				

4.1.1. Result of Self-Efficacy and Achievement
The first question in this study investigated the relationship between the EFL learners' self-efficacy and their English achievements. A Pearson product moment formula was used and the correlation between self-efficacy and achievement was computed. The result of the analysis showed that there was a significant, positive relationship between self-efficacy and achievement, $r = .46, p < .05$. A Pearson correlation coefficient (.461) is positive, indicating a positive correlation between self-efficacy and achievement. The higher level of self-efficacy learners have, the higher scores they achieve. So, the first research hypothesis was rejected. Following the guideline suggested by Cohen (1988) - that a correlation greater than 0.5 is large, 0.5-0.3 is moderate, 0.3-0.1 is small, and anything smaller than 0.1 is trivial- The effect size (.46) was moderate.The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Correlations between Self-Efficacy and Final Achievement

		Self-efficacy	Final achievement
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.461[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Final achievement	Pearson Correlation	.461[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

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

4.1.2. Result of Test-Taking Strategy and Achievement
The second question in this study investigated the relationship between the EFL learners' use of test-taking strategies and their English achievements. To define the relationship between test-taking strategy and achievement, a Pearson product moment correlation was conducted. According to the result of the analysis there was a significant, positive relationship between test-taking strategy and achievement, $r = .376, p < .05$. The Pearson correlation coefficient (.376) is positive, indicating the positive correlation between these two variables. The more test-taking strategies learners use, the better results they get. Thus, the second research hypothesis was rejected. The effect size (.37) was moderate. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3.Correlations between Test-Taking Strategy and Final Achievement

		Test-taking Strategy	Final achievement
Test-taking Strategy	Pearson Correlation	1	.376[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Final achievement	Pearson Correlation	.376[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

4.1.3. Result of Regression

The final quantitative question in this study investigated whether self-efficacy is a better predictor of EFL learners' achievement or test-taking strategies. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine how well independent variables are able to predict learner's achievement and which factor (self-efficacy or test-taking strategy) best predict learners' achievement.

A stepwise multiple regression was conducted to evaluate whether both self-efficacy and test-taking strategy were necessary to predict EFL learners' achievement. As for the normality of the data, the researcher checked the tolerance as displayed in table 4.7. The tolerance level was .80 which is above .10; therefore, there was no violation for the normality of data. At step 1 of the analysis self-efficacy was entered into the regression equation and was significantly related to learners' achievement F (1,98) = 26.433,n= 150, p < .001. The multiple correlation coefficients was .46, indicating approximately 21.2% of the variance of the Learners' achievement could be accounted for by self-efficacy. Test-taking strategy was entered second, it was significantly related to learners' achievement F (2, 97) = 16.034, n= 150, p < .001.The multiple correlation coefficients was .49, indicating approximately 24.8 % of the variance of the Learners' achievement could be accounted for by both self-efficacy and test-taking strategy (step 2). The results of the analysis are presented in table 4.4 and 4.5.

Table 4.4.Model Summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.461a	.212	.204	11.05536
2	.498b	.248	.233	10.85505

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy
b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy, Test-taking strategy

Table 4.5. Results of One-Way Analysis of Variance between the Predictive Variables

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3230.702	1	3230.702	26.433	.000a
	Residual	11977.658	98	122.221		
	Total	15208.360	99			
2	Regression	3778.648	2	1889.324	16.034	.000b
	Residual	11429.712	97	117.832		
	Total	15208.360	99			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy
b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-efficacy, Test-taking Strategy

The results obtained from ANOVA indicated that there are statistically significant relationships between the variables (F=26.43, p<000) with regard to self-efficacy. Moreover, the relationship was also significant for test-taking strategy (F=16.03, P <000).

The amount of beta is .461 for model one (SE). This is exactly the same as the value of the multiple correlations above for model 1. This is because beta is a standardized regression coefficient, which is the same as the correlation when there is only one predictor. For model 2 beta is .366 for the first predictor (SE) and .212 for the second predictor (TTS).See the results in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. Results of Regression Coefficients Concerning the Predictive Variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.

1	(Constant)	35.456	9.039			3.923	.000
	Self-efficacy	1.182	.230	.461		5.141	.000
2	(Constant)	23.620	10.435			2.263	.026
	Self-efficacy	.939	.252	.366		3.720	.000
	Test-taking Strategy	.282	.131	.212		2.156	.034

a. Dependent Variable: Final achievement

This table gives beta coefficients so that you can construct the regression equation. The equation would be:

Predicted Learners' achievement = 23.620 + .939(self-efficacy) + .282 (test taking strategy).Results from Beta Standardized Coefficient confirmed that self-efficacy (0.36) is a better predictor than test-taking strategy (0.21). Thus, the last research hypothesis was rejected. The b coefficient associated with self-efficacy (.36) is positive, indicating a relationship in which higher numeric values for self-efficacy are associated with higher numeric values for learners' achievement.

Table 4.7.Excluded Variables

Model					Collinearity Statistics
				Partial	
	Beta In	t	Sig.	Correlation	Tolerance
1 Test-taking Strategy	.212[a]	2.156	.034	.214	.800

a. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Self-efficacy
b. Dependent Variable: Final achievement

5.Discussion

The present study investigated the effect of EFL learners' self-efficacy and test-taking strategy on EFL learners' test performance. The study also examined which variables (self-efficacy or test-taking strategy) can best predict learners' achievement. The first objective seeks to examine the relationship between the EFL learners' self-efficacy and their English achievements. From the analysis of the self-efficacy survey data, the following result is obtained. Students' mean total self-efficacy score was 39.01 and their self-efficacy scores were in the range from 28 to 48. In this research, a score of 50 is the highest possible level investigated while a score of 10 is the lowest self-efficacy score. For computing the correlation between self-efficacy and achievement a Pearson product moment formula was used. The result of the analysis showed that there was a significant, positive relationship between self-efficacy and achievement, $r = .461, p < .05$. Findings are consistent with the findings of Staikovic&Luthans (1988), Multon Brown & Lent (1991), Rahemi (2007), Pajares and Johnson (1996), Zimmerman et al. (1992). So, the high level of self-efficacy influences the academic persistence and also leads to high academic achievement (Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1984). It is teacher's duty to highlight the role of self-efficacy and its positive impact on outcome for learners and try to offer some tips for enhancing learner's self-efficacy. Davidson, Feldman, and Margalit (2012) suggest educators and lecturers that in order to increase academic performance, they must identify ways through which the self-efficacy of students can be improved. The second objective of this study was to find out the relationship between the EFL learners' test-taking strategy use and their English achievements. Students' mean total test-tasking strategy score was 75.69 and their test-taking scores were in the range from 50 to 95. In this research, a score of 110 is the highest possible level investigated while a score of 22 is the lowest test-taking strategy score. To define the relationship between test-taking strategy and achievement, a Pearson product moment correlation was conducted. According to the result of the analysis there was a significant, positive relationship between test-taking strategy and achievement, $r = .376$, $p < .05$. Findings were in direction to the previous findings in areas of test-taking strategy and the academic achievement. (Dodeen and Abdelmabood (2005), Vattanapath and Jaiprayoon (1999), Dolly and Williams (1986), Amer(1993)Scharnagl(2004)). This suggests test-taking

strategy use affect students' test performance in English. So, teachers should make students aware of test taking strategies and their effect on outcome and also instruct them how to use these strategies effectively. The third objective in this study investigated which factor (self-efficacy or test-taking strategy) best predict EFL learners' achievement. In order to determine this, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted. A significant regression equation was found (F (2, 97) =16.03, p<.05, R^2=.24) with an $R^2_{adjusted}$ of .23). Results from Beta Standardized Coefficient confirmed that self-efficacy (0.36) is a better predictor than test-taking strategy (0.21). The results showed that between self-efficacy and test-taking strategy, self-efficacy had significant predictive power in EFL learner's academic achievement. Teachers should consider not only actual competence of students but also their perceptions of competence because these perceptions and beliefs may accurately predict students' future success (Hackett, 1995).

6. Conclusion

The present study investigated the effect of self-efficacy and test-taking strategy on academic achievement among EFL intermediate learners. The study revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement. Participants' beliefs about their abilities to perform tasks are very effective on their performance. Learners with high self-efficacy often outperformed comparatively to those with low efficacy. Furthermore, findings showed that there is a positive significant relationship between test-taking strategy and academic achievement. According to findings, instructions on strategy use can influence test takers' performance. Teaching such strategies to learners and motivating them to apply these strategies in test situation make learners to have better performance and also reduce their anxiety while taking tests. One of the aims of this study predicted EFL learner's academic achievement through the self-efficacy and test-taking strategy. The results indicated that between self-efficacy and test-taking strategy, self-efficacy had significant predictive power in learner's academic achievement. Self-efficacy is predictive of academic performance and course satisfaction in classrooms (Bandura, 1997).

According to the results of this study, learners can enhance their language achievement by considering the role of self-efficacy in their performance and also by employing appropriate test-taking strategies on test situation. So, it might be better that teachers try to not only improve learners' knowledge of subject matter but also try to increase learners' self-efficacy by implementing methods to raise the low student self-efficacy levels and also teach them test-taking strategies for making their students test-wise in a testing situation and doing well on test

References

Amer, A. (1993). Teaching EFL students to use a test-taking strategy.*Language Testing.* 10(1), 71-77.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84*(2), 191–215.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York: Freeman and Company.

Bandura, A. (1998). Health promotion from the perspective of social cognitive theory. *Psychology and Health, 13*(4), 623-649.

Baron,A. R. (2004).*Social psychology.*(10th ed.). Retrieved 23rd August, 2007 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-efficacy.

Belcher, M. (1985).Improving CLAST scores through attention to test-taking strategies. Research Report No. 85-02.

Collins, J. L. (1982). Self-efficacy and ability in achievement behavior. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Davidson, O. B., Feldman, D. B., and Margalit, M. (2012).A focused intervention for 1st-year college students: promoting hope, sense of coherence, and self-efficacy.*J Psychol*, 146(3), 333-52.

Dodeen, H. &Abdelmabood, H. (2005).The effect of teaching test-taking strategies on university students' performance, test anxiety, and attitudes towards tests. In P Davidson, C Coombe, & W Jones (eds). *Assessment in the Arab World*. Dubai, UAE: TESOL Arabia.

Dodeen,H., Abdelfattah,F.&Alshumrani,S.(2014).Test-taking skills of secondary students: the relationship with motivation, attitudes, anxiety and attitudes towards tests. *South African Journal of Education, 34(2)*,1-18.

Dodeen, H. (2015).Teaching test-taking strategies: Importance and techniques. *Psychology Research*, 5(2), 108-113.

Dolly, J.P. &Williams,K.S. (1986). Using test-taking strategies to maximize multiple-choice test scores. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*,46, 619-625.

ElahiMotlagh, Sh.,Amrai, K.,Yazdani, M. J., Abderahim, H.&Souri, H. (2011). The relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement in high school students.*Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*,15,765–768.

Ghafournia,N.(2013).The Relationship between using multiple-choice test-taking strategies and general language proficiency levels.*Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 90–94.

Hackett. G., & Betz. N. E. (1989). An exploration of the mathematics self efficacy/mathematics performance correspondence. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education,20(3),261-273.*

Hsieh, P.H. (2008). Why are college foreign language students' self-efficacy, attitude, and motivation so different? *International Education, 38*(1), 76–94.

Katalin, B. (2002).Reflections on the test-taking strategies of 7th and 11th grade Hungarian students of English.*NovELTy*,7(3).

Lent, R. W., Brown, A. D., and Larkin, K. C. (1984).Relation of self efficacy expectations toacademic achievement and persistence.*Journal of Counseling Psychology, 31, 356–362.*

Lent, R.W., Brown, S.D., & Larkin, K.C. (1987). Comparison of three theoretically derived variables in Predicting career and academic behavior: Self-efficacy, interest congruence, and consequence thinking. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 34, 293-298.

Louis, R. A., &Mistele, J. M. (2011). The Differences in scores and self-efficacy by student gender in mathematics and science. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education,* Online First, 1-28.Mager, R.F. (1992). No self-efficacy, no performance, training, April 32-36.

Mager, R.F. (1992).*No self-efficacy, no performance, Training*, April 32-36**.**

Marie, K. (2006).Examining an instructional strategy: relationship between feedback, performance and self- efficacy in a first year mathematics course, Conference Proceedings of AERA, available at www.sfu.ca/rethinkingteaching/publications/krbavacAERA.pdf. retrieved on January 03, 07.

Multon, K. D. & Brown, S. D. & Lent, R. W. (1991). Relation of self-efficacy beliefs to academic outcomes: A meta-analytic investigation.*Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 38(1), 30-38.

Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury, House Publishers.

Pajares, F. & Johnson, M. J. (1996). Self-efficacy beliefs in the writing of high school students: A path analysis.*Psychology in the Schools*, 33, 163-175.

Purpura, J.E. (1997).An analysis of the relationships between test metacognitive strategy use and second language test performance.*Language Learning 47*, 289-325.

Rahemi, J. (2007). Self-efficacy in English and Iranian senior high school students majoring in humanities.*Novitas-ROYAL, 1*(2), 98-111.

Rezaee, A. (2006). University students' test-taking strategies and their language proficiency. *Teaching English Language and Literature Society of Iran (TELLSI), 1*(1), 151-182.

Rogers, W., & Harley, D. (1999). An empirical comparison of three-and four-choice items and tests: Susceptibility to test-wiseness and internal consistency reliability. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 59*(2), 234.

Scharnagl, T. M. (2004). *The effects of test-taking strategies on students' reading achievement.*Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Union Institute and University, United States, Ohio.

Stajkovic, A., &Luthans, F. (1998). Self-efficacy and work-related performance: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 124, 240-261.

Strelnieks, M., 2005.The relationship of students' domain specific self-concepts and self-efficacy to academic performance.Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Marquette University, Wisconsin.

Vattanapath, R. & Jaiprayoon, K. (1999). An assessment of the effectiveness of teaching test-taking strategies for multiple-choice English reading comprehension test. *Occasional Papers* 8, 57-71.

Wang, C. &Pape, S. J. (2007).A probe into three Chinese boys' self-efficacy beliefs learning English as a second language. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 21, 364-377.

Wood, R. & Bandura, A. (1989).Social cognitive theory of organizational management.*Academy of Management Review*, 14(3), 361-384**.**

Zimmerman, B. J., Banudra, A., & Martinez-Pons, M. (1992). Self-motivation for academic attainment: The role of self-efficacy beliefs and personal goal. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(3), 663-676.

Appendix A:
Self- Efficacy Questionnaire
Dear student,
Below are beliefs and feelings that some people have about learning foreign languages. Read the statements and then decide if you:

(5) Strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (2) disagree, (1) strongly disagree.

There is no right or wrong answers. Mark your ideas in the answer sheet.

1. I have got a special ability for learning English.

1	2	3	4	5

2. I believe I have the power to get my desired grade in English final exam.

1	2	3	4	5

3. I think that someday I will speak English very well.

1	2	3	4	5

4. I am sure I can solve any problems I face in learning English because I've got the power to do it.

1	2	3	4	5

5. Personally, I'm satisfied with my current level of English proficiency.

1	2	3	4	5

6. I'm definitely sure that I can improve my English by trying more.

1	2	3	4	5

7. If I do not do well in this lesson, it is only because I do not exert enough effort.

1	2	3	4	5

8. Generally speaking, my self –confidence in English classes is high.

1	2	3	4	5

9. Learning English is a very easy task.

1	2	3	4	5

10. I try to study English to reach the highest level of ability in it.

1	2	3	4	5

Thank you very much

Appendix B: Test Taking Strategies Questionnaire

(5) Always,(4) Frequently, (3) Sometimes, (2) Rarely, (1) Never	1	2	3	4	5
1. The best time for preparing for a test is the night before the test.					
2. While answering the questions in a test, if I know what I should do I do not spend my time reading the directions of the different parts of the test.					
3. I answer the easy questions first and I leave the difficult questions until last.					
4. I try to eliminate the options that I am sure are incorrect and then I choose the correct answer from among the remaining options.					
5. If two options imply the correctness of each other, I choose neither or both of them.					
6. In a four-option multiple-choice test, I choose one of the two options which is correct and implies the incorrectness of the other one.					
7. I restrict my choice to those options which cover all or two or more given statements known to be correct.					
8. In answering a particular question, I utilize relevant content information in other test items and options.					
9. If two alternatives are correct, then I look for a third which includes these two. I choose that option as a correct answer.					
10. I look for similarities among options and identify these as incorrect. The remaining one may be the correct answer.					
11. In Reading Comprehension questions, I certainly review the questions before I read the text.					
12. In Reading Comprehension questions, if a question asks for a number or a name, I scan the text to find the correct answer.					
13. While reading a text, I try to keep in mind all the details as in answering the questions I may not find any time to go back and scan it.					
14. In order to get a general idea of the text I survey it before reading it carefully.					
15. Punctuation Marks are very important for me in understanding a text completely.					
16. I examine options which are noticeably longer than the others in the set as these may be the correct answers.					
17. I look for an association, usually semantic or grammatical, between a word or phrase in the stem and a word or phrase in one of the options which cues the answer.					
18. I pay close attention to an adverb (time, place, manner …) as it can help me find the correct answer in a test of grammar.					
19. In a test of grammar, first I read the stem carefully in order to find a clue and then I answer the question. Then I go through the options to find the one option which corresponds to my answer.					
20. In tests of vocabulary, I must know the meanings of all words as the punctuation marks and discourse markers cannot be of any help to me.					
21. Analysis of the structure of words (prefix, suffix and stem) helps me finding the meanings of unknown words in tests on vocabulary.					
22. Transition words in a sentence help me to get the meaning of a particular word or the whole sentence.					

THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER'S EMPLOYMENT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING SOFTWARE ON IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' VOCABULARY RECALL AND RETENTION

Emad Khosravani (corresponding author)
Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad, Iran
Email: emad_khosravani@yahoo.com

Zargham Ghabanchi
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran
Email: ghabanchi@um.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

THIS STUDY AIMED TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER'S EMPLOYMENT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING SOFTWARE ON VOCABULARY RECALL AND RETENTION OF IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS. TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY, 60 PARTICIPANTS WERE SELECTED FROM AMONG PRE-INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS STUDYING ENGLISH AT A BOARDING SCHOOL IN KHOOSHAB, SABZEVAR, IRAN. AFTER HOMOGENIZING THE PARTICIPANTS, THEY WERE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED TO TWO GROUPS AS THE EXPERIMENTAL AND THE CONTROL GROUPS. PRIOR TO THE TREATMENT, A VOCABULARY PRE-TEST WAS ADMINISTERED TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS. THEN, THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP RECEIVED INSTRUCTION USING LANGUAGE LEARNING SOFTWARE AND THE CONTROL GROUP RECEIVED TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTION USING PRINTED TEXT MATERIALS. EACH GROUP RECEIVED 16 SESSIONS OF 90 MINUTES OF INSTRUCTION AND THE PARTICIPANTS TOOK A VOCABULARY POST-TEST AT THE END OF SESSIONS. A DELAYED POST-TEST WAS ALSO ADMINISTERED TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF BOTH GROUPS TWO WEEKS AFTER THE END OF THE INSTRUCTION. THE DATA WERE COLLECTED FOR THE RESEARCH AND THEN SUBJECTED TO THE APPROPRIATE STATISTICAL PROCEDURES SUCH AS INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES *T*-TESTS AND PAIRED-SAMPLES *T*-TESTS. THE FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY REVEALED THAT TEACHER'S EMPLOYMENT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING SOFTWARE HAD SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS ON VOCABULARY RECALL AND RETENTION OF THE LEARNERS AND THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP SIGNIFICANTLY OUTPERFORMED THE CONTROL GROUP IN BOTH RECALL AND RETENTION OF THE WORDS.

KEYWORDS: LANGUAGE LEARNING SOFTWARE,VOCABULARY RECALL, VOCABULARY RETENTION, EFL LEARNER(S)

1. Introduction

It is clear that our new life is greatly influenced by the era of information technology, and technology plays a significant role in today's human society progress. According to this fact, it is necessary to take advantage of the modern technological facilities in aiding the task of English language education(Nomass, 2013). Sharma (2009) believes that the effect of technology has become broad in teaching and language learning in addition to the educator's role. In other words, the role of the

educator together with the role of technology can proceed to advanced learning results (as cited in Nomass, 2013).

Hewer (2007) believes that the application of CALL includes the use of technology in the shape of computers ranging from software to the Internet. "Currently, there are numerous software application programs available such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation programs, spelling check utilities, electronic workbooks, reading and writing programs, and different learning packages to assist instructors in creating tutorial exercises to enhance their English language courses'' (Nomass, 2013, p.112). Levy and Hubbard (2005) assert that a multiple of CALL programs have been created to help enhance teaching and language learners' abilities, involving speech recognizers and text analyzers.

Vocabulary, as one of the elements of language learning, has a key role in promoting second language learning, and thus the responsibility of practitioners and language instructors is to expand vocabulary knowledge of second language learners (Schmidt, 2008). According to Moras (2001), the most essential factors of vocabulary teaching are to encourage the learners, so that they can improve their vocabulary by themselves. Khiyabani, Ghonsooly, and Ghabanchi (2014) believe that one of the most widely accepted approaches in the field of teaching words in foreign language teaching is Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching (CALL and CALT).

Research in the applications of CALL is emerging, and much research is still required. A number of studies (Ghabanchi& Anbarestani, 2008; Bagheri, Roohani, & Ansari, 2012; Maftoon, Hamidi, &Sarem, 2012; SoltaniTehrani&Tabatabaei, 2012; Barani, 2013; Khiyabani et al., 2014; Pahlavanpoorfard & Soori, 2014) have approved that applying CALL software can be an effective learning tool for vocabulary development. These studies have investigated the use of computers for lexical skill development in terms of integrating CALL with vocabulary acquisition while the current study is conducted to examine the use of CALL software for vocabulary development with different subjects from above studies in terms of proficiency level. Moreover, the present study has used one of the newly developed CALL software which is different from the CALL programs that were applied in above studies.

To show the objectives of the study, the researcher considered the following research questions.

Q1: Does the teacher's employment of language learning software have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary recall?

Q2: Is there any significant difference between the impact of teacher's employment of language learning software and traditional method on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary recall?

Q3: Does the teacher's employment of language learning software have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary retention?

Q4: Is there any significant difference between the impact of teacher's employment of language learning software and traditional method on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary retention?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

With the progress of information technology, high attention has been paid to computer assisted language learning (He, Puakpong, &Lian, 2015). CALL has greatly changed the teaching of language, with its broad application in a lot of aspects of language teaching (Jian-ying, 2014). Computer assisted language learning is broadly used to refer to the area of technology and second language teaching and learning despite the fact that modifications for the term are suggested regularly (Chappell, 2001; as cited in Kazemi&Narafshan, 2014). Levy (1997) defines CALL as the search for an examination of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning (as cited in Kazemi&Narafshan, 2014). Under the umbrella term of Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), computer assisted language learning can be considered as an approach which aims at applying computer technology in learning or teaching foreign languages (Maftoon et al., 2012). Davis (2006) claims that such a technology, which "has become a fixture in many homes" nowadays, has significant effects on education and has been more and more integrated into classrooms.

2.2. Phases of CALL

Warschauer (2000) maintains that the history of CALL can be nearly divided into three main phases: structural or behaviorist CALL, communicative CALL, and integrative CALL (as cited in Yang, 2010). Each phase adapts to a specified level of technology as well as a certain pedagogical approach (Yang, 2010).

2.2.1. Structural or Behaviorist CALL

Structural or behaviorist CALL was observed in the 1950s and implemented in the 1960s and 1970s (Yang, 2010). "Informed by the behaviorist learning model, this mode of CALL featured repetitive language drills, referred to as drill-and-practice" (Yang, 2010, p. 909). CALL programs of this area allow students to learn at their own pace and the computer is considered as a mechanical tutor (Rahimpour, 2011). Behaviorist CALL was first designed and implemented in the period of the mainframe, but finally modified and implemented to the personal computer (Rahimpour, 2011). "The best-known tutorial system, PLATO, ran on its own special hardware consisting of a central computer and terminals and featured extensive drills, grammatical explanations, and translation tests at various intervals" (Ahmad, Corbett, Rodgers, & Sussex, 1985; as cited in Yang, 2010, p. 909).

2.2.2. Communicative CALL

Communicative CALL emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s, at the same time that behaviorist approaches to language teaching were being rejected at both the theoretical and pedagogical level, and whennew personal computers were creating greater probabilities for individual work (Barani, 2013). Communicative CALL adapted to cognitive theories which emphasized that learning was a process of discovery, expression and development (Barani, 2013). Communicative CALL stressed that computer-based activities should focus more on using forms than on the forms themselves, teach grammar implicitly rather than explicitly, permit and persuade students to produce original utterances rather than just manipulate prefabricated language, and use the target language predominantly or even uniquely (Jones &Fortescue, 1987; as cited in Tabatabaei, 2012).

2.2.3. Integrative CALL

Integrative CALL is based on contemporary perspectives of language teaching that treat learning as a socio-cultural activity (Bridge, 2012). Integrative CALL changes to a view which seeks both to integrate different skills (e.g., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and also integrate technology more completely into the language learning process (Tabatabaei, 2012). In this period, the emphasis was put on language use in authentic social situations (Barani, 2013). Task-based, project-based and content-based approaches all sought to integrate learners in authentic contexts, and also to integrate the different skills of language learning and use (Barani, 2013).In integrative approaches, students learn to use a multiple of technological tools as an ongoing process of language learning and use, rather than going to the computer lab on a once a week basis for isolated exercises (Yang, 2010).

2.3. Approaches to CALL

Bax (2003) critically examines and reconsiders the history of CALL and presents a different division of the period of time when CALL was progressing as an approach. He offers three new classifications: Restricted CALL, Open CALL and Integrated CALL.

2.3.1. Restricted CALL

The term 'Restricted' describes the underlying theory of learning and the actual software and activity types in use at the time, to the teachers' role, to the feedback presented to students and to other dimensions (Bax, 2003). According to Bax (2003), Restricted CALL bears a close similarity to behaviorist CALL, but this term is more comprehensive and suitable.

2.3.2. Open CALL

Bax (2003, p. 22) declares that "In the case of Open CALL, we can see that from around 1980 there was a gradual awareness that previous approaches had indeed been restricted, and that new approaches were needed. In this sense, attitudes to using computers were more open (as can be seen from Underwood's list presented earlier) and were certainly becoming more humanistic". Yet it is significant to note as Bax (2003) states that, "much software produced today is still of a relatively restricted type" and "each institution and classroom may also exhibit certain restricted and even

integrated features" (p. 23) leading to a conclusion that the needfor restricted type of CALL has not yet finished and is still developed in parallel to the open approach.

2.3.3. Integrated CALL

According to Bax (2003), the approach of Integrated CALL is a coming purpose for CALL scholars. This approach intends CALL to become normalized meaning that computer technology will become unnoticed as much as a pen and books are during everyday classroom usage (as cited in Maftoon & Shahini, 2012). Bax (2003) states that:

"CALL has not reached this stage, as evidenced by the use of the very acronym 'CALL'— we do not speak of PALL (Pen Assisted Language Learning) or of BALL (Book Assisted Language Learning) because those two technologies are completely integrated into education, but CALL has not yet reached that normalized stage. In other words, one criterion of CALL's successful integration into language learning will be that it ceases to exist as a separate concept and field for discussion" (p. 23).

2.4. Teacher's Roles in CALL

The teacher is now being asked to be familiar with modern technology and teaching methodology using CALL applications, and also to be engaged in the use of computer materials in their teaching situations (Son, 2002). A starting step for fulfilling this requirement could be to find suitable roles and possible tasks for the teacher in CALL contexts and this offers that language teachers need to identify their roles and respond to new issues and demands on teachers (Son, 2002). Gruba (2004) explains on Warschauer and Healey's (1998) interpretation of the instructor's role, and refers to the teacher as a "mediator" between the computer and learners throughout the learning process, serving the role of "keeping things running smoothly" (p. 637).

The roles of the teacher generally found in the language classroom context are tutor, guide or facilitator (Son, 2002). "In addition to these roles, the teacher in CALL needs to act as a CALL observer, designer, implementer, evaluator or manager" (Son, 2002, p. 243). Teachers who are directly engaged in the design or evaluation of CALL can be called CALL developers according to the idea of classifying CALL software progress in three modules which are design, implementation, and evaluation (Son, 2002). "CALL designers create their own computer applications by practicing and utilizing programming languages or authoring tools with instructional design approaches; CALL implementers use CALL software which matches with students or teachers' needs in the classroom and develop teaching methods for CALL practice; and CALL evaluators make comments on CALL materials, approaches or courses with evaluation criteria" (Son, 2002, p. 243).

Son (2000) states that when teachers supervise the general use of CALL, they become CALL managers who lead other teachers to the world of CALL, facilitate CALL in self-access or classroom contexts, and manage CALL resources for learning and teaching purposes (as cited in Son, 2002).It is up to the teachers' preferences whether they become a CALL observer, designer, implementer, evaluator or manager and depending on their teaching contexts, teachers can simply apply the computer as a supplement or tool to their work (Son, 2002).

2.5. Merits and Demerits of CALL

Recognizing the merits and barriers of technology integration is an necessary step in integrating technology into education successfully and lack of this knowledge may importantly prevent stakeholders and instructional centers from facing the challenges of introducing and supporting the extensive use of technology by teachers in the classroom (Hani, 2014). There are two sorts of factors that influence on the implementation of computer in language teaching. They are external factors and internal ones and the merits and barriers often come out from these factors (Hani, 2014). Among the external factors, the most frequent are access to computers and software, inadequate time for course planning, and insufficient technical and administrative support and among the internal factors, teachers' attitudes toward computers, comfort with established classroom practices, and belief in the computer use are commonly citedin the existing literature (Ottenbreit-Leftwich, Ertmer, & Tondeur, 2015).

CALL can be a sufficient medium for developing the quality of teaching and learning the language. This is because of the following leverage points: (1) the computer can be suitable for creating productive classroom activities which help in the acquisition of the four language skills, (2) CALL may help students learn inside besides outside the classroom, (3) it may also supply individualized,

uninterrupted, and authentic teaching activities, (4) it decreases learners' apathy and lack of involvement in the learning process, (5) it may also be an instrument for the combining of the four skills, and (6) the computer can provide learners with instantaneous feedback (Hani, 2014).

Levy (1997) lists several disadvantages of CALL use in the language classroom. The most significant are: (1) material produced by inexperienced teachers (software), (2) inadequate progress of natural language processing techniques, (3) weak linguistic modeling, and (4) false starts and partial achievements of CALL (as cited in Hani, 2014).

2.6. The Importance of Vocabulary Learning and Teaching

It has long been confirmed that vocabulary is necessary to English learning and teaching in EFL teaching (Chen, 2009). Vocabulary has always been an essential component of language teaching, and after a long time of relative neglect, it is now widely recognized as such (Schmitt, 2010). Nowadays, it is quite believed that vocabulary learning is one of the most significant parts of both one's native language acquisition and foreign language learning (Morra&Camba, 2009).

Wilkins (1972) clarifies the importance of vocabulary learning in his quote, "Without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp.111-112). This explanation indicates that someone's attempts to communicate others could be of no help without lexical items. In foreign language learning, there is a relationship between foreign language learning and vocabulary learning which also applies to English (Stahl, 1983; as cited in Ahmadi et al., 2012).

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

To collect the required data, 60 learners whose YLE (Young Learners English) test scores dwelled in a continuum of one standard deviation below and above the mean were selected from 80 Iranian EFL learners. Then, 30 learners were placed in the experimental group and 30 other learners were placed in the control group. All the participants were selected from the pre-intermediate level and male students. The participants' native language was Persian. In other words, they were all non-native speakers of English who were studying English as a foreign language. All the learners had studied English for about two years and they were studying in grade two of secondary school.The age range of them was between 13 to 14 years old.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. YLE (movers) Test

In order to ensure that the participants of this study enjoyed the same language proficiency level, the researcher applied the YLE series produced by Cambridge University. Because pre-intermediate EFL learners were under investigation in the present study; therefore, this standardized placement test was used as the right level to study. This test was at three different levels: "Beginners", "Movers", and "Flyers". To secure the homogeneity of the participants, considering the level of the participants, the researcher used the "Movers". This test included three sections: listening, reading and writing, and speaking. Because of the time and cost, listening and speaking sections were excluded and reading and writing items were utilized by the researcher. This section contained six parts which focused more on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension questions.

This test composed of 40 multiple-choice, fill in the blanks, and Yes/No questions in order to determine EFL learners' proficiency level. The time allocated to this test was 30 minutes. One point was assigned for each correct response. The students did not get negative points for false answers. This test was administered to 80 students. Based on their performance on the proficiency test, 60 students which were homogenous were selected for the treatment. Because this test was a standard one, it was assumed that enjoyed high level of validity and reliability, but the researcher explored the reliability again. The reliability of the test was computed by Kuder-Richardson (KR-21) formula following the test performance. It was 0.73 which indicates the internal consistency of the test.

3.2.2. Researcher-Made Test of Vocabulary

The researcher constructed a vocabulary test as pre-test to measure the level of vocabulary knowledge of experimental and control groups. This test contained 40 items and the duration of this test was 40 minutes. One point was assigned for each correct response. The students did not get negative points

for false answers. All the items were in the multiple choice format. Vocabulary items that were selected for this test laid within the scope of the materials covered in the textbook (Prospect 2).

In order to determine the reliability of the test and ensure the compatibility of the test to the learners' level of vocabulary knowledge, this test was pilot studied on the learners (*n* = 10) who were similar to the learners of the main study in terms of age, sex, and proficiency level. The results ofKuder-Richardson (KR-21) formula of estimating the reliability analysis showed that the test was reliable (*r* = 0.78). The items standardization of this test was considered in terms of item facility, item discrimination, and item distribution. The results of item analysis (facility index) revealed that three items were easy and one item was difficult. These items were revised and the final version of test was used in the study. The content validity and face validity of the test were evaluated by two experts who were PhD holders of applied linguistics with more than five years of teaching experience.

This test was given to students again after 16 sessions as the immediate post-test in order to check students' progress. It was done with the aim of measuring the students' recall of the vocabulary in two groups. The only difference of this test to the pre-test was that the order of questions was changed to wipe out the likely recall of pre-test answers. The researcher administered the immediate post-test again as a delayed post-test after two weeks. There was not any instruction in that period. It was done to test the retention of words in a longer span to see the real effect of the treatment.

3.3. Procedure

First of all, the researcher gave 80 students the YLE (movers) placement test to homogenize them. Before this test, the students were provided with enough information about the test. They were informed that there were six parts in the test and they were required to finish it according to the time limit. The students whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean were considered as the eligible participants for the study. The rest of participants, whose scores were not at this range, were dropped from the study. As a result, 60 students were selected among all 80 participants for both control and experimental groups according to their performances in the test. Randomly, one class was selected as the control group and the other class as the experimental group.

Then, the researcher gave the students his vocabularypre-testin both groupsto make sure that they were homogeneous with respect to the variable of this investigation, that is, the vocabulary knowledge. After following these steps, the researcher began his employment of language learning software in the experimental group. The interactive multimedia CD-ROM applied in this study was Gaj software. This software included animations, audio, images, music, photographs, and videos. Each lesson of this software contained some practices, activities, conversation, spelling and pronunciation, and new words to reinforce comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, writing, and listening skills. The researcher used his traditional method without employment of Gaj software in the control group. The researcher implemented his treatment in 16 sessions. After 16 sessions, the vocabulary pre-test was given to students of bothgroups again as immediate post-test for final measurement and evaluation. Then, after two weeks, the researcher gave the same test to them again as delayed post-test to determine their vocabulary retention.

4. Results

4.1. Administration and Manipulation of the YLE Test

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the YLE test. According to the mean score of 11.3125 and the standard deviation of 5.3641, 60 subjects were selected to participate in the main study from among 80 participants. That is to say, the students whose scores on the YLE test fell between 5.94 and 16.67 were selected to participate and those higher or lower than them were discarded. The K-R21 reliability index for the test was also 0.73; an acceptable index.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the YLE proficiency test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
YLE	80	1.00	23.00	11.3125	5.36419

Valid N (listwise)	80					

4.2. Normality Test for Vocabulary

Before addressing any tests to accomplish the results, the researcher should be sure of the data have been normally distributed. For this reason, when the researcher computed the vocabulary pre-test scores of both control and experimental groups, he entered them into SPSS software (version 23) to see whether the data were normal or not. Table 2 indicates the result.

Table2. Tests of normality for vocabulary pre-test in experimental and control groups

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
pre-test of control	.143	30	.118	.957	30	.257
pre-test of experimental	.150	30	.085	.962	30	.350

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of normality test (Table2) indicated that *p* values of two groups in Shapiro-Wilk part (.257, and .350) were more than the significance level (.05). Thus, the assumption of normality could be confirmed and the researcher could apply parametric tests for comparing the results of pre-tests in the experimental and the control groups.

4.3. Investigation of the First Research Question

In order to check whether or not there was a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental groups regarding their entry knowledge on vocabulary prior to the treatment, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Because Sig. was more than .05 (Sig. = *p*-value = .369 > .05), the first row of data was used to check the result of *t*-test. The results of Table 3 indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control groups in their performance on the pre-test [*t* (58) = -.541, *p* = .59 (two-tailed) > .05].

Table 3. Independent samples t-test of both groups on vocabulary pre-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-Test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.818	.369	-.541	58	.590	-.26667	.49278	-1.253	.719
Equal variances not assumed			-.541	55.4	.591	-.26667	.49278	-1.254	.720

To investigate whether or not teacher's employment of language learning software had any significant impacts on vocabulary recall of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners, a paired-samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the experimental group's performances before the treatment and after the treatment. The results are displayed in Table 4. The comparison of the pre-test and the immediate post-test of the experimental group revealed a noticeable achievement in learning lexical items. In other words, the difference between the pre-test and the immediate post-test was statistically

significant [*t* (29) = -10.912, *p* = .000 < .05]. As a result, CALL instruction was effective on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary recall.

4.4. Investigation of the Second Research Question

Table 4. Paired samples t-test of the experimental group on pre-test and immediate post-test

	Paired Differences							
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 pre-test_ immediate post-test	-10.4	5.237	.9561	-12.3	-8.47	-10.91	29	.000

In order to find whether or not there was a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental groups in their performance on the immediate post-test, an independent samples *t*-test was run. Because Sig. was more than .05 (Sig. = *p*-value = .551 > .05), the first row of data was used to check the result of *t*-test. The results of Table 5 revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control groups in their performance on the immediate post-test [*t* (58) = -3.50, *p* = .001 (two-tailed) < .05]. Therefore, it could be concluded that using language learning software was more effective than using common traditional methods on learners' vocabulary recall.

Table 5. Independent samples t-test of both groups on vocabulary immediate post-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-Test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.359	.551	-3.50	58	.001	-4.80	1.368	-7.54	-2.05
Equal variances not assumed			-3.50	57.9	.001	-4.80	1.368	-7.54	-2.05

4.5. Investigation of the Third Research Question

In order to address the thirdquestion of the study, a paired samples *t*-test between the scores of the experimental group on immediate post-test and delayed post-test was also conducted. The results are displayed in Table 6. The results revealed that the difference between the students of the experimental group on their performance in immediate and delayed post-tests was statistically significant [*t* (29) = -2.161, *p* = .039 < .05]. In other words, the treatment had a positive impact on the vocabulary retention of the students.

Table 6. Paired samples t-test of experimental group on immediate and delayed post-tests

	Paired Differences							
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			

Pair1 Immediate vs. delayed post-tests	-2.90	7.350	1.341	-5.644	-.1554	-2.161	29	.039

4.6. Investigation of the Fourth Research Question

To determine whether or not learning vocabulary through using language learning software was more effective than using traditional methods of teaching on vocabulary retention of the learners, an independent samples *t*-test was performed. Because Sig. was more than .05 (Sig. = *p*-value = .732 > .05), the first row of data was used to check the result of *t*-test. The results are shown in Table 7. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the scores of both groups on the delayed post-test [*t* (58) = -4.026, *p* = .000 (two-tailed) < .05]. So, those learners who learned vocabulary through CALL-based method had a better ability in vocabulary retention than those who learned vocabulary through traditional methods.

Table 7. Independent samples t-test of both groups on vocabulary delayed post-test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-Test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.118	.732	-4.026	58	.000	-5.866	1.457	-8.783	-2.94
Equal variances not assumed			-4.026	57.7	.000	-5.866	1.457	-8.784	-2.94

5. Discussion

The results of the current study are in line with Kang (1995) who conducted a study on elementary learners who had primary knowledge of the English alphabets and sentence structure. His findings revealed that the presentation of lexical items with visual, aural, and sentence contexts in computer-assisted learning environments improves vocabulary knowledge. The findings of this study approve the results of Naraghizadeh and Barimani's (2013) study. They investigated the effect of CALL on the vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners and observed that the group who received CALL programs outperformed the group who did not receive.The results of the study also support Barani's (2013) findings who examined the effect of CALL on vocabulary achievement of Iranian university EFL learners and found that there was a significant difference between CALL users and non-CALL users on vocabulary learning.

The findings of the study are in harmony with Kim and Gilman (2008) who conducted a study on 172 middle school learners to investigate the impacts of multimedia components like visual texts on vocabulary knowledge. The results of their study showed that learners can recall more lexical items when computer-assisted programs were applied. The results of the current study are similar to the findings of Tabar and Khodareza's (2012) study who examined the effect of using multimedia on vocabulary learning of Iranian pre-intermediate and intermediate EFL learners. Their results indicated that computer assisted vocabulary instruction in comparison to teacher-led method was more effective onIranian pre-intermediate and intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary recall. The results of this study are also compatible with Maftoon et al., (2012) who examined the effects of CALL

on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary learning. They stated that there was a significant difference between CALL-based vocabulary learning and conventional one.

The findings of the study are matched with Ghabanchi and Anbarestani (2008). They investigated the impacts of CALL programs on expanding lexical knowledge of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Their results indicated that in using CALL programs, learners had an intensive mental processing which results in long term recall of words. Akbulut (2007) arrived at the same findings concerned with the aims of this study. He stated that vocabulary recall and retention were improved through using CALL (definitions, pictures, and short video clips) rather than those learners instructed by definition only. The results of this study are in tune with KhaliliSabet and Zarat-ehsan's (2014) findings who examined the impact of multimedia glosses on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention. They concluded that application of multimedia glosses in presenting lexical items led to a better learning and retention. Also, the findings of the study are consistent with Khiyabani et al. (2014) study who investigated the impact of using multimedia in teaching vocabulary in high school classes. Their results showed that the group which used multimedia in their classes can recall and retain more vocabularies than the group which received the conventional instruction.

But, the findings of this study are not confirmed by Rahimzadeh et al., (2013). The results of their study showed that students which received CALL-based instruction were not significantly different than the group which received traditional instruction in delayed post-test. Likewise, the results obtained in this study are not in agreement with the results obtained by Bagheri, Roohani, and Ansari (2012). The findings of their study demonstrated that the performances of the CALL users and non-CALL users were not significantly different in recalling and retaining the lexical items.

6. Conclusion

This research was an attempt to study the effects of teacher's employment of language learning software on improving vocabulary recall and retention of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners compared to conventional teacher-led methods. The survey demonstrated the significant impacts of computer technology on vocabulary recall and retention of the learners. The results of this study revealed that those students who used CALL programs to learn lexical items showed more vocabulary recall and retention than those who did not, this means that computer technology had positive impacts on vocabulary recall and retention of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners.

REFERENCES

Ahmad, K., Corbett, G., Rodgers, M., & Sussex, R. (1985). *Computers, language learning, and language teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Akbulut, Y. (2007). Effects of multimedia annotations on incidental vocabulary learning and reading comprehension of advanced learners of English as a foreign language. *Instructional Science, 35*(6), 499-517.

Bagheri, E., Roohani, A., & Ansari, D. N. (2012). Effect of CALL-based and non-CALL based methods of teaching on L2 vocabulary learning. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 3*(4), 744-752.

Barani, G. (2013). The impact of computer assisted language learning (CALL) on vocabulary achievement of Iranian university students EFL learners. *International Journal of Basic Sciences & Applied Research, 2*(5), 531-537.

Bax, S. (2003). CALL—past, present, and future. *System, 31*(1), 13-28.

Bridge, J. R. (2012). *Motivation and technology for Quebec CEGEP ESL classes.* (Unpublished MEd thesis), University of Western Ontario, Canada.

Chapelle, C. (2001). *Computer applications in second language acquisition: Foundationsfor teaching, testing, and research.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Chen, Y. (2009). A cognitive linguistic approach to classroom English vocabulary instruction for EFL learners in mainland China. *English Language Teaching, 2*(1), 95-100.

Davis, R. (2006). Utopia or chaos? The impact of technology on language teaching. *The Internet TESL Journal, 12*(11). Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Articles/Davis-ImpactOfTechnology.html.

Ghabanchi, Z., & Anbarestani, M. (2008). The effects of CALL program on expanding lexical knowledge of EFL Iranian intermediate learners. *Reading Matrix, 8*(2), 86-95.

Gruba, P. (2004). Understanding digitized second language videotext. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 17*(1), 51-82.

Hani, N. A. B. (2014). Benefits and barriers of computer assisted language learning and teaching in the Arab world: Jordan as a model. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 4*(8), 1609-1615.

He, B., Puakpong, N., & Lian, A. (2015). Factors affecting the normalization of CALL in Chinese senior high schools. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 28*(3), 189-201.

Hewer, S. (2007). CALL methodology: Integrating CALL into study programs. Module 2.1. In Davies G. (Ed.), *Information and communications technology for language teachers (ICT4LT)*. Slough: Thames Vally University.

Jian-ying, Y. (2014). Models for teaching culture in computer-assisted language learning. *Sino-US English Teaching, 11*(4), 283-289.

Jones, C., & Fortescue, S. (1987). *Using computers in the language classroom*. London: Longman.

Kang, S. H. (1995). The effects of a context-embedded approach to second-language vocabulary learning. *System, 23*(1), 43-55.

Kazemi, A., & Narafshan, M. H. (2014). Technology and English language teaching. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 5*(6), 60-67.

Khalili Sabet, M., & Zarat-ehsan, M. (2014). The impact of multimedia glosses on intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 7*(3), 599-608.

Khiyabani, H., Ghonsooly, B., & Ghabanchi, Z. (2014). Using multimedia in teaching vocabulary in high school classes. *Journal of Advances in English Language Teaching, 2*(1), 1-13.

Kim, D., & Gilman, D. A. (2008). Effects of text, audio, and graphic aids in multimedia instruction for vocabulary learning. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 11*(3), 114-126.

Levy, M. (1997). *Computer-assisted language learning: Context and conceptualization*: Oxford University Press.

Levy, M., & Hubbard, P. (2005). Why call CALL "CALL"?. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 18*(3), 143-149.

Maftoon, P., Hamidi, H., & Sarem, S. N. (2015). The effects of CALL on vocabulary learning: A case of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience, 3*(4), 19-30.

Maftoon, P., & Shahini, A. (2012). CALL normalization: A survey on inhibitive factors. *JALT CALL Journal, 8*(1), 17-32.

Moras, S. (2001). *Teaching vocabulary to advanced students: A lexical approach. Karen's linguistic issues*. Retrieved from http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/publications/cl2007/paper/170_paper.html.

Morra, S., & Camba, R. (2009). Vocabulary learning in primary school children: Working memory and long-term memory components. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, 104*(2), 156-178.

Naraghizadeh, M., & Barimani, S. (2013). The effect of CALL on the vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies, 3*(8), 1-12.

Nomass, B. B. (2013). The impact of using technology in teaching English as a second language. *English Language and Literature Studies, 3*(1), 111-116.

Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A. T., Ertmer, P. A., & Tondeur, J. (2015). Interpretation of research on technology integration in teacher education in the USA: Preparation and current practices. In P. Smeyers, D. Bridges, N. C. Burbules, & M. Griffiths (Eds.), *International handbook of interpretation ineducationalresearch*(pp.1239-1262).

Pahlavanpoorfard, S., & Soori, A. (2014). The impact of using computer software on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL university students. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 3*(4), 23-28.

Rahimpour, M. (2011). Computer assisted language learning (CALL). *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning, 8*(1), 3-9.

Rahimzadeh, Z., Gorjian, B., & Pazhakh, A. (2013). The effect of computer assisted language learning (CALL) and context-based instruction of lexical items on the recall and retention of Iranian EFL

learners at elementary level. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 4*(4), 86-92.

Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research, 12*(3), 329-363.

Schmitt, N. (2010). Key issues in teaching and learning vocabulary. In R. Chacón-Beltrán, C. Abello-Contesse, & M. Torreblanca-López (Eds.), *Insights into Non-native Vocabulary Teaching and Learning* (pp. 28-40). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Sharma, P. (2009). *Controversies in using technology in language teaching*. Retrieved from http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/controversies-using-technology-language-teaching.

Soltani Tehrani, N., & Tabatabaei, O. (2012). The impact of blended online learning on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary achievement. *ELT Voices–India, 2*(5), 73-88.

Son, J. B. (2002). Computers, learners, and teachers: Teamwork in the CALL classroom. *English Language Teaching, 14*(2), 239-252.

Stern, H. (1983). Toward a multidimensional foreign language curriculum. In R.G. Mead (Ed.), *Foreign Languages: Key links in the chain of learning* (pp. 120-141). Middlebury, VT: Northeast Conference.

Tabar, H., & Khodareza, M. (2012). The effect of using multimedia on vocabulary learning of pre-intermediate and intermediate Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Basic and Applied Research, 2*(12), 12879-12891.

Tabatabaei, O. (2012). The Effect of computer-assisted language learning on learning idiomatic expressions: A case of Iranian EFL students. *Journal of Language, Culture, and Translation, 1*(1), 119-137.

Warschauer, M. (2000). *CALL for the 21st century*. Paper presented at IATEFL andESADE Conference, Barcelona, Spain.

Warschauer, M., & Healey, D. (1998). Computers and language learning: An overview. *Language Teaching, 31*(2), 57-71.

Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.

Yang, Y. (2010). Computer-assisted foreign language teaching: Theory and practice. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 1*(6), 909-912.

THE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYING CREATIVE TASKS ON IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

Mehdi Khalil
Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad, Iran
Email: mehdikhalili55@yahoo.com

Emad Khosravani
Tabaran Institute of Higher Education, Mashhad, Iran
Email: emad khosravani@yahoo.com

Ali Ghasemi Dorofki
Imam Reza International University, Mashhad, Iran
Email: ali.ghasemi.dorofki@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

ONE OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS IN PREPARING LEARNERS TO COMMUNICATE SUCCESSFULLY IN LANGUAGE CLASSES IS STUDENTS' UNWILLINGNESS TO TAKE PART IN READING CLASSES. READING CLASSES SEEM BORING FOR STUDENTS WHO FIND NO OCCASION TO SHOW THEIR ABILITY AND NO NEED TO CHALLENGE THEIR BRAIN TO ANSWER TEACHERS' DISPLAY QUESTIONS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO INVESTIGATE IF THE METHODS APPLIED IN READING COMPREHENSION CLASSES WHICH SEEM TO BE OUTDATED CAN BE ALTERED BY CREATIVE TASKS. THE SENSE OF NEED FOR EMPLOYING CREATIVE TASKS SOUNDS COMMON AMONG EDUCATIONALISTS AND TEACHERS. BUT, EFL TEACHERS SHOULD NOT THINK THAT CREATIVE TASKS CAN ONLY BE APPLIED IN SPEAKING AND LISTENING OR WRITING CLASSES. AS EXAMINED IN THIS STUDY, STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED CREATIVE READING COMPREHENSION CLASSES EXPERIENCED SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THEIR PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS. THE COURSE MATERIAL USED FOR APPLYING IN THIS STUDY WAS A READING COMPREHENSION BASED BOOK (SELECT READINGS). SOME TASKS INCLUDING JIGSAW TASKS, INFORMATION-GAP TASKS, PROBLEM SOLVING TASKS, OPINION EXCHANGE TASKS, AND DECISION MAKING TASKS WERE DESIGNED TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE CLASS. THE TEACHER HAD TO BE READY TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT SELECTING WHICH TASKS TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE CLASS WHICH BETTER INVOLVE THE STUDENTS IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS. AS THE RESULTS SHOWED, THE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY AND CREATIVITY IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY THROUGH THIS COURSE.

KEYWORDS: CREATIVE TASKS, TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING, EFL LEARNER(S), READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

1. Introduction

In English classes the teachers use different methods and strategies for teaching reading. The twentieth century has seen the rise and fall of a variety of methods and approaches from the Series Method to the Audio-Lingual, the Designer Methods, and later Communicative Language Teaching (Vardanjani, 2013). "It is clear that some approaches and methods are unlikely to be widely adopted because they are difficult to understand and use, lack practical application, require special training, are not readily compatible with local traditions and practices and necessitate major changes in teachers' practices and beliefs" (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 347). The Iranian educational system also seems to be no exception. English teachers have used different approaches, methods, and techniques in Iran at different times. That is why one could not draw a clear-cut line to distinguish periods during which a specific teaching method was applied. Although a certain method might widely be used during a specific period of time, some features and techniques of other teaching methods could also be observed at the same time (Vardanjani, 2013).

In Iran, English curriculum is going to have a change from some outdated methods, mostly the grammar translation method to communicative language teaching method which sounds to be more interactive way of teaching and learning English. The curriculum, has not yet proposed its strategies and procedures completely. As an ongoing way of teaching, especially in reading classes, the method which seems to be applied largely in many English classes in schools of Iran is grammar translation method. Teaching English in Iranian high schools is more grammar based and teachers pay more attention to teaching grammar rather than teaching reading comprehension and communicative skills. Although some teachers add some variations to teaching reading borrowed from other methods and approaches, the results seem to be unsatisfactory. Bakshi (1991) says that what the students know about English at graduation time is not more than a kind of superficial understanding of some English vocabulary meanings and few simple sentences. In the same way, Jalilifar (2010) believes that our students at pre-university level do not seem proficient enough to read and comprehend English language texts which results to losing interest in learning English for many of them and this could prevent them from success in academic English courses (Vardanjani, 2013).

It is very difficult to choose a certain method to handle reading comprehension teaching classes because the situations differ widely. In regard to employing tasks, there seems to be a big challenge with the designing or selection of tasks. Teachers always wonder what kinds of tasks and how can tasks be applied in English classes. What helps the teachers to handle this job is their sense of creativity. "Creativity, the ability to make or otherwise bring into existence something new, whether a new solution to a problem, a new method or device, or a new artistic object or form" (Britannica, 2013).

So far, there have been many studies (e.g.,Akbarentaj, 2000; Aliakbari & Jamalvandi, 2010; Alinejad, 2004; Hadi, 2012; Iranmehr, Erfani, & Davari, 2011; Kashkouli & Barati, 2013; Keyvanfar & Modarresi, 2009; Marashi & Dadari, 2012; Mehrang & Rahimpour, 2010; Nejad & Khosravian, 2014; Salimi, Dadashpour, & Asadollahfam, 2011; Sarani & Sahebi, 2012) investigating the effect of applying task-based approach and instruction in Iranian EFL classes. They have all discussed certain types of tasks which can be employed in English classes. But, it is not possible for any teacher to employ a certain kind of tasks in all classes with different syllabuses. Here a very critical factor comes into account which is creativity.

Some researchers (e.g., Baghaei & Riasati, 2013; Fahim & Ahmadian, 2012; Khany & Boghayeri, 2014) have tried to investigate the effects of creativity. However, the main focuses of such studies were on the impact of creativity on the total outcome of the English classes. The researcher believes that the finding of the current study is important because it shows that the reading comprehension classes can be more profitable and constructive and the students may be motivated to be more sensitive toward being creative by applying these creative tasks in English classes.

To address the objectives of the study, the following research questions are posed:

Q1: Does employing creative tasks have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension ability?

Q2: Does employing creative tasks have any significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' creativity?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Task-Based Language Teaching

Throughout 1970s, TBLT began to be argued as a result of taking teaching both grammar and meaning into consideration (Skehan, 2003). Kris Van den Branden (2006, p. 1) states that "for the past 20 years, task-based language teaching (TBLT) has attracted the attention of second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, curriculum developers, educationalists, teacher trainers and language teachers worldwide". Prabhu is maybe one of the first proponents of TBLT (Ellis, 2003; Long & Crookes, 1992; Shehadeh, 2005). "Prabhu's procedural syllabus which is regarded as one version of TBLT was built around a syllabus which contained no linguistic specifications but instead involved a series of tasks in the form of problem solving activities" (Nahavandi, 2011, p. 59).

From then on, TBLT began to be discussed and practiced in language teaching and research in second language acquisition. Shimomura (2014) notes that some shifts have been observed in the trends of pedagogies over the years in English classrooms. "One of these frequently observed trends is the recent shift to the TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) model from the formerly dominant PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) model in ELT research and practice around the world" (Shimomura, 2014, p. 63). Unlike the PPP model, the TBLT model helps the students for acquiring communicative English as the model provides them to complete a variety of tasks which needs the students to communicate in English.

Some of TBLT advocates (e.g.Willis, 1996) believe that TBLT develops from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), because TBLT shares several principles with CLT. Task-based language teaching grows out of the more general notion of communicative language teaching (Nahavandi, 2011). Teachers recognize the need to elicit samples of language use which shows how learners perform in real situations when they do not pay attention to accuracy. In TBLT, students engage in interaction in order to fulfill the task. However, CLT has its own rationales from different philosophies and approaches toward language instruction.

"TBLT refers to the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching." (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 174). It has been defined as "an approach to language education in which students are given functional tasks that invite them to focus primarily on meaning exchange and to use language for real-world, non-linguistic purposes." (Kris Van den Branden, 2006, p. 1)

2.2. Definitions of Tasks

Skehan (1996) defined task as an activity in which meaning is primary; and it somehow relates to the real world; task completion gains some priority; and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome. Prabhu (1987) defined task as an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process. Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (2001) define task as an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning to attain an objective.

2.3. Different Classifications of Tasks

Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun (1993) classify tasks in accordance with the type of interaction that occurs in task accomplishment such as: jigsaw tasks, information-gap tasks, problem-tasks, decision-making tasks, and opinion exchange tasks (as cited in Richards and Rogers, 2001). Prabhu (1987) identifies three broad task types: information gap, opinion gap, and reasoning gap. Nunan (1991) distinguishes between interpersonal and transactional tasks. He defines the former as one in which communication happens mainly for social purposes and the latter as one in which communication happens mainly to bring about the exchange of goods and services. Nunan (2004) defines tasks in two kinds: 1. Real world tasks: the tasks which are designed to practice those tasks that turn out to be important and useful in the real world such as using the telephone, application to a university. 2. Pedagogical tasks: the tasks which have a psycholinguistic basis in SLA theory such as information-gap task.

2.4. Teacher's Role in TBLT

Ellis (2003) explains teacher's role in a task-based language teaching class as:

1. Selector and sequencer of tasks: according to learner needs, interests and language skill level.

2. One who prepares learners for task: pre-task preparation such as topic introduction, clarifying task instructions.

3. Consciousness-raising facilitator: including attention-focusing pre-task activities such as guided exposure to parallel tasks.

2.5. The Nature of Creativity and its Definitions
Creativity is a phenomenon whereby something new and in some way valuable is created (such as an idea, a joke, a literary work, painting or musical composition, a solution, an invention etc.). "Creativity, the ability to make or otherwise bring into existence something new, whether a new solution to a problem, a new method or device, or a new artistic object or form." (Britannica, 2013). P'Rayan (2014) believes that creativity is the tendency or ability to generate an idea, act, method, approach or product that has novelty, uniqueness, appropriateness, and value. Lubart and Mouchiroud (2003) believe that creativity can also be defined as the process of producing something that maintains both originality and worthwhileness. Creativity is best hypothesized as a complex interplay of several factors: cognition, personality, motivation, social factors, and intellectual factors. This implies that cognitive factors or intellectual factors are only a part of the complex interplay of the components of creativity (Amabile, 1996).

2.6. Dimensions of Creativity
Richards (2013) describes creativity as having a number of different dimensions: the ability to solve problems in original and valuable ways that are relevant to goals; seeing new meanings and relationships in things and making connections; having original and imaginative thoughts and ideas about something; using the imagination and past experience to create new learning possibilities.

2.7. Characteristics of Creative Teachers
P'Rayan (2014) enumerates some characteristics of a creative English teacher. A creative teacher is:

"-One who is self-reliance and can think on his feet and adapt his teaching strategies and methods to maximize learning in his classes.

-One who cares about his learners' needs and adapt methods which would maximize learning.

-One who is able to do or produce something new (fresh ideas, new lessons, new activities, etc.) using one's own intuition.

-One who does not follow the same method of teaching for times.

-One who attempts to devise and plan new approaches, methods, and techniques of conveying his/her explanations and concepts.

-One who makes adjustments, changes or modifications in the lesson plan during the lesson and thinks of different ways and methods to teach the same item.

-One who prepares study material and design activities that kindle students' imagination and creativity.

-One who identifies and appreciates creativity in colleagues and students and learns from others' creativity.

-One who makes creative use of unexpected situations in class, turns every obstacle in the session into an opportunity.''(p. 5).

3. Methodology
3.1. Participants
The sample selected for this study was among 92 students of grade two who were studying English at Danial high school in Mashhad. This school was a state sample school. All the students were male. At the beginning, the Cambridge placement test was done. The students' scores were in a wide range from elementary to upper-intermediate level. These distinctions were made by using the table provided as the teacher's guide by the authors of the English unlimited placement test. According to this table, pre-intermediate level students' scores were between 36 and 55. So, the students who scored elementary and those who scored intermediate and above were omitted. All the students chosen for this survey were pre-intermediate. They scored 36 to 55 out of 120. For the distribution of the students who were consisted of a total number of 66 into two groups, they were sorted according to their placement test scores. The first student on the top was assigned to the first group and the second to the second group. The third student at the top of the list was assigned to the second and the fourth to the first group. And so it continued. Each group consisted of 33 students. Randomly, the first group was named as the control group and the second group as the experimental group.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. Placement Test

The English unlimited placement test (Written test, Cambridge University Press, 2010) consisted of 120 multiple-choice questions and six levels from Starter to Advanced. This test was administered to 92 high school students at grade two. 66 subjects with appropriate scores (36-55) were selected as the participants of the study. Those students who scored under 36 and upper 55 were omitted.

3.2.2. Teacher-Made Test of Reading Comprehension

Teacher-made test of reading comprehension was prepared for using in this study as pre-test and post-test. This test contained 30 items and the duration of this test was 30 minutes. One point was assigned for each correct response. The students did not get negative points for false answers. All the items were in the multiple choice format. The items that were selected for this test laid within the scope of the materials covered in the textbook (Select Reading).

To meet the content validity and face validity, 30 multiple choice tests were chosen out of three hundred tests prepared by the authors of the book. And, for measuring the reliability of the test, it was run on 30 students in Mosallanejad sample high school who were selected by their score in the English unlimited placement test of Cambridge. The students with the scores of 36 to 55 were selected as pre-intermediate level of English proficiency. They answered the teacher-made test of reading comprehension. The reliability coefficient of the items was 0.774, suggesting that the items had relatively high internal consistency.

3.2.3. Creativity Questionnaire

Abedi's creativity questionnaire consisted of 60 items. This questionnaire was based on Torrance tests of creative thinking. It also sought to develop a multiple choice test to provide an efficient estimate of the scores derived from the Torrance tests of creative thinking. The score of each item ranged from 1 to 3. Abedi (1993) has described the Cronbach's Alpha for fluency component 0.75, for originality 0.67, for flexibility 0.61, and for expansion 0.61 in his report. Abedi's creativity questionnaire provided a good facility for measuring the overall creativity level of the students attended in this study.

3.3. Procedure

3.3.1. Data Collection

First of all, 92 students studying in grade two of high school were selected to be sampled. Then, the placement test was done and the students who scored between 36 and 55 as pre-intermediate level were selected. 66 students were sampled in two groups to attend the reading comprehension classes. The students were assigned to two groups according to their placement test scores. The groups were named as control and experimental groups randomly. This program was defined as an English reading comprehension course. At the first session, the teacher-made test of reading comprehension was done as the pre-test. The results showed a good distribution of samples. The students in two groups scored very close to each other.

The students had some sessions of discussion to get familiar with the concept of reading comprehension, the intension behind this activity, strategies of reading, and the students got familiar with some methods of reading comprehension classes. There was a serious and deep discussion about the purpose and goals of reading comprehension. The students also answered the creativity test which was prepared in the form of a Microsoft excel file. The students themselves could see the results and the score at the end. The course included 14 sessions of reading comprehension class.

In the control group the students had a very common reading comprehension class which they had experienced it before. In this group, the students had pre-reading activities as assigned in the book. They practiced the reading comprehension with the skills defined in the book itself. They practiced scanning and skimming. They had the time to read silently. Then, the text was read and discussed paragraph by paragraph. After reading the text, the students answered the comprehension test prepared in the book. They answered the test and discussed about the answers. At the end of the course, the researcher-made test of reading comprehension was applied to the class again as the post-test. The same test of creativity answered by the students at the beginning of the course, was answered by the students at the end of the course.

In experimental group, reading and learning strategies were discussed broadly. The students were asked to be involved in the discussions. They came to this understanding that the learning job is going to be done by the learners. They discussed about using means of communication and how learning is influenced by information technology. The concept of creativity also was discussed in the classes. Some tasks were designed to be employed in the class. The researcher was watchful to select some suitable tasks which could well involve the students in the process of reading comprehension. In fact, it was very important to select and raise a subject which seems interesting to the students. For example, one thing which most teens want to speak about is sleeping. They are eager to raise their own personal experiences. So, in chapter one of the book we had an opinion exchange task as an interactive task which required students to exchange information, opinions, and attitudes. The students were grouped into four member groups. Every student in the group had to explore other members' sleep habits and behavior. Other tasks were like hot seat in which a group was selected as the authors of the text. Tasks like information-gap tasks, jigsaw tasks, and problem solving tasks were selected and employed in the class. The students attended the class three sessions a week for five weeks. At the end of the course, the researcher-made test of reading comprehension was given to the students and their scores were extracted. The same test of creativity answered by the students at the beginning of the course, was answered by the students at the end of the course.

3.3.2. Method of Data Analysis

After gathering the data, the subjects' performances on the tests (pre-tests, post-tests) were scored in order to answer the research questions and to test the research hypotheses. The researcher used *t*-test as a proper statistical formula. In order to check the effects of teacher's employment of creative tasks on students'reading comprehension ability and creativity between control and the experimental groups, the independent *t*-tests were applied for comparing the results of the two groups to see if there were any significant differences between the two groups.

In the case of the effects of teacher's employment of creative tasks on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension ability and creativity within the experimental group, the dependent *t*-tests or paired *t*-tests were utilized. Additionally, to examine the impacts of teacher's employment of traditional method on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension ability and creativity within the control group, the dependent *t*-tests or paired *t*-tests were applied again. The SPSS software (version 19) was utilized to obtain descriptive and inferential statistical results.

3.4. Study Design

This study adopted a quantitative method. Since real random selection of the participants was not possible, a quasi-experimental design was applied in this study and the variables were arranged according to this kind of design. In other words, this study used a pre-test, treatment, and post-test design. This study used one independent variable which was employment of creative tasks and two dependent variables including reading comprehension ability of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners and creativity.

4. Results

4.1. Administration and Manipulation of the English Placement Test

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the Cambridge English unlimited placement test. Among 92 students who took the placement test, 66 students were selected according to their scores which were to be pre-intermediate level (36-55). So, 26 students who scored lower than 36 or upper than 55 in the placement test were omitted. After selecting 66 students to take part in the study, they were grouped into two groups. Randomly, the first group was named as the control group and the second group as the experimental group.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the placement test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Placement test	66	36	55	43.32	5.452
Valid N (listwise)	66				

4.2. Normality Test for Reading Comprehension

Table 2. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of control group

		Pretest	Posttest
N		33	33
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	14.70	22.42
	Std. Deviation	3.721	3.093
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.100	.193
	Positive	.100	.193
	Negative	-.091	-.104
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.575	1.106
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.896	.173

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Table 3. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of experimental group

		Pretest	Posttest
N		33	33
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	14.42	24.21
	Std. Deviation	3.597	3.324
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.102	.110
	Positive	.102	.110
	Negative	-.094	-.102
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.587	.630
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.881	.823

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Before going directly to the statistical method for comparison of data obtained from two groups, two normality tests were conducted to see if the data collected from the groups are normally distributed or not. The results of the normality tests which are shown in table 2 and table 3 indicate that *p* values of the control group (0.896 and 0.173) and the experimental group (0.881 and 0.823) in pre-test and post-test are larger than 0.05, it means that the normality is obtained. So, the test distribution is normal. Thus, parametric tests such as independent and dependent t-test can be run on these results

to have a comparison on the results of the pre-test and post-test in the control and the experimental groups.

4.3. Testing Research Question One

In order to determine whether there is any significant difference between the control and experimental groups of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension ability before applying creative tasks, an independent sample *t*-test was run to compare the participants' scores of the control and experimental groups before applying creative tasks.

Table 4. Independent samples test of pre-test scores of control and experimental groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.086	.770	.303	64	.763	.273	.901	-1.527	2.072
	Equal variances not assumed			.303	63.927	.763	.273	.901	-1.527	2.072

Because sig. value for equality of variances was more than 0.05 (sig. = *p*-value = 0.770 > 0.05), the first row of data was used to check the results of *t*-test. The results, as Table 4 shows, indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups in their performances on the pre-test [*t* (64) = 0.303, *p* = 0.763 (two-tailed) > 0.05]. This indicated that the participants in both groups had similar reading comprehension ability in their language learning.

To investigate the first research question, a paired samples *t*-test between the scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and the post-test of the reading comprehension was performed. The results shown in Table 5 indicated that the difference between the reading comprehension pre-test and post-test of the experimental group was statistically significant. [*t* (32) = -29.341, *p*=0.00 < 0.05].

Table 5. Paired samples test of the experimental group on pre-test and post-test

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	-9.788	1.916	.334	-10.467	-9.108	-29.341	32	.000

An independent samples *t*-test was applied to check whether or not the teacher's employment of creative tasks is more effective than the traditional method in improving learners' reading comprehension ability. The results of the post-tests were analyzed to compare the experimental and control groups' reading comprehension ability of the participants.

Table 6. Independent samples test of both groups on reading comprehension post-tests

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.30	.581	-2.26	64	.027	-1.788	.790	-3.367	-.209
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.26	63.6	.027	-1.788	.790	-3.367	-.209

Because sig. value for equality of variances was more than 0.05 (sig. = *p*-value = 0.581 > 0.05), the first row of data was used to check the results of *t*-test. The results, as Table 6 shows, indicated that there was statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups performance on the post-tests [t (64) = -2.262, p = 0.027 (two-tailed) < 0.05]. Therefore, the results indicated that after treatment, learners in the experimental group had significant improvement in their reading comprehension ability. Consequently, the results showed that teacher's employment of creative tasks is more effective than traditional method in developing of learners' reading comprehension ability.

4.4. Normality Test for Creativity

Before choosing the statistical method for comparison of data related to creativity, tests of normality were conducted to show the normality or lack of normality of the data obtained. For this reason, Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were run. The results are shown in tables 7 and 8.

Table 7. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of control group creativity

		Creativity 1	Creativity 2
N		33	33
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	81.12	83.15
	Std. Deviation	5.904	6.042
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.175	.198
	Positive	.175	.198
	Negative	-.120	-.119
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.004	1.137
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.265	.150

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Table 8. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of experimental group creativity

		Creativity 1	Creativity 2
N		33	33
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	80.76	87.12
	Std. Deviation	5.927	5.260
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.157	.191
	Positive	.157	.191
	Negative	-.127	-.135
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.901	1.099
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.391	.179

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

The results of normality tests (Table 7 and Table 8) show that *p* values of the control group (0.265 and 0.150) and the experimental group (0.391 and 0.179) in creativity pre-test and post-test are more than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, the assumption of normality can be confirmed and a parametric test such as *t*-test can be applied for comparing the results of the creativity pre-test and post-test in the control and experimental groups.

4.5. Testing Research Question Two

In order to determine whether there is any significant difference between the control and experimental groups of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' creativity before applying creative tasks, an independent sample *t*-test was run to compare the participants' scores of creativity in the control and experimental groups before applying creative tasks.

Table 9. Independent samples test of both groups on creativity pre-tests

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Creativity1	Equal variances assumed	.001	.977	.250	64	.804	.364	1.456	-2.546	3.273
	Equal variances not assumed			.250	63.999	.804	.364	1.456	-2.546	3.273

Because sig. value for equality of variances was more than 0.05 (sig. = *p*-value = 0.977>0.05), the first row of the data was used to check the results of *t*-test. The results, as Table 9 shows, indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups in their

performances on the creativity pre-test [t (64) = 0.250, *p* = 0.804 (two-tailed) > 0.05]. This indicated that the participants in both groups had similar creativity in their language learning.

To investigate the second research question, a paired samples *t*-test between the scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and the post-test of creativity was performed. The results are shown in Table 10. The results indicated that the difference between creativity pre-test and post-test of the experimental group was statistically significant. [*t* (32) = -15.785, *p*= 0.00 < 0.05]. So, it can be concluded that teacher's employment of creative tasks has significant effects on Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners' creativity.

Table 10. Paired samples test of experimental group on creativity pre-test and post-test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Experimental Group — Creativity1 Creativity2	-6.36	2.316	.403	-7.185	-5.542	-15.78	32	.000

An independent samples *t*-test was applied to check whether or not the teacher's employment of creative tasks is more effective than the traditional method in improving learners' creativity. The results of post-tests were analyzed to compare the experimental and control groups' creativity of the participants.

Table 11. Independent samples test of creativity post-tests

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t*-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Creativity2	Equal variances assumed	.311	.579	-2.84	64	.006	-3.970	1.395	-6.756	-1.184
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.84	62.8	.006	-3.970	1.395	-6.757	-1.183

Because sig. value for equality of variances was more than 0.05 (sig. = *p*-value = 0.579> 0.05), the first row of the data was used to check the results of *t*-test. Because sig. value for equality of variances was more than 0.05 (sig. = *p*-value = 0.579> 0.05), the first row of data was used to evaluate the result of t-test. As Table 11 displays, because sig. (two-tailed) = 0.006 and it was less than 0.05 (α = 0.05), there was statistically significant difference between experimental and control groups on the

creativity post-tests [t (64) = -2.847, p = 0.006 (two-tailed) < 0.05]. Therefore, the results indicated that after treatment, learners in the experimental group had significant improvement in their creativity. Consequently, the results showed that the teacher's employment of creative tasks is more effective than traditional method in developing of creativity.

5. Discussions and Conclusions

Studies which were done in the field also confirm the effects investigated in this study. Marashi and Dadari (2012) studied the effects of employing tasks on writing. Mehrang and Rahimpour (2010) investigated the effects of applying tasks on speaking. Keyvanfar and Modarresi (2009) have worked on the effects of applying some tasks on reading. Adhami et al. (2014) and Kazemi (2012) discuss the tasks known as jigsaw tasks. Rosen and Foltz (2014) study the tasks known as problem solving tasks. Nunn (2002) investigates the tasks which he calls opinion exchange tasks. They all come to this conclusion that employing tasks improves the students' abilities.

In this study, it is proved that employing creative tasks has significant effects on the students' reading comprehension ability. It is seen that students can change significantly when they attend a reading comprehension class in which creative tasks are employed. Teachers can improve students' reading comprehension ability by applying creative tasks. They can also improve their creativity by employing creative tasks.

REFERENCES

Adhami, M., Marzban, A., Garmsar, I., & Qaemshahr, I. (2014). Research Article The Effect of Jigsaw Task on Reading Ability of Iranian Intermediate High School EFL Learners. *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies(Special Issue on Applied Sciences), 4*(2), 13-24.

Akbarentaj, N. (2000). The Psychological Effect of Task-Based Language Teaching on Iranian Students in Learning English as A Foreign Language. *IAU of Babol, Iran*.

Aliakbari, M., & Jamalvandi, B. (2010). The Impact of" Role Play" on Fostering EFL Learners' Speaking Ability: A Task-Based Approach. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics, 14*(1), 15-29.

Alinejad, Z. (2004). The effect of task-based reading activities and text-based reading activity on the Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. *Tehran: IAUCTB*.

Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context: Update to" the social psychology of creativity."*: Westview press.

Baghaei, S., & Riasati, M. J. (2013). An investigation into the relationship between teachers' creativity and students' academic achievement: A case study of Iran EFL context. *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research, 14*(12), 1576-1580.

Bakshi, R. N. (1991). Indian English. *English Today, 7*(03(27)), 43-46.

Britannica, E. (2013). Britannica *Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica.

Bygate, M., Skehan, P., & Swain, M. (2001). Researching pedagogic task. *Second Language Learning, Teaching and Testing. Harlow (Pearson Education)*.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*: Oxford University Press.

Fahim, M., & Ahmadian, M. (2012). Critical thinking and Iranian EFL context. *Journal of language teaching and research, 3*(4), 793-800.

Hadi, A. (2012). Perceptions of task-based language teaching: A study of Iranian EFL learners. *English Language Teaching, 6*(1), p103.

Iranmehr, A., Erfani, S. M., & Davari, H. (2011). Integrating task-based instruction as an alternative approach in teaching reading comprehension in English for special purposes. *Theory and practice in Language studies, 1*(2), 142-148.

Kashkouli, Z., & Barati, H. (2013). Type of test-taking strategies and task-based reading assessment: A case in Iranian EFL learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 70*, 1580-1589.

Kazemi, M. (2012). The Effect of Jigsaw Technique on the Learners' Reading Achievement: The Case of English as L2. *MJAL 4: 3 Autumn 2012; ISSN 0974-8741 University of Guilan, Iran*.

Keyvanfar, A., & Modarresi, M. (2009). The Impact of Task-based Activities on the Reading Skill of Iranian EFL Young Learners at the Beginner Level. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2*, 81-100.

Khany, R., & Boghayeri, M. (2014). Do Gender, Educational Degree, and Experience make a difference in EFL Teachers' Creativity? *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, 4*(10), 282-291.

Long, M. H., & Crookes, G. (1992). Three approaches to task-based syllabus design. *Tesol Quarterly*, 27-56.

Lubart, T. I., & Mouchiroud, C. (2003). Creativity: A Source of Difficulty in Problem Solving. *The psychology of problem solving*, 127.

Marashi, H., & Dadari, L. (2012). The Impact of Using Task-based Writing on EFL Learners' Writing Performance and Creativity. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(12), 2500-2507.

Mehrang, F., & Rahimpour, M. (2010). The impact of task structure and planning conditions on oral performance of EFL learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2*(2), 3678-3686.

Nahavandi, N. (2011). The effect of task-based activities on EFL learners' reading comprehension. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 2*(1), 56-69.

Nejad, F. M., & Khosravian, F. (2014). The Development and Evaluation of an Achievement Test for Measuring the Efficacy of Task-Based Writing Activities to Enhance Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension. *English Language Teaching, 7*(7), p.120.

Nunan, D. (1992). *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching*: Cambridge University Press.

Nunn, R. (2002). Designing simple interactive tasks for small groups. *The Internet TESL Journal, 8 (7)*.

P'Rayan, A. (2014). Assessing English Language Teacher's Creativity Quotient Retrieved 2014, from http://www.hltmag.co.uk/feb14/

Pica, T., Kanagy, R., & Falodun, J. (1993). Choosing and using communication tasks for second language instruction. *Multilingual Matters*, 9-9.

Prabhu, N. S. (1987). *Second language pedagogy* (Vol. 20): Oxford University Press Oxford.

Richards, J. C. (2013). Creativity in language teaching. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 1*(3), 19-43.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (3 ed.): Cambridge University Press.

Rosen, Y., & Foltz, P. (2014). Assessing collaborative problem solving through automated technologies. *Research and Practice in Technology Enhanced Learning, 9*(3), 389-410.

Salimi, A., Dadashpour, S., & Asadollahfam, H. (2011). The effect of task complexity on EFL learners' written performance. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 29*, 1390-1399.

Sarani, A., & Sahebi, L. F. (2012). The impact of task-based approach on vocabulary learning in ESP courses. *English Language Teaching, 5*(10), p118.

Shehadeh, A. (2005). Task-based language learning and teaching: Theories and applications. *Teachers exploring tasks in English language teaching*, 13-30.

Shimomura, F. (2014). General Overview of TBLT and Its Applicability To The University English Classrooms in Japan. *International Journal of Education, 6*(4), p62-p70.

Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied linguistics, 17*(1), 38-62.

Skehan, P. (2003). Task-based instruction. *Language teaching, 36*(01), 1-14.

Van den Branden, K. (2006). *Task-based language education: From theory to practice*: Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Vardanjani, A. M. (2013). A Critical Study of Iranian EFL Environment. *International Journal of English Language and Translation Studies, 1*(3).

Willis, J. (1996). A Framework for Task-based learning: London: Addison Wesley Longman Limited.

IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING L1 IN HIGH AND LOW PROFICIENCY LANGUAGE CLASSES

Ahmad Mahdieh Najafabadi
Department of English, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran
Ahmadmahdieh1@gmail.com

Omid Tabatabaei
Department of English, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran
Tabatabaeiomid@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

THIS STUDY AIMED AT INVESTIGATING IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF USING L1 IN HIGH AND LOW PROFICIENCY LANGUAGE CLASSES. THE SAMPLE OF THE STUDY INCLUDED 40 TEACHERS WHO HAD BEEN TEACHING HIGH PROFICIENCY CLASSES AND 47 TEACHERS WHO HAD BEEN TEACHING LOW PROFICIENCY CLASSES. TO COLLECT DATA, THE RESEARCHER MADE USE OF QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW. REGARDING THE DATA ANALYSIS, THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRES INCLUDING FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES WERE COMPUTED. NEXT, ONE SAMPLE T-TEST WAS RUN TO SEE TO WHAT DEGREE PARTICIPANTS OF FOUR GROUPS BELIEVED IN TEACHING ENGLISH MONOLINGUALLY BY THE TARGET LANGUAGE. RESULTS OF THE STUDY REVEALED THAT ALMOST ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF 2 GROUPS BELIEVED THAT ENGLISH SHOULD BE TAUGHT MONOLINGUALLY BY THE TARGET LANGUAGE AND THEY WERE STRONG ADVOCATES OF TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH THE TARGET LANGUAGE RATHER THAN THE MOTHER TONGUE. REGARDING LOW PROFICIENCY CLASSES, SOME TEACHERS ASSERTED THAT USING L1 IS JUST LIKE A BITTER PILL TO SWALLOW, I.E. UNPLEASANT AND UNAVOIDABLE AND THERE IS NO ESCAPING THE FACT THAT SOMETIMES THE TEACHERS HAVE TO USE MOTHER TONGUE AS A LAST RESORT.

KEYWORDS: BELIEFS, LEARNING-ORIENTED LANGUAGE LEARNING, THE BILINGUAL APPROACH, THE MONOLINGUAL APPROACH

1. Introduction

In terms of using L1 in language classroom and code switching, there have been many theoretical arguments, both for and against the use of L1 in language classrooms. The incorporation of L1 into an L2 classroom is one of the most disputed and ambiguous issues among linguists, researchers and teachers.

On the one hand, Macaro (2005) argues that L1 should be integrated into an L2 classroom. The use of the first language will provide students with a source of scaffold and live input (Crawford, 2004) and learners have the ability to deal with two different languages simultaneously.

On the other hand, Cook (2001) insists that students should be shown the importance of the L2 through its continual use. And also, supporters of the Monolingual Approach state that translating between L1 and L2 can be dangerous as it encourages the belief that there are 1 to 1 equivalents

between the languages, which is not always the case (Pracek, 2003). According to these opposing views, the issue of using mother tongue in the language classroom is still controversial.

Many teachers and researchers began to re-evaluate and reconsider their negative views towards the use of mother tongue after the appearance of studies supporting the use of L1 in a controlled way (Jadallah & Hasan, 2011). Swan (1985, cited in Atkinson, 1987) asserts that the communicative approach should be reassessed, but did not call for a reassessment of the role of the mother tongue in the classroom, which Atkinson believes has a vital impact on student's learning. Sometimes it is difficult to decide when to shift from L2 to L1 (Copland & Neokleous, 2011).

Teachers' perceptions also play an important role in their actual practices while teaching target language. In their book *Psychology for Language Teachers* (1997), Williams and Burden argue that teachers are highly influenced by their beliefs. Teachers' beliefs is an extremely complicated phenomenon which involves various aspects, such as beliefs about the nature of language itself, language learning and teaching, learners, teachers, and the teachers –learners power relationship. Such beliefs definitely influence teachers' approaches to EFL teaching. In the light of this, this study aimed at exploring Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of using L1 in high and low proficiency language classes.

2. Literature Review

It is claimed that the ban of L1 from the classroom would motivate conscious and unconscious learning (Jadallah & Hasan, 2011). Sharma, (2010, p. 80 cited in Jadallah & Hasan, 2011, p. 3) states that "the more students are exposed to English, the more quickly they will learn". However, Cook (1999) argues that it is difficult for students who share the same L1 not to use it in classroom.

Alshammari (2011) indicates that an EFL teacher's hesitancy to use the L1 is due to the assumption made by some researchers that it may leads to a deficiency level in students' speaking. Atkinson (1987) argues that the reasons behind the absence of attention given to L1 use in an L2 classroom are:

A- Linking translation with the grammar translation method and excluding the L1 use with subsequent methods (i.e. the direct method)

B- High status native speakers and their priority to teach even multi-lingual classes

C- The assumption by Krashen (1981) that learning is less valuable than acquisition

D- The claim that the best way to learn English is through speaking only English.

Allowing students to use their mother tongue together with a second language is called a bilingual approach. It is normal behavior, and desirable to code-switch between two languages that both speaker and listener know (Cook, 2008). Apparently, students will code-switch in the classroom when they feel it is appropriate (Macaro, 2005). "The mother tongue is the greatest asset people bring to the task of foreign language learning and provides a language acquisition support system" (Butzkamm, 2003, p. 29).

Macaro (2005) argues that he has never come across a study that revealed that the majority of participants prefer to exclude L1 entirely from L2. This demonstrates that the exclusion of students' mother tongue is about to vanish. Moreover, he insists that the most important variables in this issue, which needs to be carefully considered, are the age of learners and their proficiency level.

There is a wide variation between teachers who use L1 in the classroom, from those who allow slight use to those who use it overwhelmingly (Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). One of the most recent arguments regarding L1 use is that of Trent (2013, p. 215), who argues that "these negative sentiments need to be weighed against a series of supposed benefits around use of the L1 in L2 learning and teaching". Although some researchers state that L1 should not be overused in the classroom (Atkinson, 1987; Cook, 2001), Edstrom (2006, p. 289) argues that it is difficult to set a fixed amount because "it is inseparably linked to the underlying function or purpose". Thus, according to Edstrom's (2006) claim, L1 can be used extensively when is convenient.

One of the most recently developed methods is CLT. It has been introduced as a reaction to the failure of the audio-lingual method to enhance students' ability to communicate in the target language, especially in a context where English is rarely used outside the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Although it aims to maximize the use of L2 as the medium of interaction, it permits the use of students' L1, but in limited situations and in a controlled way. Wu (2009) argues that

many researchers and teachers claim that CLT does not allow the use of L1. However, it can be used in CLT class but in a balanced way.

3. Research Questions
1. What beliefs do Iranian EFL teachers hold about using L1 in high proficiency language classes?
2. What beliefs do Iranian EFL teachers hold about using L1 in low proficiency language classes?

4. Method

4.1. Participants

The sample of the selected participants included two different groups as follows: Group 1: A total of 40 male and female Iranian EFL teachers who had been teaching high English proficiency classes for more than 10 years well known language institutes (located in Isfahan & Najafabad), participated in the survey. The teachers ranged in age from 35 to 50. They had enough experience in teaching English as foreign Language at upper intermediate and advanced levels. In addition, most of them had PhD and experience in teaching at universities.

Group 2: A total of 47 male and female Iranian EFL teachers who had been teaching low English proficiency classes for more than 3 years in well-known language institutes (located in Isfahan & Najafabad), participated in the survey. The teachers ranged in age from 20 to 35. They had experience in teaching English as foreign Language at beginner, pre-intermediate and intermediate levels.

4.2. Instrument

4.2.1. Questionnaire

The survey instrument, a questionnaire, was adopted to measure Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of using L1 in language classroom .This questionnaire was adopted from Abdulkarim Alsaawi's (2013) used in his study on exploring Saudi Arabian EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions of using L1 in language classroom.

This questionnaire composed of 3 sections: first section contained general and demographic information (e.g. Age, Gender, Field of study, Degree and Total number of years teaching English). The second section included 9 multiple choice questions and for each question the teachers were supposed to select the choice that they believed most closely represented their answer. The last section contained 10 statements. The teachers read each statement carefully and according to their views they chose one of the following scales: SA (strongly agree), A (agree), U (undecided), D (disagree), SD (strongly disagree).

4.2.2. Interview

In order to obtain additional information from the participants, make the study more conclusive and accurate, and have the best results and conclusion from the current study, the researcher made use of the interview which consisted of 6 questions as follows:
1. How much English do you think teachers should speak in class that may be most helpful to the students? Why? Explain.
2. When do you think using English is most effective? Why?
3. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of using English only in L2 teaching? Explain.
4. When do you think using Persian is helpful to your students? Why? Explain.
5. Considering low proficiency language classes (beginner, pre-intermediate), what beliefs do you hold about using mother tongue in the language classroom? Explain.
6. Considering high proficiency language classes (upper inter-mediate and advanced) what beliefs do you hold about using L1 in the language classroom? Explain.

4.3. Procedure

The researcher visited two groups of language teachers. The first group included well known and eminent language teachers who had more than 10 years of experience in teaching high proficiency language classes. In addition, most of them were PhD holders and had experience teaching at universities (Azad university of Najafabad & Isfahan University). These teachers were supposed to fill out the questionnaires regarding high proficiency language classes.

The second ones were those who had experience in teaching low proficiency language classes and were kind of novice language teachers. This group of language teachers were supposed to fill out the questionnaires regarding low proficiency language classes. The researcher explained the pedagogical goal of the survey and asked both groups of teachers to fill out the questionnaires. Then the questionnaires were distributed among them .A few of them answered the questions after or between their class times, but most teachers assigned a time for returning the questionnaire, between 3 and 7 days, So the questionnaires were collected during 20 days.

As for the interview, in order to have the best results, the researcher chose 20 people from group 1 and 2 randomly and interviewed them. For the first group, the researcher made appointment with 10 teachers of the first group of the participants of the study. As mentioned earlier, they were famous and eminent teachers who had more than 10 years of experience in teaching high proficiency language classes. Also, they had great reputations among both language learners and other language teachers and were the most reliable and dependable sources of getting information related to the topic of this study. Then, the researcher interviewed these 10 teachers one by one using a recorder. This procedure lasted for 3 weeks since it was very difficult to find these teachers at their free time and make them stay for the interview after their classes when they were tired. However, they were really kind and cooperative with the researcher and answered the questions honestly and precisely.

For the second group, just like the first one, the researchers made appointment with 10 teachers of the second group. These teachers who were kind of novice, were interviewed one by one using a recorder. In spite of the fact that these teachers did not have a lot of experiences in teaching English, most of them had cutting edge ideas and views and provided the researcher with helpful answers.

4.4. Data Analysis

After gathering the data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22 was used to organize and analyze the collected data. The data analysis included the following steps: first, in order to determine if the data had the assumptions of normality, primarily Kolmogrov-Smirnov test was run. Then, the descriptive statistics for the questionnaires including frequencies and percentages were computed. Next, one sample t-test was run to see to what degree participants of four groups believed in teaching English monolingually by the target language.

5. Results

5.1. Investigating the Questionnaire

5.1.1. The First Research Question

The first research question was posed by the researcher to find out the perceptions and opinions of teachers who had been teaching high English proficiency classes, regarding the use of L1 in language classroom. In this attempt, first the frequency table in terms of age and gender of the intended group are shown below.

Table 1
Frequency Table of Age and Gender for Group 1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
gender	female	18	45.0	45.0	45.0
	male	22	55.0	55.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	
age	25-30	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
	30-35	12	30.0	30.0	45.0
	35+	22	55.0	55.0	100.0
	total	40	100	100	

As shown in this Table; in terms of gender, 45 % of this group included female teachers and 55 % of it included male ones. In terms of age, 15% of the group included teachers ranged in age from 25 to 30; 30% of it included teachers ranged in age from 30 to 35 and finally 55% of it included teachers who were over 35 years old.

In order to look at the descriptive statistics of the first group in terms of mean and standard deviation, Table 2 is depicted below.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Group 1

Group	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
				Statistic	Std. Error	
1	40	41.00	79.00	61.60	1.33	8.43

As shown in this Table, the mean of 40 teachers (high)' responses to the questionnaire about teaching English monolingually is 61.60. The minimum of the responses is 41 and the maximum is 79.

To find out the result of the first research question, one sample t-test was run to see to what degree these teachers believed in teaching English monolingually. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

The Results of One Sample T-Test for Group 1

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
General beliefs	28.2	39	.000	61.60	34.90	40.29

As indicated in Table 3, the mean is 61.6000 with the significant level of .000, p>.05. (t (39) = 28.209; p = .000), thus the respondents (the first group) hold the view that while teaching English, L1 shouldn't be used; in other words, English should be taught monolingually without the use of L1 in the classroom.

5.1.2. The second Research Question

The frequency table of age and gender for teachers, who had been teaching low English proficiency classes, is shown in table 4.

Table 4

Frequency Table of Age and Gender for Group 2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Female	32	68.1	68.1	68.1
	Male	15	31.9	31.9	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	
Age	19-15	7	14.9	14.9	14.9
	20-24	21	44.7	44.7	59.6
	25-29	13	27.7	27.7	87.2
	30+	6	12.8	12.8	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

The sample of the selected participants of the second group included 32 female and 15 male teachers. In terms of age, 14.9 % of this group included teachers ranged in age from 15 to 19; 44.7 % of them ranged in age from 20 to 24; 27.7 % of them ranged in age from 25 to 29 and finally 12.8 % of them were over 30 years old.

In order to look at the descriptive statistics of the second group in terms of mean and standard deviation, table 5 is depicted below.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Group 2

Group	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
				Statistic	Std. Error	
2	47	35.00	83.00	57.23	11.36	1.65

As shown in this Table, the mean of 47 teachers (low)' responses to the questionnaire about teaching English monolingually is 57.23. The minimum of the responses is 35 and the maximum is 83.

To find out the result of the second research question, one sample t-test was run to see to what degree the teachers who had been teaching low English proficiency classes, believed in teaching English monolingually. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

The Result of One Sample T-Test for Group 2

Group	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
2	34.52	46	.000	57.23	53.89	60.57

Similar to the first group, the second group highly believe in teaching English monolingually, with the mean of 57.23 at the significant level of .000, p> .01. (t (46) = 34.52, p = .000). Therefore, the second group of teachers were strong advocates of teaching English by the target language rather than the mother tongue.

5.2. Findings from the Interviews

In order to elicit additional information about use of L1 in language classroom, make the study more conclusive and accurate, and have the best results and conclusion from the current study, the researcher interviewed 10 high proficiency teachers and 10 low proficiency ones.

The first interview question was, "**How much English do you think teachers should speak in class that may be most helpful to the students? Why? Explain**." Regarding low proficiency classes, all of the high and low proficiency teachers answered that for high proficiency classes, using mother tongue is not acceptable and teachers should speak English all the time during the time of class. But regarding low proficiency classes, 50 % of the teachers believed that more than 90% of the time of class should be spoken in English; and another 50% of them believed that depending on the different situations, the teachers should use English at least more than 70 percent of the time of class.

The second interview question was: "**When do you think using English is most effective? Why?**" All of the teachers shared the same idea and asserted that using English is almost always effective because students must be exposed to English as much as possible in order to master English.

The third interview question asked "**What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of using English only in L2 teaching? Explain**." 10 high proficiency teachers and 8 low proficiency ones stated that one of the most important advantages of using English only is that students learn to think in English and this help students avoid translating. All teachers asserted that using English is all advantage and there is no disadvantage.

The fourth interview question was "**When do you think using Persian is helpful to your students? Why? Explain.**" Regarding low proficiency classes, all the teachers asserted that it is helpful to use Persian when the teacher is teaching grammar, abstract, confusing and basic concepts. They also stated that using L1 is necessary when there is breakdown in communication.

The fifth interview question asked "**Considering low proficiency language classes (beginner, pre-intermediate), what beliefs do you hold about using mother tongue in the language classroom? Explain.**" Most of the teachers believed that using L1 is somehow helpful when the teacher is supposed to teach basic concepts and they asserted that if the students do not understand the basic concepts, they will face more difficulties in higher levels. In addition, 90% of the teachers believed that using L1 for teaching grammar is helpful.

Finally, the sixth interview question inquired "**Considering high proficiency language classes (upper inter-mediate and advanced) what beliefs do you hold about using L1 in the language classroom? Explain**." All of the teachers stated that using L1 for high proficiency classes is not acceptable and they emphasized that it is absolutely a bad idea to use L1 in high proficiency classes.

6. Discussion

Almost all of the participants of two groups believed that L1 should not be used in language classroom and they firmly agreed on teaching English monolingually without use of L1 and believed that using L1 in teaching the target language is not acceptable.

The findings and results obtained from this study are in line with: 1.The findings of study conducted by Tsukamoto et al. (2012) who found that 83% of students preferred the exclusion of their L1 in the L2 classroom; 2. The findings of Cook (2001, p. 412) who insists that students should be

shown the importance of the L2 through its continual use and with supporters of the Monolingual Approach who state that translating between L1 and L2 can be dangerous as it encourages the belief that there are 1 to 1 equivalents between the languages, which is not always the case (Pracek, 2003); 3. Findings of Macaro (2001, p. 531) who claims that the reason for the exclusion of L1 in the classroom is to "develop the learners' own in-built language system"; 4. The findings of Ellis (1984) who asserts that many researchers have argued that a student's mother tongue has no role in learning English in EFL classrooms; therefore, it may decrease a student's exposure to L2 valuable input; 5. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003)'s study in which students who were interviewed were unwilling to use their L1 in their group work due to two reasons; the first was that it might negatively affect their activity, and the second was that they felt they should maximize the use of English as much as possible in theclassroom; 6. The findings of Halliwell and Jones (1991, p. 1) who list three reasons for using L2 only in classroom: a- The chance to experience the target language as a real means of communication, b- Giving them a chance to develop their own in-built language learning system, c- Bridging that otherwise wide gap between carefully controlled secure classroom practice and the unpredictability of real language encounters.

On the other hand, the results and finding sobtained from this study are in contrast with: 1. with the findings of Alnofaie (2010) who found that 70% of students questioned were in favor of the use of their mother tongue; 2. Those of Alshammari (2011) which indicated that 61% of the students questioned preferred the use of their L1 in an L2 classroom; 3. A study conducted by Brooks-Lewis (2009) at two universities in Mexico which showed that students' perceptions with regard to the incorporation of their L1 were enormously positive; 4. The findings of Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) who claimed that L1 use could help learners to perform tasks at a complex cognitive level; 5. The findings of study conducted by Macaro et al. (2012) regarding students' attitudes towards monolingual or bilingual assistants of native-speaker teachers in which the results revealed that the majority of students who participated preferred the bilingual assistants, due to their chance to use their mother tongue.

7. Conclusion

The above mentioned results of the present study revealed that the majority of the participants of groups 1(teachers who had been teaching high English proficiency classes) and group 2(teachers who had been teaching low English proficiency classes) believed that English should be taught monolingually and they were strong advocates of teaching English by the target language rather than the mother tongue and they believed firmly that using L1 in teaching the target language is not acceptable. Although, regarding low proficiency classes, some teachers asserted that using L1 is just like a bitter pill to swallow and there is no escaping the fact that sometimes the teachers have to use mother tongue as a last resort.

References

Abdan, A.A. (1991). An exploratory study of teaching English in the Saudi elementary public schools, *System*, 19(3), 253-266.

Alam, M.A., Hussein, S.M. Khan, B.A. (1988). A study of the attitudes of students, teachers and parents towards English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabian public schools, *Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Education, Educational Development.*

Al-Nofaie, H. (2010). The attitudes of teachers and students towards using Arabic in EFL classrooms in Saudi Public schools- A case study, *Novitas-Royal (Research on Youth and Language)*, 4 (1), 64-95.

Alshammari, M.M. (2011). The use of the mother tongue in Saudi EFL classrooms, *Journal of International Education Research (JIER)*, 7(4), 95- 102.

Aqel, F. (2006). Using the mother tongue (Arabic language) in EFL, *Journal of Educational Sciences, (University of Qatar)*, 4 (9), 52-65.

Arva, V. and Medgyes, P. (2000). Native and non-native teachers in the Classroom, *System*, 28(3), 355-372.

Auerbach, E. (1993).*Reexamining english only in the ESL classroom,*TESOL Quarterly, 27/1: 9-32.

Bawcom, L. (2002).*Using the mother tongue,* Modern English Teacher, 11/1/2002.

Briggs, M. (2001). *Teacher and student attitudes to English-only & L1 in the EFL classroom.*MA Dissertation at

the University of Bristol.

Brooks, F.B. and Donato, R. (1994). Vygotskyan approaches to understanding foreign language learner discourse during communicative tasks, *Hispania*, pp. 262-274.

Brooks-Lewis, K.A. (2009). Adult learners' perceptions of the incorporation of their L1 in foreign language teaching and learning, *Applied Linguistics*, 30(2), 216-235.

Brown, H. (1994). *Principles of language learning and teaching* prentice, Hall Regents: New Jersey.

Brown, H. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching,* Longman: San Francisco.

Burden, P. (2000). *The use of the Students' mother tongue in monolingual English "Conversation" Classes at Japanese Universities.* The Language Teacher, 24(6), 5-10.

Butzkamm, W. (2003). We only learn language once. The role of the mother tongue in FL classrooms: death of a dogma, *Language Learning Journal*, 28(1), 29-39.

Campbell, D.T. and Fiske, D.W. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix, *Psychological bulletin*, 56(2), 81-105.

Chaudron, Craig. (1988). *Second language classrooms.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Language teaching approaches: An overview, *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 2, 3-10.

Cook, V. (1999). Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching, *TESOL quarterly*, 33(2), 185-209.

Cook, V. (2001). *Using the first language in the classroom,* in The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue Canadienne des Languages Vivantes, 57(3), 23-402.

Copland, F. and Neokleous, G. (2011). L1 to teach L2: complexities and contradictions, *ELT journal*, 65(3), 270- 280.

Crawford, J. (2004). Language choices in the foreign language classroom: Target language or the learners' first language, *RELC Journal*, 35(1), 5-20.

Critchley, M. (1999). *Bilingual support in English classes in japan: A survey of Student Opinions of L1 Use by Foreign Teachers.* The Language Teacher, 23(9), 10-13.

Del-Mar, M., Viano, M. and Orquin, V. (1982). Identifying our students' strategies for learning EFL', *Modern English Teacher*, 9(4), 55-72

Duff, P.A. and Polio, C.G. (1990). How much foreign language is there in the foreign language classroom? *The Modern Language Journal*, 74(2), 154-166.

Edstrom, A. (2006). L1 use in the L2 classroom: One teacher's self-evaluation, *Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue canadienne des langues vivantes*, 63(2), 275-292.

Gray, K. (2001). *The Japanese learner: Context, Culture & Classroom Practice.* Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Harbord, J. (1992). *The use of the mother tongue in the classroom.* ELT Journal, 46(4), 30-55.

Hawks, P. (2001). *Making distinctions: A Discussion of the Mother Tongue in the Foreign Language Classroom.* Hwa Kang Journal of TEFL, 7, 47-55.

Hitotuzi, N. (2006). The learner´s mother tongue in the L2 learning-teaching symbiosis', *profile issues in teachers professional development*, (7), 160-172.

Krashen, S.D. (1985). *The Input hypothesis: Issues and Implications.* Longman: London and NewYork.

Kim, S.H.O. and Elder, C. (2008). Target language use in foreign language classrooms: Practices and perceptions of two native speaker teachers in New Zealand, *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 21(2), 167-185.

Lewis, M. (1993).*The lexical approach.* Language Teaching Publications: London.

Mitchell, R. (1988). *Communicative language teaching: in Practice.* CILT: London

Pacek, D. (2003). *Should EFL Give Up on Translation?* Talk Given at the 11th Annual Korea TESOL International Conference, October 18th, 2003, Seoul.

Pachler, N & Field, K. (2001). *Learning to teach modern foreign languages in the secondary school.* Routledge: London.

Phillipson, R. (1992).*Linguistic Imperialism.* Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Pennycook, A. (1994). *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language.* Longman: London & New York.

Polio, C. (1994). Comments on Elsa Roberts Auerbach's "reexamining English only in the ESL classroom". TESOL Quarterly, 28(1), 153-161.

SchweersJr, C.W. (1999). Using L1 in the classroom. *Forum*: 37(2), 6-12.

Swan, M. (1985). A critical look at the communicative approach (1), *ELT journal*, 39(1), 2-12.

Tian, L. and Macaro, E. (2012). Comparing the effect of teacher codeswitching with English-only explanations on the vocabulary acquisition of Chinese university students: A Lexical Focus-on-Form study, *Language Teaching Research*, 16(3), 367-391.

Weschler, R. (1997). Uses of Japanese (L1) in the English classroom*: Introducing the Functional- Translation Method.* The Internet TESL Journal, 3(11),62-92.

Wringe, C. (1989).The effective teaching of modern languages. Longman: London & New York.

Zhou, J. (2003). *New Wine in an Old Bottle: Innovative EFL Classrooms in China.*

THE IMPACT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT ON EFL LEARNERS' LIFELONG LEARNING AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Siamak Mazloomi
Department of Languages and Literature, College of Humanities, Islamic Azad University,
Islamshahr Branch, Islamshahr
siamakmaz@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
THE PRESENT STUDY INVESTIGATES THE IMPACT OF SELF-ASSESSMENT ON EFL LEARNERS' LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES, LEADING TO LIFELONG LEARNING. FOUR GROUPS OF HOMOGENIZED IRANIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (A TOTAL OF 120) AT THE ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY IN A WHOLE TERM OF CONVERSATION (SPEAKING) AND WRITING. THEIR LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS WERE ASSESSED AT THE PRETEST, USING PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST (PET) ALONG WITH THEIR LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES UTILIZING OXFORD'S STRATEGY INVENTORY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL). THE TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS TOOK THEIR COURSES IN WRITING AND SPEAKING, SELF-ASSESSING THEIR OWN ASSIGNMENTS AFTER EACH SECTION OF INSTRUCTION BASED ON THE CRITERIA PROVIDED BY THE TEACHERS (THROUGH RUBRICS AND CHECKLISTS). AT THE END OF THE COURSE, THE LEARNERS WERE GIVEN THE SAME PET AS WELL AS THE SILL. THE RESULTS OF THE *T*-TESTS BETWEEN THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS OF EACH SKILL INDICATED A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT OF THE USE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT IN DEVELOPING THEIR PROFICIENCY LEVELS. YET A *T*-TEST BETWEEN THE MEAN SCORES OF THE PRETEST AND POST-TEST OF SILL REVEALED NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE LEARNERS' LEARNING STRATEGIES.

KEYWORDS: SELF-ASSESSMENT (SA), LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES (LLS), LIFELONG LEARNING (LL), LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (LP)

1. Introduction

One of the drawbacks in the educational system in Iran is the fact that most students give up learning and studying after graduation, mostly due to the lack of extrinsic motivation, yet one of the ultimate goals of every educational system is lifelong learning (LL). It is essentially crucial when we are dealing with second or foreign language learning which is indeed a never-ending lifelong process. According to Delors *et al.* (1996), for LL, as the ultimate goal of every educational system, self-awareness is necessary; and self-assessment (SA) will eventually lead to the kind of self-awareness and reflection needed for self-regulation and LL. That is, through SA, learners are able to develop the necessary criteria for reflectively distinguishing one's own weaknesses in learning and setting goals for future actions (Dyke, 2006). Accordingly, SA practices will bestow the learners the ability to reflect; and the ability which is a necessary premise for learner autonomy and self-regulation in Dewey's attitudes (Dyke, 2006).

While alternative forms of assessment, such as self-assessment, increase the validity and reliability of classroom assessments and develop formative/dynamic aspects of learning, they have not been much practiced by students and teachers at different levels (Taras, 2002). In Iran, for instance, both students and teachers seem to have little previous experience of them in the language classrooms, as assessment has traditionally been the teachers' sole prerogative and obligation.

Teachers have been considered as the only authority of classes and avoid any democratic contribution from the learners, whether in their pedagogy or in their assessment.

SA by definition is the use of any tasks, tools, or tests to help learners assess their own abilities. Yet due to the inherent intricacy in providing a comprehensive definition of self-assessment, a number of researchers (Bachman, 1990; Haughton & Dickinson, 1988; Oscarson, 1989) have attempted to define the term by identifying two types of self-assessment according to their purpose: (1) performance-oriented self-assessment, and (2) development-oriented self-assessment. A major distinction between performance-oriented self-assessment and development-oriented self-assessment is that the former typically samples the test takers' performance at one particular point in time, whereas the latter assesses the participants for an extended period in order to detect changes and patterns of development over time. Here in this research, self-assessment is considered as a development-oriented assessment and is operationally defined as the learners' assessments of their own writing and speaking tasks based on the criteria provided through rubrics, checklists and scales.

Matsuno (2009) states that SA is an effective tool which helps students to perceive the purpose of the assignment and the criteria for assessment (Orsmond, Merry & Reilling, 1997), and to provoke learning (Sullivan & Hall, 1997). Such awareness of the assessment criteria, raised through SA, softens the blow of a bad grade by helping students understand the reasons for their grade (Taras, 2002). Moreover, Kavaliauskiene (2004) argues that SA enables learners to reflect on their own progress and find ways to change, adapt or improve it. In fact, most language learners, specially the good language learners, are regularly involved in SA in their learning process and apply such metacognitive strategy to monitor and manage their learning process.

Rivers (2001) regards SA as the most salient skill for self-regulation and self-directed learning. Self-directed learning demands that the learners accurately assess their learning outcomes, and in a review of the literature Wenden (1999) concludes that self-directed and good language learners possess metacognitive behaviors including SA. Rivers (2001) even emphasizes that the accurate use of metacognitive, affective and social strategies to control the language learning process and the learning environment is the hallmark of self-directed language learning. In order for such learning to take place, learners must be able to accurately determine their immediate and long-term needs and must have the freedom to take measures to satisfy those needs. In the absence of either accurate SA or genuine autonomy, self-directed language learning and LL will not occur (Rivers, 2001, p. 287).

2. Purpose and Significance of the Study

The current research is conducted to emphasize the positive effect of SA on LP and life-long language learning. It also leads to implications for syllabus design and language pedagogy since SA techniques could be as useful tasks in every language learning curriculum to make learners aware of the criteria they have to observe to be acceptable in the target community.

Since LL cannot be operationally defined and measured, language learning strategies (LLS) have been measured and a change in them has been considered as a sign of turn to LL. The application of appropriate LLS helps good language learners improve their LP more effectively throughout their lives. Therefore, it is supposed that SA can help learners adopt adequate LLS for their life-long language learning.

3. Research questions

To investigate the impact of the use of SA on LP and LLS, the researcher posed the following research questions:
1. Does the use of SA in writing have a significant effect on EFL learners' LP level?
2. Does the use of SA in speaking have a significant effect on EFL learners' LP level?
3. Does SA have a significant effect on EFL learners' use of LLS?

4. Review of related literature
4.1. Lifelong learning (LL)

The concept of LL is closely coupled to the notions of motivation and independent, autonomous learning. Boud (2000) emphasizes the need for what he calls 'sustainable assessment' as

an "indispensable accompaniment to LL" (p. 151). Oscarson (2009) declares the necessity of LL and its assumed dependence on autonomous language learning.

Moreover, Delors *et al.* (1996) explains that independent/autonomous learning is the key to perpetual individual growth, and this capacity is only possible after some period of interaction with an intellectual mentor or a mediator in Vygotsky's terms, most often a teacher. This teacher-student relationship aims at developing the pupils' self-reliance. It helps to form individual judgment and a sense of individual responsibility to enable students to pursue learning throughout their lives. It is through dialogue with the teacher that the student's faculty for self-awareness is helped to develop (p. 30).

Delors *et al.* (1996) also establish the concept of LL as the key to change and as a strategic investment, primarily for the individual but also for economic growth and democracy in the world. To acquire the necessary skills for successful communication in a foreign language, Falchikov and Boud (1989) assert that, "LL requires that individuals be able not only to work independently, but also assess their own performance and progress" (p. 395). Therefore, a change in the learners' learning strategies can be considered as a sign of LL, and SA closely contributes to LL. Thus, the hypothesis arises that if SA leads to any change in language learning strategies, it will ultimately contribute to LL.

4.2. Assessment for learning (AfL)

Modern trends in language learning emphasize functional, communicative competence, unlike the past emphasis of the formal aspects of language mastery. Teachers traditionally use summative tests to assess the formal skills relating to the control of grammar, spelling, pronunciation, while it is much more difficult to appraise the communicative ability (Bachman, 1990). According to many teachers, this is especially so when having to deal with the practicalities involving large groups of students (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009). Gipps (1994) expressed the difference in outlook in the following manner:

> The underlying assumption of most traditional psychometrics is one of fixed abilities and therefore limitation; in educational assessment, performance is seen to be dependent on context and motivation and is essentially interactive and elastic. Thus the concept is a positive one with the corollary that in assessment all pupils must be given the opportunity to show what they can do, that it is possible to maximize learning, and that assessment should try to get the best performance out of pupils (p. 165).

The syllabuses put emphasis on the students' ability to learn autonomously and evaluate their work as a method of enhancing their learning. The students require instruments in order to be able to take charge of their own learning as well as the assessment of their learning independently and with their teacher's help. The aim in most curricula is consequently more authentic and direct language assessment. The ultimate goal is to involve students in communicative performance tasks that they would normally face at, for instance, a future workplace, such as expressing opinions, giving information, writing reports, and so forth. (Dragemark Oscarson, 2009) The assessment in such situations is highly formative/dynamic, as the feedback is often direct. In this way, assessment can be a part and a method of supporting the learning and teaching process or what Black *et al.* (2003) calls Assessment for Learning (AfL).

SA is seen as one strategy and one way of helping to develop insight, on the part of the student, into his or her strengths and weaknesses within different areas of knowledge (Oscarson, 1989). It is also one way for the student to understand how it is possible to learn more effectively through assuming responsibility for one's own learning (Skolverket, 2001). It can be an empowering tool, allowing students to be involved at what can be seen as the center of power, that is, assessment (Falchikov, 1997; Heron, 1988). SA is seen by Boud (1995, p. 13; 2000, p. 159) as a "necessary skill for LL", and Boud, Cohen and Sampson (1999) go so far as to say that unless assessment fosters SA, it "acts to undermine an important goal of LL" (p. 419).

4.3. Self-assessment (SA)

There is a lack of a consistent definition of SA which might be one of the primary reasons for the contradictory empirical results throughout the literature. The concept is expressed by a variety of names such as self-evaluation, self-rating, self-testing, and self-appraisal. Another problem is that the definition depends on the purpose of SA. SA can be used for a variety of purposes, including appropriate placement, diagnosis and feedback to the learner, program evaluation, assessment of attitudes and sociopsychological differences, determination of course grade, and so forth (Henning, 1987).

Due to the inherent intricacy in providing a comprehensive definition of SA, a number of researchers (Bachman, 2000; Haughton & Dickinson, 1988; Oscarson, 1989) have attempted to define the term by identifying two types of SA according to their purpose: (1) performance-oriented SA, and (2) development-oriented SA. A major distinction between performance-oriented SA and development-oriented SA is that the former typically samples the test takers' performance at one particular point in time, whereas the latter assesses the participants for an extended period in order to detect changes and patterns of development over time.

Performance-oriented assessment measures the outcomes related to selection, certification, placement, achievement, diagnosis, etc. Many researchers have investigated whether SA instruments accurately sample the learners' language ability at one particular point in time. Although there remains serious concerns about learners' objectivity and capacity to view their achievements, the use of SA for the purpose of the performance-oriented SA has various advantages. First, it eliminates concerns with cheating and security issues (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985). Second, it is cost and time efficient (Strong-Klause, 2000). Because the students' self-ratings are greatly affected by subjective errors, the results must be interpreted with caution when used for the purpose of placement, certification, diagnosis, and admission.

Development-oriented assessment measures the process of learning (usually in a classroom environment) in which self-managed activities are incorporated. It is used as an observation of "the participants for an extended period in order to detect changes and patterns of development over time" (Dornyei, 2001, p. 194). This type of assessment began to receive attention as the result of an increasing interest in the learner-centered approach. In a learner-centered curriculum, learners are encouraged to not only be test takers, but also to be active participants in the assessment process (Bachman, 2000; Dickinson, 1987).

By incorporating SA into classroom learning, students as well as teachers acknowledge assessment as a mutual responsibility, and not as the sole responsibility of the teacher (Oscarson, 1989). Furthermore, a number of empirical studies indicate the presence of increased productivity and autonomy, higher motivation, less frustration, and higher retention rates among learners when development-oriented SA is utilized (Dickinson, 1987; Ellis, 1994; Gardner & McIntyre, 1991; McNamara & Deane, 1995; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996; Oscarson, 1989; Peirce, Swain, & Hart, 1993; Rivers, 2001).

4.4. Language learning strategies (LLS)

Oxford (1990) states that strategies are especially important in language learning "because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence" (p.1). Defining the LLS, "different researchers use different terms and different concepts" (Oxford & Crookall, 1989, p.414); therefore, a great number of researchers have formulated their own definitions.

Rubin (1981) conducted a study to identify cognitive strategies in second language learning and introduced the distinction between direct and indirect LLS. In 1987, Rubin proposed, "LLS are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly" (p.23). She also suggested that LLS include "any set of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval and use of information" (p.19).

Bialystok (1978) defined LLS as "optional means for exploiting available information to improve competence in a second language" (p.71). Meanwhile, he identified four kinds of LLS: (a) formal practicing; (b) functional practicing; (c) monitoring; and (d) inferencing.

According to O'Malley et al. (1985), "LLS have been broadly defined as any set of operations or steps used by a learner that will facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, or use of information" (p.23). In this study, they classified twenty-six strategies into three subgroups: metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective. Similarly, Chamot (1987) gave a definition of LLS as "techniques, approaches or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information" (p.71). She proposed that some LLS are observable, but some may not be observable. In cognitive perspective, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) viewed LLS as "the special thoughts or behaviors of processing information that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (p.1).

Oxford and Crookall (1989) defined LLS as "steps taken by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information" (p.404). They noted that strategies may be used consciously but they can also become habitual and automatic with practice. Similarly, Oxford (1990) claimed "learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning" (p.1). She proposed a more specific definition of learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (p.8).

5. Method

5.1. Participants

Four groups of English Translation sophomores, a total of 120, participated in the present study who were selected out of 136 participants based on their scores on a PET and who were taking their conversation and writing courses at lower intermediate level of LP. For each productive language skill – writing and conversation (speaking), two groups were chosen and assigned into experimental and control groups, consisting of 30 students in each group.

The two experimental groups attended eight sessions of instruction, through which they were administered the SA checklists and rubrics to evaluate their performances in expository writing and speaking for each section of instruction – based on the units of their textbooks or the type of instruction they received. The participants' performances were evaluated by two EFL teachers, holding MA in TEFL, and each having at least ten years of experience in language teaching, especially speaking and writing. They were provided by the same rubrics and checklists the students used for SA.

The two control groups also attended similar classes with the same teacher, materials, and instructions, yet they were not asked to self-assess their language skills; instead, they did the regular exercises and tasks assigned in their textbooks and were assessed by their teachers.

5.2. Instrumentation and data collection

All the participants attended a sample Preliminary Language Test (PET) to measure and homogenize their proficiency level before the term. They also took the same proficiency test at the end of the experiment to gauge their proficiency development.

In order to assess their LLS, the participants were also requested to fill out the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), Version 7.0, developed by Oxford (1989). This scale is among the valid and reliable questionnaires focusing on LLS and includes 50 items divided into six parts pertaining to Memory (9 items), Cognitive (14 items), Compensation (6 items), Meta-cognitive (9 items), Affective (6 items), and Social strategies (6 items).

5.3. Procedure

One week after the beginning of the winter semester in 2014, the sophomores of English Translation learning English conversation and essay writing at the Islamic Azad University of Islamshahr took a paper-based PET. One hundred and twenty learners whose scores fell one SD above and below the mean were selected as the prime homogeneous participants of the study. The researcher did not exclude the learners who had not met the criteria; nevertheless, he mainly focused on those who had met the criteria for the study.

The learners also received a questionnaire of SILL before the treatment began. The researcher conducted the treatment throughout the winter semester which took three months.

In the writing classes, both groups received similar materials, a course book entitled "*Practical Writer with Readings*" by Baily and Powel (1989). The book consists of two main parts, dealing with one-paragraph and five-paragraph essays. The learners were instructed on the general style of five-paragraph essays, including introductions, body paragraphs and conclusions as well as different kinds of expository genre, such as cause-effect and comparison and contrast essays through process writing method, in which the teacher is involved and gives feedback on every step of writing. They were assigned to write a five-paragraph essay on each topic discussed in the classroom every session. In the experimental group, the learners were supposed to assess their own essays based on the criteria they were provided through checklists or rubrics.

In the speaking classes, both the experimental and control groups focused on a book entitled "*Interchange II*" by Richards. Each unit in the book consists of dialogues through which some specific functions of language on a particular theme are presented. The dialogues were practiced in the class through an eclectic method of teaching, including repetition, pair work, chain drill, group work and role playing. The learners were also encouraged to have discussions on the theme of each unit, which is emphasized in this research. The participants were given a topic based on the theme of each unit to speak about for one or two minutes and record their voices at home as their assignment. They were all supposed to hand in their recorded voices at the end of the term. Yet the experimental group was also required to write down the scripts of their talks and self-assess their speeches based on the checklists provided by the teacher.

Two raters also assessed the participants' language productions both in speaking and in writing. At the end of the term, the experimental groups were expected to have significantly developed their LP. Therefore, the same PET and SILL were administered as the post-tests.

6. Results
6.1. Investigating the first null hypothesis

The first null hypothesis was set as: the use of SA in writing does not have a significant effect EFL learners' LP.

Since no significant difference was found between the pretest proficiency scores of the two groups, an independent samples *t*-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the general LP post-test of the writing groups in order to probe the effect of SA on the improvement of the LP in the writing group. The results of the independent samples *t*-test (t (58) = 6.09, $p < .05$, r = .92, representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between experimental and control groups' mean scores on the post-tests of general LP of writing groups. Thus it can be concluded that the SA significantly improved the LP of the writing group. Thus the first null-hypothesis **was rejected**.

Table 1: Independent samples *t*-test Post-tests of General LP Test of Writing Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	*T*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	3.801	.056	18.883	58	.000	16.900	.895	15.109	18.691
Equal variances not assumed			18.883	53.951	.000	16.900	.895	15.106	18.694

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's F = 3.80, p > .05). That is why the first row of Table 1, "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

6.2. Investigating the second null hypothesis

The second null hypothesis was considered as: the use of SA in the speaking class does not have a significant effect on EFL learners' LP.

Since no significant difference was found between the pretest LP scores of the speaking groups, an independent samples *t*-test was also run to compare the experimental and control groups' mean scores on the LP post-tests of the speaking groups in order to probe the effect of SA on the improvement of LP. The results of the independent samples *t*-test (*t* (58) = 15.32, p < .05, r = .89, representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between experimental and control groups' mean scores on the post-tests of general LP test of speaking groups. Thus it can be concluded that the SA significantly improved the LP of speaking group. Thus the second null-hypothesis **was rejected**.

It can be concluded that the LP level of the EFL learners in the speaking experimental group has been significantly improved by the introduction of SA as a means of self-evaluation, goal-setting and self-regulation.

Table 2: Independent samples *t*-test; Post-tests of General LP Test of Speaking Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.300	.586	15.320	58	.000	16.000	1.044	13.909	18.091
Equal variances not assumed			15.320	56.799	.000	16.000	1.044	13.909	18.091

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's F = .30, p > .05). That is why the first row of Table 2, "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

6.3. Investigating the third null hypothesis

The third null hypothesis was speculated as: SA does not have a significant effect on EFL learners' use of LLS.

A paired-samples *t*-test was run to compare the experimental groups' means on the pre-test and post-test of SILL. The results of the paired-samples *t*-test (*t* (29) = 1.36, p > .05, r = .24, representing an almost moderate effect size) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental group's means on the pre-test and post-test of SILL. Thus the third null-hypothesis **was supported**. That is, it cannot be concluded that applying SA in the writing and speaking classes might lead to any modifications in the learners' LLS, at least not in such a short time. In fact, SA practices may not affect the learners' choice of LLS and may not eventually result in life-long learning.

Table 3: Paired-Samples *t*-test; Pre-test and Post-test of SILL

Paired Differences						t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
			Lower	Upper				
2.867	11.539	2.107	-1.442	7.175		1.361	59	.184

7. Discussion

The findings of the current research demonstrate that first, the implementation of SA in both speaking and writing classes has a significant positive effect on the LP level of the EFL learners. Second, the use of SA in EFL classes does not significantly affect their LLS.

The first and second research questions of the current study dealt with the impact of SA on general LP in both writing and speaking classes, revealing a significant effect through practice and training. Janssen-van Dieten (1989, 1992) and Peirce, Swain, and Hart (1993) found weak correlation between learners' SAs and their LP test results, demanding training in order to improve language learners' SA ability. The current study also indicated a weak correlation between learners' LP level and SA at the pretest, but their LP can be improved through SA training and practices, obtaining a closer correlation. Blanche and Merino (1989), LeBlanc and Painchaud (1985), Oscarson (1980), Ross (1998) and von Elek (1981, 1985) claimed a moderate correlation between learners' SAs and teacher-assessments of the learners' LP, suggesting that self-assessed scores can be affected by subjective errors in the form of past grades, lack of practice, varying degrees of self-esteem and self-confidence, cultural and gender factors.

The third null hypothesis of the study stated that learners' LLS are not significantly modified by the use of SA in the EFL classes, which was not rejected. The result was in compliance with most studies done on the learners' behavioral changes due to application of SA, such as Blanche and Merino (1989), Oscarson (1980), Ross (1998), Shunk (2001) and von Elek (1981, 1985). Such results might be due to the short period of treatment, and it might require more time to change learners' behaviors and LLS (Brown, 2004; Kavaliauskiene, 2004; Liang, 2006). But they all agree that SA positively affects learners' ability to set their goals in language learning and to diagnose their own weak points to be removed, making them more responsible for what they are learning (Kavaliauskiene, 2004; Skolverket, 2001). Similarly, the current study also indicated that SA has been the most effective on metacognitive strategies.

8. Conclusion

The current research was an endeavor to investigate the impact of SA on LP and LLS. A primary analysis and review of the related literature revealed the importance of SA in autonomous, learner-centered, lifelong language learning (Brown, 2004; Kavaliauskiene, 2004; Liang, 2006; Skolverket, 2001). Since today's language teaching trends are inclined towards more humanistic and democratic language learning classes, the use of formative and dynamic assessments, including SA, is encouraged in the modern ESL/EFL classes.

In relation to the **first research question**, an independent samples t-test was run and revealed that there was a significant difference between experimental and control groups' mean scores on the post-tests of LP of writing groups (t (58) = 6.09, p < .05, r = .92, representing a large effect size). Thus it can be concluded that SA significantly improved the LP of writing group. That is, the application of SA either in speaking or writing classes will ultimately lead to the learners' LP development, which is almost in line with the result that Naeini (2011) reached while working on one of the skills and observing the effect on the other skill.

The **second research question** was also concerned with the impact of SA on the LP of the speaking group. The results of the independent samples t-test (t (58) = 15.32, p < .05, r = .89, representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between experimental and control groups' mean scores on the post-test of LP test of speaking groups. Thus it can be concluded that the SA application significantly improved the LP of speaking group. As it was mentioned, SA could be an effective technique in developing the kind of awareness the learners need while attending to the criteria of their own assessment and noticing their deficiencies.

The **third research question** deals with the effect of SA on the learners' LLS. A paired-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental groups' means on the pre-tests and post-tests of SILL. The results (t (29) = 1.36, p > .05, r = .24, representing an almost moderate effect size) demonstrated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental groups' means on the pre-tests and post-tests of SILL. That is, it can be concluded that applying SA in the writing and speaking classes might not lead to much significant modifications in the learners' LLS, at least not

in such a short time. In fact, SA practices may not affect the learners' choice of LLS and may not eventually result in life-long learning. However, based on what was stated in the review of the related literature, SA and self-appraisal will eventually lead to better performance and will give the learners motivation, self-perception, and self-regulation abilities, which all contribute to lifelong learning. The current study also confirmed that metacognitive strategies are more affected through SA.

SA can be applied as a means of self-orienting and self-regulating tasks and activities in the EFL classrooms and seems to be quite effective in doing so (Black *et al.*, 2003). For instance, in speaking classes, students may be asked to record their voices talking on a specific topic, to write the tape script and to analyze and assess the tape scripts through some speaking assessment criteria, such as scales/rubrics or checklists. Or in a writing class, students can be assigned to write an essay on a particular topic and analyze and assess it through presented scales/rubrics or checklists. These self-orienting activities will help the learners develop their own learning goals and their self-confidence and motivation in learning. They will feel more responsible for their own studies and will have a say in their own assessment if assessment is taken for learning (AfL) (Blanche & Merino, 1989; Brown, 2004; Liang, 2006; Oscarson, 1989; Skolvertket, 2001;).

On one hand, EFL teachers should be trained and made aware of the standard criteria they have to use in order to rate EFL learners' performances in writing and speaking. This could be done through Teacher Training Classes and by providing them with the necessary scales and rubrics for assessment. They also have to be trained on how to implement SA techniques in the classroom and how to give feedback on the learners' productions since it is the training and the feedback by the teachers which lead to higher accuracy of learners' SA and better perception of the assessment criteria. As Blanche and Merino (1989) state, there will not be any significant correlation between teachers' assessment and students' SA without appropriate training and guidance.

On the other hand, teachers should apply those SA techniques and tasks in the classroom environment while giving feedback and mediating the information. They can provide the learners with some scales/rubrics or checklists to self-assess themselves or use them for peer assessment, which is equally effective according to Birjandi and Siyyari (2011). They should also give feedback to the learners on their SA directly or indirectly. They can spend some time after each unit of instruction to let the learners self-assess their achievement and set their goals for further development. They should train and scaffold the learners on how to assess themselves explaining the rubrics/checklists and giving feedback in case needed.

The material developers and curriculum designers can include those scales/rubrics or even checklists in their materials and syllabi and ask teachers to apply them as SA tasks in the classroom. They can also provide some *can-do* questionnaires for the learners after each unit based on the objectives of each unit in the syllabus so that the learners are made aware of their own weaknesses. Moreover, giving some samples of corrected papers or performances and providing them with some comments would be a suitable guide for the learners showing them how to self-assess themselves.

To sum up, it is suggested to include SA checklists and scales for every curriculum on language teaching to help students gain the kind of awareness they need to self-assess and self-regulate their improvement.

References

Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bailey, E. P., & Powell, P. A. (2009). *The practical writer with readings* (7th ed.). New York: Thomson Wadsworth.

Bialystok, E. (1978). A theoretical model of second language learning. *Language Learning*, 28, 69-83.

Birjandi, P., & Siyyari, M. (2011). Self-assessment and peer-assessment: A comparative study of their effect on writing performance and rating accuracy. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *13(1)*, 23-45.

Black, P., Harrison, Ch., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for learning: Putting it into practice*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Blanche, P., & Merino, B. J. (1989). Self-assessment of foreign language skills: Implications for teachers and researchers. *Language Learning*, *39*, 313-340.

Boud, D. (2000). Sustainable assessment: Rethinking assessment for the learning society. *Studies in Continuing Education*, *22, (2)*, 151-167.

Boud, D., & Kalchikov, N. (1989). Quantitative studies of self-assessment in higher education: a critical analysis of findings. *Higher Education*, *18*, 529-549.

Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York: Longman.

Chamot, A. U. (1987). The learning strategies of ESL students. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 71-83). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Delors, J., Mufti, I. A., Amagi, I., Carneiro, R., Chung, F., Geremak, B., et al. (1996). *Learning: The treasure within*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

Dornyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Dragemark Oscarson, A. (2009). *Self-assessment of writing in learning English as a foreign language: A study at the upper secondary school level*. Goteborg: Geson Hylte Tryck.

Dyke, M. (2006). The role of the 'Other' in reflection, knowledge formation and action in a late modernity. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, *25, (2)*, 105-123.

Gipps, C. (1994). *Beyond testing: Towards a theory of educational assessment*. London: The Falmer Press.

Heron, J. (1988). Assessment revisited. In D. Boud (Ed.). *Developing student autonomy in learning* (2nd ed., 77-90). London: Kogan Page. New York: Nichols.

Janssen-van Dieten, A. (1989). The development of a test of Dutch as a second language: The validity of self-assessment by inexperienced subjects. *Language Testing*, *6, (1)*, 30-46.

Kavaliauskiene, G. (2004). Quality assessment in teaching English for specific purposes. *ESP World*. Retrieved from http://esp-world.info/Articles.

Liang, J. (2006). Overview of self-assessment in the second language writing classroom. Paper presented at the 2006 TESOL Convention, Tampa, Florida. Available: http://secondlanguagewriting.com/documents/overview.doc.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1994). Toward a social psychological model of strategy use. *Foreign Language Annals*, 27 (2), 185-195.

Matsuno, S. (2009). Self-, peer-, and teacher-assessments in Japanese University EFL writing classrooms. *Language Testing*, *29(1)*, 75-100.

O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., Stewner-Manzanares, G., Russo, R. P., & Kupper, L. (1985). Learning strategies used by beginning and intermediate ESL students. *Language Learning*, 35, 21-46.

Oscarson, M. (1989). Self-assessment of language proficiency: Rationale and applications. *Language Testing*, *6(1)*, 1 – 13.

Orsmond, P., Merry, S. & Reiling, K. (1997). A study in self-assessment: Tutor and students' perceptions of performance criteria. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *22*, 357-369.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know.* Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Oxford, R. L. (1989). Use of language learning strategies: A synthesis of studies with implications for strategy training. *System, 17 (2).*

Oxford, R. L., & Crookall, D. (1989). Research on language learning strategies: Methods, findings, and instructional issues. *Modern Language Journal*, 73, 404-19.

Rivers, W. P. (2001). Autonomy at all costs: An ethnography of metacognitive self-assessment and self-management among experienced language learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, *85, (ii)*, 279-290.

Ross, S. (1998). Self-assessment in second language testing: A meta-analysis and analysis of experiential factors. *Language Testing*, *15, (1)*, 1-11.

Rubin, J. (1981). Study of cognitive processes in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 117-31.

Rubin, J. (1987). Learner strategies: Theoretical assumptions, research history and typology. In A. L. Wenden, & J. Rubin(Eds), *Learner strategies in language learning*, 15-30. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Shunk, D. H. (2001). Social cognitive theory and self-regulated learning. In B. J. Zimmerman, & D. H. Shunk (Eds.). *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: Theoretical perspectives* (125-153). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Skolverket (2001). *Languages syllabuses, grading criteria and comments*. Bors: Fritzes.

Sullivan, K., & Hall, C. (1997). Introducing Students to Self-assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *22 (3)*, 1-15. Retrieved November 3, 2012, from Academic Search Elite: http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.ub.gu.se/.

Taras, M. (2002). Using assessment for learning and learning from assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *27 (6)*, 501.

von Elek, T. (1981/1985). A test of Swedish as a second language. In Y. P. Lee *et al*. (Eds.). *New Directions in Language Testing* (47-57). Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Wenden, A. L. (1999). An introduction to metacognitive knowledge and beliefs in language learning: Beyond the basics. *System*, *27*, 435- 441.

THEORIES AND APPROACHES TO ACQUISITION OF WORD MEANING IN FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Mohammadreza Nasr
Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
nasr_mr@yahoo.com

Yona Farazmand
Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
yfarazmand@yahoo.com

Marzieh Mehrnoush
Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
marziehmehrnoush@yahoo.com

Firooz Sadighi
Professor of English Language and Linguistics
Department of English, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
firoozsadighi@yahoo.com

 ABSTRACT
CHILDREN GO ABOUT LEARNING A PLETHORA OF WORDS QUITE READILY AND RAPIDLY WITHIN THE FLOW OF PASSING CONVERSATIONS. VARIOUS THEORIES AND APPROACHES HAVE BEEN PUT FORTH WITH REGARD TO COGNITIVE, SOCIAL AND PRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVES OF SEMANTICS ACQUISITION. SUCH THEORIES ATTEMPT TO ACCOUNT FOR HOW THE CHILD ACQUIRES THE INTRICATE SEMANTIC ELEMENTS OF LANGUAGE EFFICIENTLY. TO THIS END, THIS REVIEW OUTLINES SOME DOMINANT THEORIES AND APPROACHES TO ACQUISITION OF LEXICAL MEANING INCLUDING BOOTSTRAPPING APPROACHES TO WORD MEANING THAT IS, SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC BOOTSTRAPPING, SEMANTIC CONSTRAINTS APPROACH, CONTEXT- BASED APPROACHES, SEMANTIC FEATURE THEORY, PROTOTYPE THEORY, THEORY CONSTRUCTION, FAST MAPPING, USAGE-BASED APPROACH AND FINALLY SEMANTIC FIELD THEORY. THE BASIC TENETS OF THESE THEORIES AS WELL AS THE PHENOMENA AND MECHANISMS INVOLVED WHEN THE CHILD ACQUIRES SUCH TREMENDOUS NUMBER OF WORDS ARE EXPOUNDED. THE PAPER FINALLY CONCLUDES THAT GENERATING A FULL–FLEDGED THEORY ALONG THESE LINES NECESSITATES MORE SOPHISTICATED THEORIES THAN YET EXIST AND IN- DEPTH STUDIES OF INTERFACE BETWEEN SYNTAX, SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS.

KEYWORDS: WORD MEANING THEORIES, ACQUISITION, SEMANTICS, FIRST LANGUAGE

1. Introduction

A crucial issue in language acquisition is how children come to understand and produce a wealth of words. Acquisition of semantics in children is a highly complicated process encompassing many factors. The learning mechanisms put forth by researchers all display the sophistication children encounter in discovering the cues they employ while building upon their lexical learning. However, Acquiring semantics by children involves the interaction between cognitive concepts and the linguistically coded meanings. It is evident that meanings are not provided by the environment but created by children who are continuously in the process of acquiring semantic dimension throughout life (Lust, 2006).The first words uttered by children appear around age one when they first learn words at a slow rate then, they experience a sudden vocabulary spurt in which time they add more words to their mental lexicon. Children significantly comprehend more words than they produce between between ages one or two. They pick up words readily during the course of conversation and interaction with adults where they work out the meanings of unfamiliar words from the contexts in which they are used by adults (Bavin, 2009).The information available in the context as well as the joint attention contribute substantially to children's lexical acquisition. In addition, they need to take in a variety of uses of words in the context employed by adults and relate them to the words of the same semantic fields. From the onset, children learn how to combine words to build larger utterances and specific collocations. As they learn more shades of meanings of the words, they use a broader range of combinations to communicate the meanings they intend (Clark & Kelly 2006, Tomasello, 2003). Many theories have been constructed to explain the nature of semantic acquisition, some of which postulate that children primarily draw on perception while others view them as engaged in constructing meaning through pragmatic and social cues. In what follows, the main theories of word meaning acquisition together with their shortcomings are delineated.

2. Bootstrapping approaches in acquisition of word meaning

Bootstrapping approaches refer to the mechanisms contributing to the child to initiate the process of language learning and fall under two types.

2.1. Semantic Bootstrapping Hypothesis

Initially, children do not have access to language form, but do have access to extra-linguistic forms of meaning. On the basis of these meanings, children bootstrap to formal knowledge of language, i.e., to its forms and its units (Lust, 2006).

According to this hypothesis, children observe the real world situations and then based on their observations formulate word meanings and aspects of grammatical structure. To put it differently, semantic bootstrapping triggers a semantic-syntax association (Höhle B., 2009). Pinker (1984) maintains that children construct semantic representations with the help of the context as well as the universal linking rules. However, semantic bootstrapping failed to account for the acquisition of word meanings on the following fronts:

   a. There is an infinite set of possible meanings in any context. This indicates that meanings can't be assigned by children before knowing the language.
   b. Reference is inscrutable; this inevitably means that meaning is indeterminable.
   c. Children do not rely on ostensive contexts for early word acquisition. They also learn new words by overhearing them (Akhtar et al. 2001)
   d. Children's lack of direct dependence on ostensive contexts as well as the indirect relation between language, meaning and referential context contribute to blind infant learning word meaning.

The corollary which is made in respect of the above evidence is that, though meaning is indispensable, it cannot be regarded as a separate initial step, independent of linguistic knowledge to resolve the issue of language acquisition for children in the initial state (Lust, 2006) .In this regard,

Pinker (1987) holds that the real power of bootstrapping theory lies in its syntactic nature rules acquired.

2.2. Syntactic bootstrapping

If a word-world paring fails to account for learning word meanings thus, learners perform a sentence world paring, (Gleitman, 1994) that is, the syntax can aid in determining the meaning of words to certain extent. In other words, much of the evidence required for children to discover the meanings of the words through the process of reverse engineering can be found implicitly in the sentence (Pozzan et al). There is a body of research underpinning syntactic bootstrapping hypothesis that is, children make use of syntactic bootstrapping to crack the meaning of novel words (Höhle B., 2009).On the other hand, Landau (1994) maintains that the hypothesis arises two questions:

   a. How can children do the syntactic analysis of the input reliably, not knowing in advance precisely the syntactic properties of all the words in them?
   b. How can children cope with the infrequent input errors they inescapably face?

However, the interface between syntax and word meaning has remained a contentious issue in linguistics.

3. Approaches to acquisition of lexical meaning

To assign meaning to new words, children mainly employ two approaches to limit the range of possible meanings for a word.

3.1. Word meaning constraints

Semantic constraints approach is the one which suggests that children start with certain innate constraints that make them to take into account only some related cues (Doughty 2008). Markman (1989) put forth three semantic constraints on word meaning including whole object constraint, mutual exclusivity constraint and taxonomic constraint. Whole object constraint assumes that words pick out whole objects. It indicates that when an adult refers to an object, children assume that the person is naming the whole object not parts of the object (Doughty, 2008). Thus, it rejects any reference to properties of the object. The mutual exclusivity constraint predicts that only one term is applied to each object. Thus, children rule out the second term they hear to be applied to an already known referent (Brown, 2010).Synonymy, superordinate and pronouns are eliminated accordingly based on this constraint (Lust, 2006). Similarly, the taxonomic constraint narrows children's guesses about word meaning. Consequently, a new word refers to a known class of things: cat refers to all members of like kind and not to a particular cat (Doughty, 2008).These biologically determined constraints however, are employed by children, not adults; they may reject possible word meanings which are well-formed at early stages of lexical acquisition (Lust, 2006).

3.2. Context- based approach

Another approach which has been proposed is that children like adults adopt the identical pragmatic presumptions about communication. In other words, they draw on the cooperative maxims put forth by Grice. This approach encompasses the mechanisms central to communicative exchanges including joint attention, physical co -presence and conversational co- presence (Bavin, 2009).

Joint attention refers to the time when children and adults stay focused on one thing. It plays a significant role in early word acquisition. Tomasello (1995) holds that it involves the coordinated attention and engagement between the child and adult to a mutual third entity. To him, to learn a word, a joint focus of attention with an adult is required. To learn meanings , children link the words they hear with the events being taking place, that is , they map word –to- world and world- to- word (Bavin, 2009). Doughty (2008) asserts that joint attention serves as a facilitative role in word acquisition .Talking with the child, adults need to make sure of a locus of joint attention accompanied by physical co- presence which is in turn followed by conversational co- presence (Bavin, 2009). On the contrary,

Akhtar (2007) believes that joint attention as a necessary precursor to word acquisition is not universally underpinned, that is, children acquire some early words without joint attention.

In addition to the pragmatic factors discussed above, children like adults take advantage of conventionality and contrast in language. For specific meanings, particular terms have been specified in the speech communities which are initially used by children. Failing to utter the expression common in the community may give rise to misunderstanding. In the same vein, contrast -the differences of form in words reflect a difference in meanings- goes hand in hand with conventionality (Bavin, 2009).Children suppose that different words are expressed by different meanings (Clark, 1990), as a result, they narrow down the meanings of the new word. According to Clark (1993), these two principles play a significant role in early word use and interpretation. A corollary is made that children take advantage of the pragmatic factors in assigning meanings to the words they hear and in identifying the right terms for use.

4. Semantic feature theory

Semantic feature theory asserts that the meaning of a word in the mental lexicon is composed of a universal bundle of primitive features which holistically show the nature of word meaning (Clark, 1993).Thus the features for the word dog shared by all members of the category include [+four-legged, +bark, +domestic, etc]. According to this theory, children learn the word meaning by building upon the most general features and acquire the others through time (Riemer, 2015).This theory accounts for synonymy and antonymy .Naming every four legged animal as dog is an example of overextension errors made by children which is explained by the same theory as well (Rieme,r 2015).Although semantic feature theory was substantiated by Piagetian and Chomskyan enterprises, it fell short of the target as it was impossible to come up with some defining features for each word. Likewise, each feature in turn, necessitated further decomposition (Lust 2006).In addition; abstract nouns cannot be decomposed in respect of features.

5. Prototype theory

Words are believed to be organized in the mind based on prototypical categories exhibiting family resemblance. Geeraerts (1989) holds that prototype categories share the following characteristics:
a. They exhibit different degrees of category membership
b. Prototypical categories are fuzzy at the boundaries
c. Prototypical categories are not a single set of criterial features:
d. They have overlapping meanings

The experiments conducted with children and adults are in line with prototype theory in that they rank exemplars of many concepts for instance apple as a prototype fruit. In addition, the more prototype like a word is, the quicker it is to distinguish it from members of the other categories (Lust 2006).

However, this theory failed to account for the theory of word meaning due to its unclear categorical attributes to assign prototype.

Taken together, the theories discussed above failed to gain support as they only take into account the cognitive aspects of meaning and overlooked the social perspective of meaning (Seel, 2012).

6. Fast mapping

Children can work out the meaning of a new word from a brief encounter to it in a familiar context .The one- shot word learning ability with limited exposure is referred to as fast mapping (Gershkoff-Stowe, 2007). Fast mapping in the scope of word learning indicates initial hypothesis formation due to brief exposure to the data(Lust 2006). Children aged two have the ability to appropriately and quickly map a new word to a novel object in the context of some other familiar objects (Alishahi, 2008).In the same vein, Bavin (2009) postulates that when children come across a novel word, they learn how it is used in the context in question. Moreover, they learn about its conventional meanings, neighbors, relations and syntactic constructions. Fast mapping is an integral part of language acquisition since it provides good insight on how children gain the required information about the

meaning of a word on the basis of the clues including the words it contrasted with and how it is used in the context (Heibeck, 1985). Lust (2006) maintains that constant mechanism of fast mapping contributes to the productive vocabulary development to a large extent even for children aged 3 to 4. The earliest meanings arisen from fast mapping by children may be more limited in terms of scope than that of adult's for the same term. Attributing adult-like meaning by children is a slow and long process derived through time (Bavin, 2009).

7. Theory construction in acquisition of word meaning
Recent research demonstrates that the child formulates theories in the course of acquisition of words. They have certain expectations about the features necessary for a particular domain around which they establish word meanings in a top down fashion. To frame a concept, they seek the underlying features of the concept in question (Lust, 2006).

8. Usage -based theory and word meaning acquisition
It takes language as a social behavior and postulates that usage influences language structure which is derived from communicative events. Tomasello (2003) holds that "meaning is use" serves as the single most important principle of usage- based theory. Bavin (2009) maintains that children start to communicate using the utterances - the basic unit through which a communication intention is expressed - not the words .In the course of communication with an adult, the child makes an endeavor to understand the general intention within the utterance and to determine the overall communicative functions whose constituents play which is known as blame assignment. In the same vein Clark (1997) holds that children mine a speaker's intention as well as pragmatic clues so as to interpret meaning together with the reference. It is abundantly clear that they don't learn the words in a direct way.

Bavin (2009) believes that the early multi-word utterances which are basically concrete come in three types: word combinations, pivot schemas, item-based constructions and finally abstract constructions. Children at about 18 months start to produce relevant two –word utterances of the same category. According to Bavin (2009), it is difficult to determine the meaning of the combined words out of the context unless some inflections and morphemes are added to clarify the meaning. Pivot schemas are characterized by more regular patterns, in which one word structures the utterance. These pivot schemas are locally bound and seem to be internally devoid of syntax. Syntactic markings, word order and syntactic symbols are part and parcel of item-based construction. By the time children are two or three years of age, they start to make some abstract constructions with fewer lexical items thrown in. Although the linguistic patterns are abstract, they serve a specific function in communicative context.

9. Semantic field theory
The words of a language are classified into semantically related fields in various ways. In English, lexemes representing fruits are categorized under the superordinate term fruit which includes apples, oranges and dozens of others. A lexeme per se acquires meaning through the relations it makes with the neighboring words. Thus, semantic field is intrinsic to word meaning acquisition and is determinant of the meanings ascribed to the words in the lexicon .The development of semantic domains entails the acquisition of single words, meanings and the relations among the lexemes (Brainerd, 1982) .In respect of word meaning acquisition, most of the early words used by children refer to objects, people, and animals. According to Bavin (2009) children organize the newly learned lexical items into semantic domains. At the early stages of word acquisition, there are very few words at the ready in their semantic domains. As children grow older they increase the size of the domains by adding more members. Afterwards, as Clark (1995) postulates children try to make their words more adult-like that is, more words are made for more distinct differences and consequently, more meanings are added to the domains. However, according to Bavin (2009) building up the domains takes a long time and the meanings attributed to each word may change as more words are added. Likewise some domains become interrelated by the overlapping terms.

10. Concluding remarks

This paper aimed to provide an overview of the theories and approaches to word meaning acquisition. Some of these theories postulate that children primarily rely on perception while others view them as engaged in constructing meaning through pragmatic cues and social perspectives. Bootstrapping approaches to word meaning consist of semantic and syntactic bootstrapping; the former accentuates child's observation of real word out of which meanings are derived while the latter stresses the role of syntax as a means of determining meaning. Semantic constraints approach takes into account some built-in constraints narrowing meanings to words. Context- based approaches bear on cooperative principles and joint attention. Based on semantic feature theory meanings are the products of a set of discrete features. In the prototype theory, mental representation for meanings in terms of family resemblance is taken into account. Usage-based approach postulates that meaning is emerged from language use. Finally in semantic field theory, the word meaning is determined on the basis of its relations with other words. The theories we explicated, pave the way for development of intricate semantic relations .As a result, providing a well- substantiated explanation for the child's lexical acquisition requires the formation of more complex theories and further research on the interactions of syntax, semantics and pragmatics.

References

Akhtar, N., & Gernsbacher, M. A. (2007). Joint attention and vocabulary development: a critical look. *Language and linguistics compass*, *1*(3), 195-207.

Akhtar, N., J. Jipson and M. A. Callahan (2001). "Learning words through overhearing." *Child Development* **72**(2): 416–430.

Alishahi, A., Fazly, A., & Stevenson, S. (2008, August). Fast mapping in word learning: What probabilities tell us. In *Proceedings of the Twelfth Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning* (pp. 57-64). Association for Computational Linguistics.

Bavin, E. L. (2009). The Cambridge handbook of child language.

Brainerd, C. J., & Pressley, M. (Eds.). (1982). *Verbal processes in children*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Brown, K. (2010). *Concise encyclopedia of semantics*. K. Allan (Ed.). Elsevier.

Clark, E. 1997). "Conceptual Perspective and Lexical Choice in Acquisition." *Cognition* **64**(1): 1–37.

Clark, E. (1993). *The Lexicon in Acquisition*. Cambridge;NewYork: Cambridge University Press.

Clark, E. (1973) What's in a Word? On the Child's Acquisition of Semantics in His First Language. In T. E. Moore (ed.), *Cognitive Development and the Acquisition of Language*. New York: Academic Press. 65–110.

Clark, E. V., & Kelly, B. F. (Eds.). (2006). Constructions in Acquisition. Stanford, CA: CSLI.

Clark, E. V. (1995). *The lexicon in acquisition* (Vol. 65). Cambridge University Press

Clark, E. V. (1990). On the pragmatics of contrast. *Journal of Child Language*,*17*(02), 417-431.

Doughty, C. J., & Long, M. H. (Eds.). (2008). *The handbook of second language acquisition* (Vol. 27). John Wiley & Sons

Geeraerts, D. (1989). Introduction: Prospects and problems of prototype theory.*Linguistics*, *27*(4), 587-612.

Gershkoff-Stowe, L., & Hahn, E. R. (2007). Fast mapping skills in the developing lexicon. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, *50*(3), 682-697.

Gleitman, L. (1994). A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words, But That's the Problem: The Role of Syntax in Vocabulary Acquisition. In B. Lust, M. Su˜ner and J. Whitman (eds.), Syntactic Theory and First Language Acquisition: Cross-Linguistic Perspectives.Vol. 1: Heads, Projections and Learnability. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 291–300.

Heibeck, T. H. (1985). Word Learning in Children: An Examination of Fast Mapping.

Höhle, B. (2009). Bootstrapping mechanisms in first language acquisition. *Linguistics*, *47*(2), 359-382.

Landau, B., & Gleitman, L. R. (Eds.). (1994). *The acquisition of the lexicon*. MIT Press.

Lust, B. C. (2006). *Child language: Acquisition and growth*. Cambridge University Press.

Mechanisms of Language Acquisition. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Markman, E. M. (1989). Categorization and Naming in Children: Problems of Induction. Cambridge, MA: MIT/Bradford Books

Pinker, S. (1987). The Bootstrapping Problem in Language Acquisition. In B. MacWhinney (ed.),399–442.

Pinker, Steven. 1984. Language learnability and language development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Pozzan, L., Gleitman, L. R., & Trueswell, J. C. Semantic ambiguity and syntactic bootstrapping: The case of conjoined-subject intransitive sentences. *Language Learning and Development*.

Riemer, N. (Ed.). (2015). *The Routledge Handbook of Semantics*. Routledge.

Seel, N. M. (Ed.). (2012). *Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Tomasello, M. (2003). Constructing a Language: A Usage-Based Theory of Language Acquisition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Tomasello, Michael, and Nameera Akhtar. 1995. Two-year-olds use pragmatic cues to differentiate reference to objects and actions. Cognitive Development 10.201–24.

THE ROLE OF PSYCHOTYPOLOGY IN THIRD LANGUAGE ACQUISTION

Laleh Moghtadi

Department of Foreign Language, Nourabad Mamasani Branch, Islamic Azad University, Nourabad Mamasani, Iran

lamoghtadi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

IN THIS EXPLORATORY STUDY, I EMPIRICALLY SUBSTANTIATE THE CLIAM WETHER PSYCHOTYPOLOGY IS A FACTOR PERTINENT TO THE ACQUISTION OF ENGLISH AS A THIRD LANGUAGE (L3). THE MAIN CONCERN OF THE PRESENT STUDY IS, THUS, TO INVESTIGATE THE PROBABLE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE PSYCHOTYPOLOGY OF THE FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGES AND THE ACQUSITION OF ENGLISH L3 RELATIVE CLAUSES. THE CURRENT STUDY WAS IMPLEMENTED ON SELECTING A TOTAL OF 100 FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS STUDYING AT SECOND GRADE FROM TWO EDUCATIONAL DISTRICTS OF TABRIZ (AN AZERI-SPEAKING CITY IN IRAN). THE PARTICIPANTS WERE HOMOGENEOUS IN TERMS OF THEIR ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL, SEX, AND AGE. OXFORD SOLUTIONS PLACEMENT TEST, A QUESTIONNAIRE, AND TWO SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE TESTS WERE UTILIZED. THE RESULTS OF STATITICAL ANALYES INCLUDING DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND SPEARMAN'S RHO CORRELATIONS INDICATED THAT THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT CORRELATION BETWEEN THE PSYCHOTYPOLOGY OF THE FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGES AND THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH L3 RELATIVE CLAUSES.

KEY WORDS: BILINGUALISM, THIRD LANGUAGE ACQUISTION, PSYCHOTYPOLOGY, ACQUISTION, FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGES

1. **Introduction**

Going beyond second language acquisition (SLA) to the third language acquisition (TLA) is very common for many people all over the world (Cenoz, 2008). According to Cenoz (2003), TLA refers to "the acquisition of a non-native language by learners who have previously acquired or are acquiring two other languages. The acquisition of the first two languages can be simultaneous (as in early bilingualism) or consecutive" (p.71).

TLA is a relatively new area of research compared to what has been done in SLA and first language acquisition (FLA) (Cenoz and Jessner, 2000)."One of the first true L3 acquisition studies is the one by Stedje and Biedermann (1975) and Stedje (1977), in which the acquisition of German as an L2 is compared to the acquisition of German as an L3 " (Falk, 2010, p. 12).

According to the scholars who actively work on this new area of research (Cenoz & Jessner, 2000; Cenoz, 2000), TLA is qualitatively different from SLA and FLA, since the L3 learner has already acquired (at least) one L2 (up to some level) in addition to the L1 and this knowledge plays a role in the acquisition of other foreign languages (Cenoz & Jessner, 2000). Furthermore, it is believed that TLA presents more diversity and complexity than SLA resulting in situations that are unique in language acquisition.

During the last decades, there has been an increased interest in this relatively under–explored field. Cenoz (2001) believes that the learners who are learning a foreign language are not always

monolinguals, especially those who are members of linguistic minorities in their countries. Iran sets a real example of those countries in which many English learners are members of linguistic minorities like Arab, Turk, and Kurd. In Iran, a multicultural and multilingual society (Khadivi & Kalantari, 2010; Kalantari, 2012), TLA has still been subsumed into research on SLA except for a few studies such as Keshavarz and Astaneh (2004); Modirkhamene (2008); Farhadian et al. (2010); Kassaian and Esmae'li (2011); Saeidi and Mazoochi (2013) and Khany and Bazyar (2014) to name a few.

While the studies explored the issue of TLA in Iran have investigated a group of variables in relation to L3 development (e.g., autonomy, proficiency, and motivation, among others) and made valuable contribution highlighting the difference between SLA and TLA, still one possibly significant relation that has been overlooked is that between the psychotypology of first and second languages and L3 development. With regard to TLA specifically, psychotypology is a variable that can potentially determine the source of cross-linguistic influence in multilingual. According to Ringbom, (2001) and Kellerman (2001), psychotypology plays a crucial role in TLA (as it may affect the L3 learner's successful acquisition of a third language). Therefore, an argument can be made that further research still needs to be conducted in order to better understand whether there is a relationship between this influential factor and TLA. In other words, the main question that this paper addresses is whether the learning of an L3 is enhanced through L1 and L2 psychotypology.

2. **Literature Review**

According to Kellerman (1978, as cited in Ellis, 2008, P. 977), distance could be considered as either a linguistic phenomenon that is referred as linguistic distance or as an individual perception that is referred as *psychotypology*. 'Linguistic distance' and 'psychotypology' are two factors that determine the transfer source in TLA and appear to be influential factors in the choice of source language concerning cross-linguistic influence (for instance whether a language learner draws on the L1 or L2 in the production of L3) (Cenoz, 2001).

Generally speaking, transfer is most likely to occur between languages that are closely related to one another than between languages that are distantly related, which is called *language distance*. On the other hand, 'psychotypology' refers to the individual language learner's perception of linguistic distance between his or her languages. Kellerman (1978) has suggested that "learners have perceptions regarding the distance between their L1 and the L2 they are trying to learn. These perceptions constitute their *psychotypology*" (as cited in Ellis, 2008, P. 977). He posited that a learner's unique perception of linguistic distance is a critical factor in determining the transferability of items across languages.

Confirming previous studies on typology shows that language learners tend to borrow more terms from the language that is typologically closer to the target language (Cenoz, 2001) or the language that is perceived as typologically closer to the target language. "For Cenoz et al. (2001), linguistic typology proximity is the priming factor for determining cross-linguistic influences" (Leung, 2009, p.4).

Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) used the term 'crosslinguistic similarity', which is one of the subcategories of linguistic and psycholinguistic factors involving "the ways that transfer can be affected by characteristics of both the source and recipient languages" (p. 176).

3. **Psychotypology Studies**

Kellerman (1979) used lexical judgment and oral production tests to investigate to what extent Dutch learners of English can translate Dutch sentences containing the verb *breken* into English using the verb break. According to the percentage of students who were prepared to translate into English using *break,* the results revealed clear differences in the 17 sentences. Interpreting the results, Kellerman proposed three factors affecting transfer: "prototypicality (i.e., the extent to which learners perceive the feature to be transferrable), the learner's perception of L1-L2 distance and the learner's actual knowledge of L2" (as cited in Iwashita, 2012, p. 293).

Building on the Kellerman (1979) study, Kato (2005) used both lexical judgment and oral production tests to investigate the acquisition of Japanese vocabulary by Chinese native speakers. While the results of the lexical judgment test were not consistent with the Kellerman's (1978, 1979) studies, the results of the oral production test were similar (as cited in Iwashita, 2012).

Ringbom's (1987) study of English learners in Finland has played a significant role in demonstrating the influence of psychotypology in TLA. Ringbom (1987) compared the acquisition of English for Swedish and Finnish speaking Finns. There are great typological differences between the L1s, Finnish and Swedish, which are the two main language groups. Finnish is structurally very different from English (and Swedish), whereas Swedish is structurally similar to English. The study focused on the L3 English acquisition for learners of typologically unrelated L1s. The results revealed that Swedish, regardless of whether it was the L1 or the L2, was transferred into English L3 rather than Finnish (Swedish and English are Germanic languages, while Finnish is a Finno-Ugric language). Ringbom found that it is psychotypology that determines the extent of L1 and L2 transfer because similar languages provide much more reference points for the learner than is the case when they are unrelated. Concerning the differences for the two language learner groups, Ringbom concludes that:

The difference between learning a related and an unrelated language is primarily a difference between much overt cross-linguistic influence based on perceived similarities vs. little or no overt cross-linguistic influence: a question of "transfer" vs. lack of transfer. Cross-linguistic influence based on perceived similarities is overwhelmingly "positive transfer", not "negative transfer" (Ringbom, 1987, p.109).

In one study, De Angelis (2005) studied the use of non-native function words in the written production of learners of Italian as a third or fourth language with English, Spanish, or French as native or non-native languages and concluded that psychotypology influenced the selection of non-target function words. In the words of De Angelis (2005):

It cannot be assumed a priori […] that whenever two languages typologically close to each other are present in the speaker's mind and one of them is the speaker's native language, it is the native language that will have the most dominant role. (p. 401, as cited in Boratyńska-Sumara, 2014, p. 144).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

To accumulate the relevant evidence, the following research questions were formulated:

- Would the psychotypology of the first language correlate with the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses?
- Would the psychotypology of the second language correlate with the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses?

Based on the aforementioned questions, the following null hypotheses were postulated and tested:

Ho1: The psychotypology of the first language would not correlate with the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses.

Ho2: The psychotypology of the second language would not correlate with the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses.

4. **Method**

4.1.   The Context for the Study

Persian is an Indo-European language-a southwestern Iranian language from the Indo-Iranian branch, which is written with a modified Arabic alphabet. Persian is the first language of the majority of the population in Iran and the country's official language; the sole language of education and instruction.

Azerbaijani or Azeri or Torki is a member of the Oghuz branch of the Turkic languages. It is divided into two main varieties: North Azerbaijani and South Azerbaijani, and a large number of dialects. South Azerbaijani is spoken in Iran, Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. In Iran, South Azeri uses the Perso-Arabic script although the spelling and orthography are not yet standardized.

In Iran, English is regarded as an academic subject in the formal context of the classrooms. In some parts of Iran, where learners are members of linguistic minorities like Arab, Turk, and Kurd, English is regarded as an L3, which is acquired after the acquisition of the L1 and L2 languages.

4.2.   Design

This study aimed at investigating the probable correlation between the psychotypology of the first and second languages and the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses in multilingual environment with Azeri as the L1, Persian as the L2 and English as the L3. The current study has attempted to uncover the relationship between psychotypology and TLA. Concerning the importance of L3 learning, therefore, this study set out a correlational study. It applied research procedures for data collection (administering Oxford Solutions Placement Test, a questionnaire, and two syntactic structure tests to the participants) as well as research procedures for data analysis, specifically processing, analyzing, coding of the questionnaire and two language tests, as well as subsequent quantification and interpretation of the coded data.

4.3. Target Structure

The target structure selected for the study was the English relative clause. The formation of relative clauses appears as a grammar item in grade two in high school in Iran. The third lesson in the students' English book highlights this structure. This lesson consists of nine parts: New Words, Reading, Comprehension, Speak Out, Write It Down, Language Functions, Pronunciation Practice, Vocabulary Review, and Vocabulary. Topics covering relative clauses tend to appear repeatedly in different textbooks, especially pre-university level textbooks.

4.4. Participants

A total of 100 female high school students studying at the second grade was selected from two educational districts of Tabriz (an Azeri-speaking city in Iran). The Azeri-Persian bilingual learners were studying English as an L3 academically in Tabriz. They were between the ages of 15 and 18 years (*M*=15.68*, SD*=.62*)*.

The participants were homogeneous in terms of the educational context: they attended public high schools; they were taught the same materials; i.e. the textbooks and methodology for teaching English as a foreign language were the same (sanctioned by the Ministry of Education). They had the same number of hours of instruction, which was one session (one hour and thirty minutes) every week. They were also homogeneous in terms of their English proficiency level (achieved through OSPT), sex, and age.

4.5. Research Instruments
4.5.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised three sections, the first being 'Background Information'. The 'Background Information' section contained questions about the participants' background.

To learn about the language repertoire of the participants, they also had to provide information in the second section of the questionnaire - 'Language Information' - about the educational level of their parents, their families' native tongues, how many years of education they had received in the L1, L2 and possible L3 language(s) they use at school, as well as the city they originate from.

Since the bilingual students' perception of the language distance between the English, Azeri and Persian (psychotypology) was essential to this research, the participants were asked to identify two languages, among L1, L2, and L3, which were, in their view, typologically closer in 'Cross-linguistic Similarity', the third part of the questionnaire. In other words, they were asked about their views on the affinity between the three areas of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation among the three languages concerned. The aim was to elicit information about the factor that may influence the acquisition of English, i.e. psychotypology.

The questionnaire was piloted on a pilot group consisting of 25 students selected from one of the assigned schools; participants had similar characteristics to those of students in the study but were not members of the two specified groups used in the study. The reliability of the test turned out to be .87 based on Cronbach Alpha formula. Furthermore, two university lecturers with a PhD degree in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) were invited to appraise whether face validity and content validity were present "since we need evidence to establish that the inferences, which are made on the basis of the test results, are appropriate" (Ary, Cheser Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010, p.

226). They were asked to offer any comments regarding technical matters, the relevance of items to the purpose of the questionnaire, the wording of the instructions, interpretation problems and the instructions, and any other changes that they felt would be beneficial. After piloting, wording and conceptual problems were discussed, additional ideas were invited, and some changes were implemented.

To avoid participants' English proficiency impinging upon their ability to fill in the questionnaire, and since the bilingual group did not receive any education in their native language, and, therefore, could not read in their L1 Azeri, the questionnaire was written in Persian in order. It should be noted that all the bilingual children in Iran have Persian as the language of instruction, and they also studied English as a school subject. Although Persian is becoming the language of instruction in all areas of Iran, Azeri is the language at the community level in Tabriz. The bilingual children learn and speak their L1 at home and do not receive education in their native languages; like other Iranian students, they start learning Persian literacy skills (reading and writing) at the age of seven and continue until their diploma. As a result, they become bilingual by speaking their mother tongue, Azeri, from birth and learning to speak and write Persian at school.

4.5.2. Oxford solutions Placement Test

An English proficiency test; i.e. the OSPT (Edwards, 2007) was utilized to ensure the homogeneity of the participants in terms of English proficiency level. As far as the English proficiency test was concerned, the researcher decided to use the OSPT rather than the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The reason for this was that it was considered the OPT might not appropriately fit participants' language proficiency. The OPT may be too challenging for participants such as high school students and could lead them using guesswork to a certain extent: the validity and reliability of the test would then be diminished. Moreover, as grammar and vocabulary are heavily focused on in the Iranian EFL curriculum, the researcher decided to use the grammar and vocabulary sections of the OSPT instead.

The test consisted of 50 multiple-choice items with an estimated time of 45 minutes for completion, as determined in the OSPT. It was a paper-and-pencil test and participants had to answer the questions on specified answer sheets.

The reliability of the OSPT was tested on the pilot group. It was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and was found to be .62, which was considered statistically acceptable for the current study.

Besides, for the purpose of measuring the concurrent validity of this test, it was correlated with an achievement test developed by the Ministry of Education for second-grade centres. The correlation coefficient calculated between the achievement test and the OSPT appeared to be.91.

4.5.3. Grammaticality Judgment Test

A grammaticality judgment test (GJT) was conducted to measure participants' implicit knowledge about English relative clauses. This elicitation technique is just one of the methods that can be used to obtain information about the knowledge learners have. It is one of the most widespread data-collection methods and provides "information about learner knowledge in a controlled way (the speaker cannot avoid grammatical properties) […] and they eliminate much potential performance interference because the subject does not have to produce the sentences, merely assess them" (Hawkins, 2001, p. 24, as cited in Falk & Bardel, 2011, p.76). According to Bialystok (1981), "simple grammaticality-judgment tasks reflect information about implicit knowledge, that is, the intuitive knowledge of language" (García Mayo, 2003, p.98).

The test comprised 27 English relative clause sentences, with an even split of three grammatical and three ungrammatical sentences in each category, along with three distractors. The distractor sentences were added to ensure that "participants in a study cannot easily guess what the study is about…this would be a threat to internal validity" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 51). Moreover, the time allotted for the test was 15 minutes.

In order to ensure the quality of the GJT, the following principles were observed. First, only one error was made in each ungrammatical sentence so that the participants would not be distracted

by other errors. Second, vocabulary was controlled for and should not have caused any problems for the participants. Therefore, the participants were allowed to ask the meaning of words they did not know. Finally, less demanding test items were placed in the first part of the test, followed by more challenging ones.

In order to meet internal consistency reliability, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was measured. To do so, the GJT was tested on the pilot group. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the GJT was found to be .59, which was considered statistically acceptable for the current study.

Regarding the face validity and content validity of the GJT, the test was evaluated by two university lecturers with a PhD degree in TEFL. They were asked to comment on matters such as clarity, timing, and ease/difficulty. This resulted in a few adjustments to the questions in the GJT.

It should be noted that the GJT was coded into 'corrects', 'incorrect" and 'skips'. A 'correct' was either a correct acceptance of a grammatical sentence or a correct rejection. An 'incorrect' was either an incorrect rejection of a grammatical sentence or an incorrect acceptance of an ungrammatical sentence. A 'skip' (a missing value) was when no answer was given to an item.

4.5.4. Cloze Test

The second syntactic structure test was a cloze test (CT) which was used to measure the English relative pronoun proficiency of high school students. It was a 354-word cloze text, which was a reading passage about a letter between two friends.

The researcher opted for the rational deletion method, because they were interested to see the extent to which students have command over the use of relative pronouns. According to Farhady (1996), utilizing this variety would enable us to have a reasonable idea of students' strengths and weaknesses with regard to a predetermined element of language. Bachman (1985) favoured rational deletion by saying that "the use of a rational deletion procedure allows the test developer much greater flexibility in revising specific items on the basis of both the content specifications of the test and the item statistics" (p. 550, as cited in Wu, 1994, p. 10).

Therefore, twenty relative pronouns were removed from the text and the students were asked to fill in the omitted words with only one pronoun. The first sentence was also left intact so that the participants could have a better idea of what the text was about.

There was an attempt to control the vocabulary used in the test. Therefore, the vocabulary was selected from words familiar to the participants and they were allowed to ask the meaning of any words they did not know. Time allocated for students to complete the CT was 20 minutes as Tremblay and Garrison (2010) claim CTs can take a relatively short amount of time to complete (e.g., 15 - 35 minutes).

In order to estimate the reliability of the CT the Cronbach Alpha was used according to which the reliability of the test was .62, which was considered statistically acceptable for the current study.

It should be noted that the CT was scored according to the appropriate scoring method since "it is more internally-reliable than Exact Word scoring" (Owen et al. 1996, as cited in Hadley & Naaykes, 1999, p. 65); that is, answers which were grammatically appropriate were accepted as correct and were given a score of one. Those answers which were incorrect were assumed incorrect and were given a zero score and those answers which were left blank were coded as a 'skip'.

4.6. Data Collection Procedures

The data collection phase comprised the administration of four instruments. During the first phase of the study, after choosing subjects, the researcher used oral description to explain the study to the students, giving brief instructions for all phases of the study. They reiterated that participants should not see the experiment as a 'test'. The questionnaire was then distributed.

Then, the OSPT was taken by participants during the second week. The test was administered according to the test instructions including strict time limits (45 minutes).

In the next step, participants were asked to judge the (un)grammaticality of English relative clause structures. They were asked to respond as quickly as possible, because of the 15-minute time limit. The participants were not allowed to go back and change their answers. "Given that one is

attempting to gain knowledge about a learner's "grammar" and not about formal rule knowledge, it is advisable to get "quick" responses without a great deal of thinking time" (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 51).

The last phase was the administration of the CT. The participants were asked to spend 20 minutes to complete this test.

4.7. Data Analysis

In the current study, data analysis procedures consisted of descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, i.e., Spearman's rho correlation coefficient.

First, reliability of the measures was examined by computing the internal consistency. Validity of the measures was also examined by measuring concurrent validity, face validity and content validity.

Second, descriptive statistics were performed for the instruments of the study; i.e. two syntactic structure tests (GJT and CT), the proficiency test (OSPT) and the questionnaire. Test items and questionnaire items were analysed in the light of the average score (means), and variability (standard deviations).

Third, each variable was screened for missing data and outliers. No missing values were identified while a small number of outliers (i.e., "cases with values well above or well below the majority of other cases" (Pallant, 2013, p. 66)) were identified for some of the variables. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), "one option for reducing impact of univariate outliers is to change the score(s) on the variable(s) for the outlying case(s)" (p. 76). In accordance with this method, univariate outliers were assigned a raw score on the offending variable that was one unit larger or smaller than the next most extreme score.

Fourth, bilinguals' responses on the 'Cross-linguistic Similarity' section of the questionnaire were also screened for normality separately as per research questions using measures of skewness, kurtosis, histograms, and the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. The Shapiro-Wilk statistic was calculated for both groups, as each group comprised 100 participants (Coakes & Steed, 1999). The histograms indicated non-normal distributions for the variable of research questions and the statistics were not significant; therefore the non-parametric Spearman's rho correlation technique was run.

5. Results

To arrive at plausible answers to the research questions, the results of GJT, CT and the cross-linguistic similarity questionnaire are presented in turn. To begin with, Figure 1 shows the percentages the learners obtained on GJT and CT.
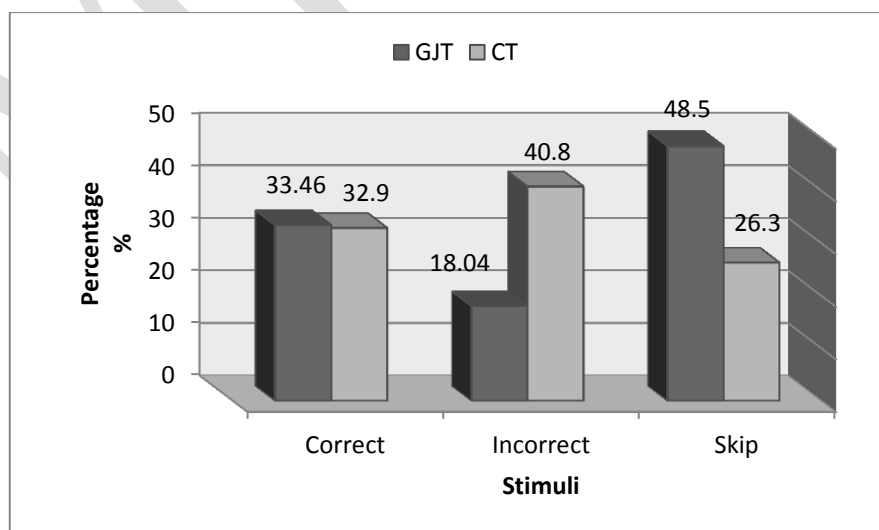

Fig. 1 *Distribution of stimuli*

As Figure 1 shows, we found 803 correct responses of 2400 grammatical sentences in GJT. In other words, the overall accuracy rate in GJT is only 33.46 %. Furthermore, we found 18.04 % incorrect responses and 48.50 % skipped items out of 2400 responses.

Moreover, the participants had 658 (32.90%) correct responses and 816 (40.80%) incorrect responses out of 2000 responses in CT. There is also a category including skipped items; they had 526 (26.30%) skipped items out of 2000 responses.

The next piece of data analysis displays the results of analysing the bilingual learners' performances on the cross-linguistic similarity. Respectively, the following figures show the percentages obtained by bilinguals on the affinity between the three areas of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation among the three languages concerned. As illustrated in Figures 2, in terms of pronunciation, the bilingual learners considered the distance between Azeri and English to be much different than between Persian and English, even though this difference is small.
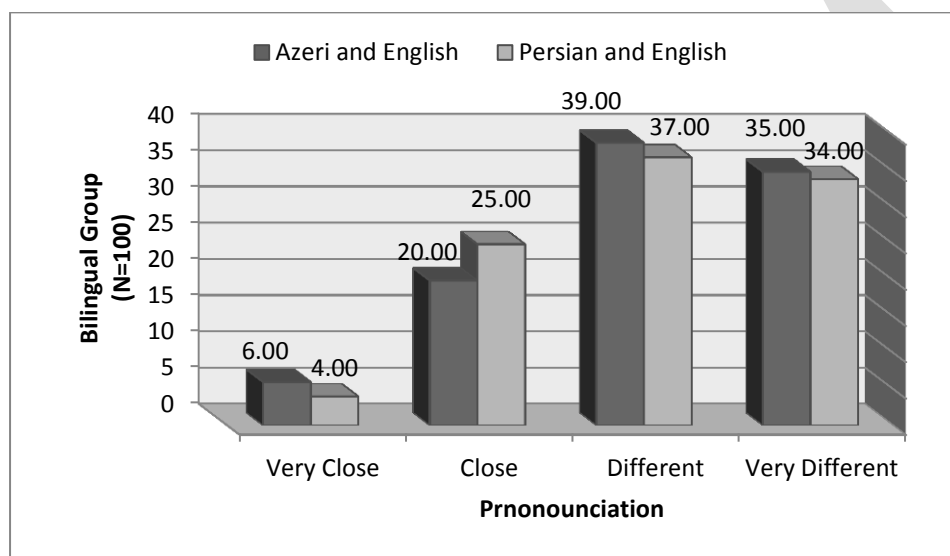

Fig 2. *Perceived distance between English, Azeri and Persian pronunciation among the bilingual students*

In terms of grammar, they considered the distance between English and Azeri to be close and the distance between Persian and English to be different (Figure 2).
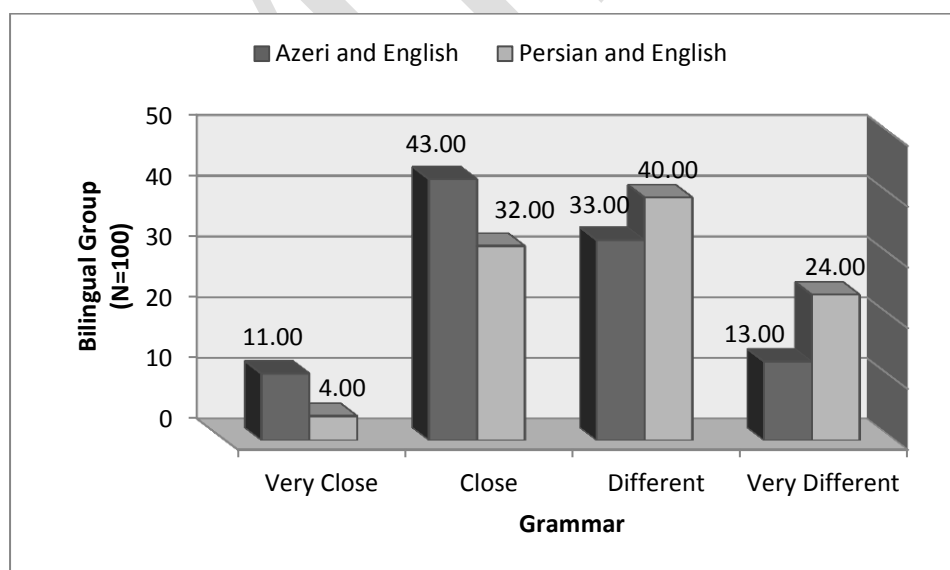

Fig 3. *Perceived distance between English, Azeri and Persian grammar among the bilingual students*

In terms of vocabulary, the bilingual students considered the distance between English and Persian to be closer than between Azeri and English. Furthermore, they considered the distance between Azeri and English to be very different (Figure 4).
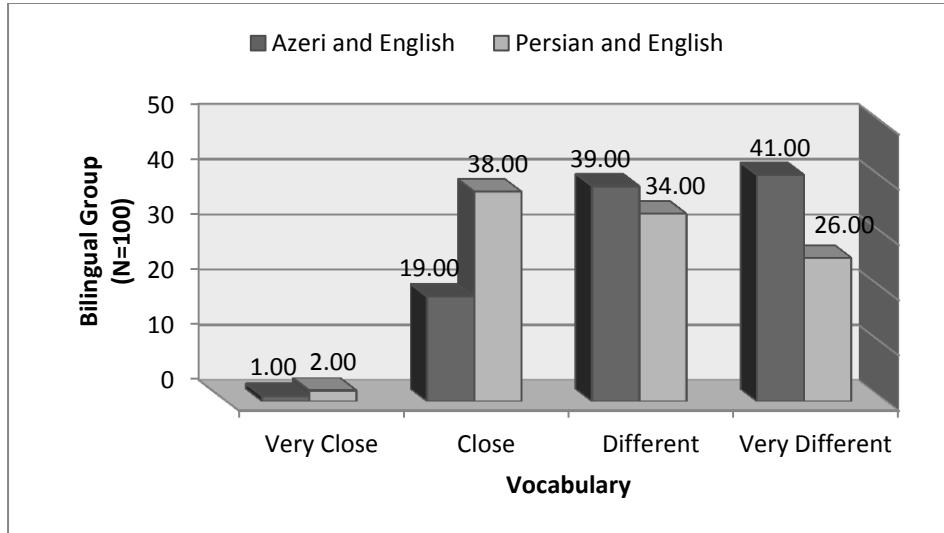

Fig 4. *Perceived distance between English, Azeri and Persian vocabulary among the bilingual students*

In order to locate any further differences, the descriptive statistics for the perceived distance between Azeri, English, and Persian are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics for perceived distance between Azeri, English, and Persian

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perceived distance between Persian and English Vocabulary	100	1.00	4.00	2.8400	.83750	.08375
Perceived distance between Persian and English Grammar	100	1.00	4.00	2.8400	.83750	.08375
Perceived distance between Persian and English Pronunciation	100	1.00	4.00	3.0100	.87033	.08703
Perceived distance between Azeri and English Vocabulary	100	1.00	4.00	3.2000	.77850	.07785
Perceived distance between Azeri and English Grammar	100	1.00	4.00	2.4800	.85847	.08585
Perceived distance between Azeri and English Pronunciation	100	1.00	4.00	3.0200	.89871	.08987
Valid N (listwise)	100					

To test the relationship between psychotypology and English proficiency, Spearman's Rho correlations were computed.

Table 2

Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient between measures of psychotypology and syntactic structure tests

	r	*P* Sig. (2-tailed)
Perceived distance between Azeri and English & GJT	.151	.133
Perceived distance between Azeri and English & CT	.101	.318
Perceived distance between Persian and English & GJT	.138	.172
Perceived distance between Persian and English & CT	.135	.180

As Table 2 shows, there was a small, positive correlation in the perceived distance between Azeri and English and the two syntactic structure tests; moreover, there was a very small, positive correlation in the perceived distance between Persian and English and the two syntactic structure tests. It seems that the psychotypology of the second language and the psychotypology of the first language influence both the GJT and CT for bilingual learners. However, the relationships were not significantly related to the GJT and CT. Therefore, based on the findings, the null hypotheses stating that there is no significant correlation between the psychotypology of first and second languages and the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses were confirmed.

6. **Discussion**

One of the most important results found in the psychotypology studies is that 'psychotypology' (perceived similarities and differences between languages) is the issue that appears to be an influential factor in TLA, as it may affect the L3 learner's successful acquisition of an L3. In other words, it seems that the perceived distance between the language learner's L1 and L2 and the TL is believed to influence the acquisition rate of the TL (Williams & Hammarberg, 1998; Ringbom, 1987; De Angelis & Selinker, 2001; Bouvy, 2000; Cenoz, 2001; Hammarberg, 2001).

Perceiving and making use of cross-linguistic similarities are important in the learner striving to facilitate the learning task. "To the learner similarities have a much more direct effect on language learning and performance than differences do. Learners are constantly trying to establish links between the TL (target language) and whatever prior linguistic knowledge they have" (Ringbom & Jarvis, 2009, p. 106).

Further, these processes are central to transfer. According to the Typological Primacy Model (TPM), (psycho)-typology determines whether the L1 or the L2 will be transferred in TLA. If a learner perceives either one or another language to be closer to the L3, this particular language will be transferred. Thus, it is expected a relationship can be found between the psychotypology of previously acquired languages and the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses.

The results of this study do not confirm the theoretical assumption that there is a significant correlation between these variables of interest, though a small, positive relationship is detected (GJT and Perceived distance between Azeri and English (*r* = .151); CT and Perceived distance between Azeri and English (*r* = .101); GJT and Perceived distance between Persian and English (*r* = .138); CT and Perceived distance between Persian and English (*r* = .135)). The direction, in fact, indicated that the participants may rely on the perceived similarity to succeed in L3 English relative clause learning.

These results are not consistent with similar studies by Foote (2009) and Ringbom (1987). In a study by Ringbom (1987), the acquisition of English for Swedish and Finnish speaking Finns is compared. Concerning the differences for the two language learner groups, Ringbom concludes that:

The difference between learning a related and an unrelated language is primarily a difference between much overt cross-linguistic influence based on perceived similarities vs. little or no overt cross-linguistic influence: a question of "transfer" vs. lack of transfer. Cross-linguistic influence based on perceived similarities is overwhelmingly "positive transfer", not "negative transfer" (Ringbom, 1987, p.109).

One possible explanation for the lack of a significant correlation between psychotypology and the two syntactic structure tests could be participants' lower metalinguistic awareness, which does not allow them to perceive objective linguistic distance.

Metalinguistic awareness is defined as "the ability to reflect on and manipulate the structural features of language" (Nagy & Anderson, 1995, p.1). According to Jessner (2008) metalinguistic knowledge refers to "the ability to focus on linguistic form and to switch focus between form and meaning". Jessner (2008) explains that this knowledge is "made up of a set of skills or abilities that the multilingual user develops owing to his/her prior linguistic and metacognitive knowledge" (p. 275, cited in Jung, 2013, p. 57).

Metalinguistic knowledge is a subfield of metacognition and is concerned with activities of reflection on language and its use and a person's ability to intentionally monitor and plan her/his own method of linguistic processing in comprehension and production of any aspect of language (Wojtowicz, 2006).

The participants' lower metalinguistic ability may result in: (1) their failure to notice a number of the actual similarities that exist across languages; (2) their misperception of the nature of many of the similarities that they do notice; and (3) their assumptions that certain similarities exist between the languages that actually do not exist (Herdina & Jessner, 2000).

Moreover, metalinguistic awareness is directly related to learners' literacy (Homer, 2000). In other words, literacy is crucial to certain aspects of metalinguistic awareness. Recently, Bigelow and Tarone (e.g., Bigelow, Delmas, Hansen, & Tarone, 2006; Tarone & Bigelow, 2005) have proposed, based on theory and empirical research, that one variable that might impact L2 learning is one's level of L1 literacy. According to them, this would be due to the fact that people with a limited level of L1 literacy will also probably have lower levels of metalinguistic awareness. In other words, having a low level of metalinguistic awareness would be a consequence of the learners' limited literacy. To conclude, based on the literature review, literacy in previously learned languages, that were acquired in formal educational contexts, fosters a higher degree of metalinguistic awareness "as children are exposed to two written codes and therefore, they may be faster at acquiring the code of a third language" (Schwartz, Geva, Share, Mark, & Leikin, 2007, p.27)

Furthermore, perceiving cross-linguistic similarities is of course a subjective process that takes place in the learner's mind and often results in an inaccurate or incomplete awareness of the actual similarities that exist across languages. It seems that if the bilingual participants' metalinguistic ability was higher, they would be more aware of the linguistic distance between Azeri-English and Persian-English and they would therefore make fewer errors in comprehending and producing the L3 relative clause structure.

A further discussion concerns the interpretation of the results of CT analysis that revealed that the bilingual learners had 526 (26.30%) skipped items and 816 (40.80%) incorrect responses in contrast to 658 (32.90%) correct responses out of 2000 responses. One possible interpretation regarding the skipped and incorrect items could be covert cross-linguistic influence (lack of perceived similarity; where similarities are not perceived).

Ringbom (1987) drew a distinction between different types of cross-linguistic influence in the process of production; overt and covert cross-linguistic influence based on whether or not similarity is perceived by the learner. Covert cross-linguistic influence is due to the learner not being able to establish any cross-linguistic similarities resulting in errors, omissions or avoidance, and cumulatively creating a strong negative effect.

It seems that the unanalysed Azeri -Persian bilinguals' underlying knowledge has not been placed in relation to their L3 English because they have not perceived the similarity. According to Ringbom (1987), "absence of cross-linguistic similarities, for instance between totally unrelated languages, produces learning conditions where learning, especially learning to understand, is delayed

at the important initial stages" (p. 139). The insignificant correlation between the psychotypology of Azeri-English and Persian-English and the two syntactic structure tests may, in fact, confirm such an interpretation.

In conclusion, the results confirmed the null hypotheses stating that there is no significant correlation between the psychotypology of first and second languages and the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses were confirmed.

7. **Conclusion**

The main purpose of this study was to establish factors pertinent to the acquisition of English as an L3 in Iran. In order to investigate this matter, data have been obtained through the instruments prepared for the present purpose. The respondents included in the investigation were 100 female Azeri-Persian bilingual high school students.

The theoretical framework suggests that typological distance between the language learner's languages and the distance perceived by the language learner (psychotypology) may also prove influential (Bouvy, 2000; Cenoz, 2001, De Angelis & Selinker, 2001; Ringbom, 1987, 2001; Hammarberg, 2001; Williams & Hammarberg, 1998).

The results of this study disconfirm the hypothesis that the perceived distance between a language learners's various languages may influence the acquisition of a third language. The results reveal that there is no significant correlation between the psychotypology of the first and second languages and the acquisition of English L3 relative clauses. The main reason for this could be related to the bilinguals' low metalinguistic ability, which in turn might be linked to a lack of literacy skills in their L1 (Azeri). Low metalinguistic ability does not allow them to perceive objective linguistic distance. Although psychotypology does not significantly related to the acquisition of L3 English, the researcher proposes that this factor is indeed highly influential in the acquisition of additional languages.

8. **Implication of the Study**

This study is situated in a research field that is still relatively new. A deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to the learning of an additional language will not only enhance the quality of the research, but will also have implications for language teaching. Based on the findings of the present study the following implication applies to bilingual subjects and syntax achievement. It has been tried out to broaden the result to the areas of teaching and learning English by identifying factors behind the achievement of students in English.

Regarding cross-linguistic similarities, the pedagogical point worth mentioning is that it may be useful for the foreign language teacher to over-emphasize any cross-linguistic similarities between the learner's L1 and the TL during the early stages of learning, by making explicit references whenever possible to relevant aspects of the L1. This will help to facilitate learning in that the learner will be able to draw more readily upon what he or she already knows. "The more aware learners are of the similarities and differences between their mother tongue and the target language, the easier they will find it to adopt effective learning and production strategies" (Swan, 1997, p.178). When teaching grammar to learners with an unrelated language the teacher should bear in mind that the learners are probably in more need of explicitly formulated rules and may find it difficult to cope solely on the basis of memorized examples.

In multilingual educational settings, similarities and differences between languages can be concentrated on in order to increase metalinguistic awareness in both teachers and students. It is though that the learner's awareness of similarities and differences between their mother tongue and additional languages will pave the way for effective learning. Therefore, a method of teaching foreign languages that demonstrates cross-linguistic similarities among languages seems to be an effective way in preparing language learners for more successful learning (Modirkhamene, 2008).

9. **Further Research**

The findings in this study open a range of new research questions that need to be answered in the future. In fact, the results merit further research into the aspects of the role of psychotypology.

The researcher proposes further research on metalinguistic awareness is carried out. Although scholars agree that metalinguistic awareness is highly influential in third language acquisition, this concept is scarcely investigated. The researcher believes that further studies in the abovementioned areas will shed light on the complexities of third language acquisition in general and the specificity of the L3 learners' experiences.

This study only examined two genetically and typologically similar languages (English and Persian) in relation to a distant language (Azeri). Different combinations of the three languages, such as three totally distant languages, three closely related languages, or the L1 and L3 being more closely related than the L2, could be adopted to test whether language distance and psychotypology is really an important factor underlying cross-linguistic influence among the languages concerned.

Research manageability made it necessary to delimit the study in terms of the age and gender of the participants. Thus, the results obtained from this study cannot be generalized to other age ranges and male learners. Therefore, more studies may be conducted with different age groups and with male participants. Other researchers may be interested in comparing degrees of bilingualism across different genders and different ages.

10. **Limitation of the Study**

The current study has shed some light on factors pertinent to the acquisition of English as an L3, especially in the area of syntactic learning, but it has certain limitations.

The most obvious limitation present in the design of this study originates in the test administered to evaluate the participants' proficiency in English. As a consequence of the short period of contact time allowed and as grammar and vocabulary are heavily focused on in the Iranian EFL curriculum, the test only included a structure section and a vocabulary section. Therefore, the researcher cannot make claims about the participants' reading and oral skills. In other words, it is not possible in this study to establish the respondents' overall English proficiency. Undoubtedly, the test could have been more extensive, by including more test items estimating other language features. However, the researcher has included test items that she believes will indicate the respondents' level of English proficiency to the extent possible in this investigation.

The second limitation involves the issue of trilinguality. While in many countries two languages are mastered as first and second languages and then an L3 is added for different purposes, in Iran Arabic is studied for religious use early in life and English is then studied as a foreign language at high school. Arabic remains the language for prayers and reciting the holy texts. In other words, learners in Iran have mastered and studied one foreign language before coming into contact with the TL English. Therefore, in this study, both the Persian monolingual group and the Azeri-Persian bilingual group have mastered Arabic up to a certain level. In fact, the participants were not purely bilinguals (Azeri and Persian) or monolinguals (Persian). It seems likely, therefore, that knowledge of other languages could affect performance in English.

References

Ary, D. Cheser Jacobs, L. Sorensen, Sh. & Razavieh, A. (2010). *Introduction to research in education.* Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.

Bigelow, M. Delmas, R. Hansen, K. & Tarone, E. (2006). Literacy and the processing of oral recasts in SLA. *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 4, p. 665-689. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/40264303

Boratyńska-Sumara, J. (2014). Lexical transfer research in third language acquisition (TLA) – an overview. *Studia Linguistica Universitatis Iagellonicae Cracoviensis*, 131 (2), pp. 137–148. http://www.ejournals.eu

Bouvy, Ch. (2000). Towards the construction of a theory of cross-linguistic transfer. In J. Cenoz, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *English in Europe: The acquisition of a third language* (pp. 143-156). Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cenoz, J. (2000). Research on multilingual acquisition. In J. Cenoz, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *English in Europe: The acquisition of a third language* (pp. 39-53). Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cenoz, J. (2001). The effect of linguistic distance, L2 status and age on cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: psycholinguistic perspectives* (pp. 8-20). Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cenoz, J. (2003). Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: Implications for the organization of the multilingual mental lexicon. *Bulletin VALS-ASLA (Vereinigung für angewandte Linguistik in der Schweiz),* vol. 78, p. 1-11.

Cenoz, J. (2003). The additive effect of bilingualism on third language acquisition: A review. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *7* (1), 71– 87. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/13670069030070010501

Cenoz, J. (2003). The influence of age on the acquisition of English: General proficiency, attitudes and code mixing. In M. d. P. G. Mayo & M. L. G. Lecumberri (Eds.), *Age and the acquisition of English as a foreign language* (77-93). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cenoz, J. (2008). The influence of bilingualism on multilingual acquisition: Some data from the Basque country. Retrieved from http://webs.uvigo.es/

Cenoz, J., & Jessner, U. (Eds.). (2000). *English in Europe: The acquisition of a third language.* Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Cenoz, J., & Jessner, U. (Eds.). (2001). *Trends in bilingual acquisition.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins. http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/tilar.1

Coakes, S. & Steed, L. (2005). S*PSS: Analysis without Anguish:* Version 12.0 for windows. John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd.

De Angelis, G. & Selinker, L. (2001). Interlanguage transfer and competing linguistic systems in the multilingual mind. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: psycholinguistic perspectives* (pp. 42-58). Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

De Angelis J. (2005). Interlanguage transfer of function words. *Language Learning,* vol. 55, no. 3, p. 379–414.

Edwards. L. (2007). *Oxford Solutions Placement Test.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Falk, Y. (2010). Gingerly studied transfer phenomena in L3 Germanic syntax. The role of the second language in third language acquisition. Retrieved from http://repository.ubn.ru.nl/

Falk, Y. and Bardel, C. (2011). Object pronouns in German L3 syntax: Evidence for the L2 status factor. Retrieved from http://repository.ubn.ru.nl/

Farhadian, M., Rohani A,. Mariani, M., Redzuan, M., Gazanizadand, N. & Kumar. V. (2010). Theory of mind in bilingual and monolingual preschool children. *J Psychology,* vol. 1, no.1, p. 39-46.

Farhady (1996). Varieties of cloze procedure in EFL education. *Roshd Foreign Language Teaching Journal*, vol. 12m no. 44, p. 217-229.

García-Mayo, M. d. P. (2003). Age, length of exposure and grammaticality judgements in the acquisition of English as a foreign language. In M. d. P. García-Mayo & M. L. García-Lecumberri (Eds.), *Age and the acquisition of English as a foreign language* (pp. 94-114). Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters Ltd.[22] Hadley, G. & Naaykes, J. (1999). Testing the test: Comparing SEMAC and exact word scoring on the selective deletion cloze. *The Korea TESOL Journal,* vol. 2, no. 1, p. 63-72.

Hammarberg, B. (2001). Roles of L1 and L2 in L3 production and acquisition. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: psycholinguistic perspectives* (pp. 21-41). Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Herdina, P. & Jessner, U. (2000). The dynamics of third language acquisition. In J. Cenoz, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *English in Europe: the acquisition of a third language* (pp. 84-98). Clevedon. Buffalo Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Homer, B. D. (2000). Literacy and metalinguistic knowledge: A cross-cultural study. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/

Iwashita, N. (2012). Cross-linguistic influence as a factor in the written and oral production of school age learners of Japanese in Australia. Retrieved from http://www.nla.gov.au

Jarvis, S. & Pavlenko, A. (2008). *Cross-linguistic influence in language and cognition*. New York, London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Jessner, U. (2008). Teaching third languages: Findings, trends and challenges. *Language Teaching,* vol. 41, no. 01, p. 15-56. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004739

Jung, J-Y. (2013). The role of metalinguistic awareness in multilingual acquisition. *Teachers College, Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics,* vol. 13, no. 2, p. 57-59.

Kalantari, K. (2012). The Dillemas of multilingualism in Iran. *ENGLISH REVIEW: Journal of English Education,* vol. 1, no. 1, p. 7-19.

Kassaian Z. & Esmae'li, S. (2011). The Effect of bilinguality on L3 breadth of vocabulary knowledge and word reading skill. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies,* vol. 1, no. 8, p. 966-974. http://dx.doi.org/10.4304/tpls.1.8.966-974

Keshavarz, M. H., & Astaneh, H. (2004). The impact of bilinguality on the learning of English vocabulary as a foreign language (L3). *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, vol. 7, no. 4, p. 295-302. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13670050408667814

Khadivi, A. & Kalantari, R. (2010). Bilingualism in Iran: Challenges, perspectives and solutions. Retrieved from http://www.mymla.org/

Khany, R. & Bazyar, A. (2014). Generative analysis of the acquisition of negation by Iranian EFL learners: A typological study. *Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics Studies,* vol. 4, no. 1, p. 62-87.

Leung, Y.-k. I. (Ed.). (2009). *Third language acquisition and universal grammar*. Clevedon, Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Modirkhamene, S. (2008). Metalinguistic awareness and bilingual vs. monolingual EFL learners: Evidence from a diagonal bilingual context. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics,* vol. 1, no. 1, p. 66-102.

Nagy, W. E. & Anderson, R. C. (1995). Metalinguistic awareness and literacy acquisition in different languages. Retrieved from *http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED391147.pdf*

Pallant, J. (2013). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide data analysis using IBM SPSS* (5th edition). Maidenhead: Open University Press/McGraw Hill. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2013.784467

Ringbom, H. (1987). *The role of the first language in foreign language learning.* Clevedon, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Ringbom, H. (2001). Lexical transfer in L3production. In J. Cenoz, B. Hufeisen, & U. Jessner, (Eds.), *Cross-linguistic influence in third language acquisition: psycholinguistic perspectives* (pp. 59-68). Clevedon, [42] Buffalo, Toronto, Sydney: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Ringbom, H. & Jarvis, S. (2009). The importance of cross-linguistic similarity in foreign language learning. In [43] M. H. Long & C. J. Doughty, (Eds.), *The handbook of language teaching* (pp. 106-118). UK: Blackwell Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9781444315783.ch7

Saeidi, M. & Mazoochi, N. (2013). A comparative study on bilingual and monolingual Iranian EFL learners' linguistic intelligence across genders. *Life Sci J,* vol. 10, no. 6, p. 321-334.

Schwartz, M. Geva, E. Share, Mark, D. L. & Leikin, M. (2007). Learning to read in English as third language: The cross-linguistic transfer of phonological processing skills. *Written Language & Literacy,* vol. 10, no. 1, p. 25–52. http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/wll.10.1.03sch

Swan, M. (1997). The Influence of the Mother Tongue on Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition and Use. Retrieved from http://www.mikeswan.co.uk/elt-applied-linguistics/influence-second-language.htm

Tabachnick B. G. & Fidell L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics.* Boston: USA. Pearson Education, Inc.

Tarone, E. and Bigelow, M. (2005). Impact of literacy on oral language processing: Implications for SLA research. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics.* Vol. 25, p. 77-97. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0267190505000048

Tremblay, A. & Garrison, M. D. (2010). Cloze tests: A tool for proficiency assessment in research on L2 French. Retrieved from http://www.lingref.com/

Williams, S. & Hammarberg, B. (1998). Language switches in L3 production: Implications of a polyglot speaking model. *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 19, no. 3, p. 295-333. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/applin/19.3.295

Wojtowicz, S. (2006). The role of literacy in second and third language acquisition. Retrieved from http://www.catesol.org/

Wu, R. J-R. (1994). The sensitivity of the cloze procedure to discourse constraints in English as a foreign language. Retrieved from http://ir.lib.ksu.edu.tw/

TABOO WORDS IN CHILDREN FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Mohammad Zare`a, Sanaz Mohazabiehb

aPhD candidate of TEFL, Department of Language Teaching, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran
bPhD candidate of TEFL, Department of Language Teaching, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

ABSTRACT
THE PRESENT STUDY AIMED AT INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF THREE DIFFERENT MAJOR FACTORS OF FREQUENCY, SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL LOCATION, AND SPEAKER-HEARER RELATIONSHIP INVOLVED IN ACQUISITION OF TABOO WORDS BY IRANIAN FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUIRERS. MOREOVER, THE TWO PRAGMATIC FEATURES; VERBAL INTERACTION AND DEGREE OF FORMALITY OF HEARD TABOO WORDS WERE EXPLORED. TO THIS END, 50 IRANIAN FAMILIES WERE SURVEYED WITH CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 3 AND 5. EACH FAMILY PROVIDED DEMOGRAPHICAL AND LINGUISTIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACQUIRED WORDS BY THEIR KIDS. NEXT, THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE GATHERED DATA WERE ANALYZED. WITH REGARD TO THE FIRST RESEARCH QUESTION RAISED IN THE RESEARCH, AMONG THE THREE MAJOR FACTORS; FREQUENCY, LOCATION AND SPEAKER-HEARER RELATIONSHIP, THE FAMILIARITY WITH THE SPEAKER WAS FOUND TO BE THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FACTOR IN ACQUISITION OF TABOO WORDS. CHILDREN'S INTERACTION WITH STRANGERS, RATHER THAN THE FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS OR RELATIVES, WAS INVESTIGATED TO HAVE THE GREATEST EFFECT. THE SECOND RESEARCH QUESTION CONSIDERED THE PRAGMATIC FEATURES SUCH AS DEGREE OF FORMALITY AND THE MODE OF INTERACTION; CLOSE OR DISTANCE, IN WHICH THE WORDS ARE HEARD. THE FINDING OF THE STUDY REVEALED THAT MOST ACQUIRED WORDS WERE PRESENTED TO CHILDREN THROUGH CLOSE INTERACTION WITH THE SPEAKER. IN ADDITION, REGARDING THE DEGREE OF FORMALITY AND THREE CATEGORIES; SLANG, COLLOQUIAL AND CASUAL WORDS, THE MOST FREQUENT ACQUIRED WORDS WERE CATEGORIZED AS COLLOQUIAL IN PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

KEY WORDS: TABOO WORDS, SLANG WORDS, COLLOQUIAL WORDS, CASUAL WORDS, FORMALITY, VERBAL INTERACTION

Definition of some key words
Taboo words: words or expressions, usually of a negative nature, that are considered offensive or embarrassing and that are discouraged in pubic usage. For example, swear words.
Slang words: casual, very informal speech, using expressive but informal words and expressions (slang words/expressions). For some people, slang is equivalent to colloquial speech but for others, it means "undesirable speech". Most slang is rather unstable as its words and expressions can change quite rapidly.
Colloquial words: Usually, they refers to a speech variety used in informal situations with colleagues, friends or relatives, and "slang" is used for a very informal speech variety which often serves as an "in-group" language for a particular set of people such as teenagers, army recruits, pop groups, etc.

1. Introduction

The process of language acquisition happens in mid conversation. That is, adults and children talk to each other; adults expect children to respond to requests and comments, and to signal to their interlocutors what they are interested in as well as their needs and wants. Adults offer to children extensive information about their language, directly or indirectly when they talk to them. Both tacit and explicit expectations are set up by adults for children regarding when to talk, what to say, when and how to respond to adult utterances; what counts as a turn in conversation, when and when not to take a turn; and what counts as an appropriate contribution in the ongoing exchange. In the course of conversation, adults use the conventional words (sometimes swear words) for objects and actions.

Children are learning to swear at an earlier age and the rise in profanity among children is not surprising, By the time kids go to school now, they're saying all the words that we try to protect them from on television which means that swearing really takes off between ages 3 and 4. However, children do not appear yet to be using worse swear words than in the past and just common swear words more often. When young children swear before the age of 2 or 3 years old, they are usually just repeating what they have heard. Because they are learning to use language to communicate, children mimic words to make sounds and to see how those around them will respond. Through these responses, children come to understand what the words mean.

Therefore, before taking your young child's insult to heart, it may be important to realize that she may have no idea what she is actually saying. When slightly older, children swear for different reasons. If they do not hear a word often, they may be using it because they do not understand that it is offensive. Perhaps they have heard it pass through the lips of someone they admire. And they say it in an attempt to be similarly cool. Or, they might just like the sound of it.

By the time children are in pre-K and kindergarten, they often begin to realize that curse words are offensive and may quit swearing on their own. Children in the midst of developing their own vocabularies are like language vacuum cleaners, sucking up as many words as they can. Emotionally charged expletives stand out like superheroes. Though they may not know what they mean, curse words are internalized as words with superpowers. And they get used when normal words just won't fit the bill. That's why children often curse at the most embarrassing moments, when visiting the dentist for the first time, in the grocery checkout aisle when told they can't have a package of gum, on the first day of school.

In each of these examples, children might be confronting new or different expectations, experiencing fear, frustration or disappointment, or receiving less attention than might be typical. Likewise, during times when you are distracted, nervous or frustrated, your child's anxiety may also be heightened. Because they have learned, perhaps from you, that curse words are for moments when we aren't really sure what else to say, it often seems that they let them fly when we most wish they would not.
If children are not exposed to profanity, they will not begin using it. Though television, cartoons and the world at large are full of curse words, children are most likely to hear adult language at home.

Research questions
1. In L1 acquisition, which factor such as frequency, location (social and physical), and speaker-listener relationship, is the most influential in acquisition of taboo words and to what extent?
2. What pragmatic features (close verbal interaction and formality) are mostly involved in children`s acquisition of swear words?

2. Literature Review

The difference among languages is in what is easier and what harder to learn. According to great body of research, two sources of complexity for learning have been distinguished: conceptual and formal complexity (e.g., Slobin 1973, 1985b). Regarding conceptual complexity, one can mention the complexity of the ideas being expressed in language. In similar societies all over the world, children

are likely to develop cognitively at about the same rate. This may propose that children, in turn, go through different stages of development at the same rate and they probably get ideas at about the same age. In other words, children are supposed to master simpler distinctions first and they gradually move on to more complex ones.

Nevertheless, language learning gets more complex when children get to acquire taboo words in differing exposures. Moreover, the complexity has to do with the ways used and also the factors that are relevant to the acquisition of these words and phrases.

Defining swearwords

S-T words can be defined as multifunctional, pragmatic units which hold various discourse functions as well as expression of emotional attitudes. As Drescher (2000) believes, they are similar to discourse markers in that they contribute, for example, to the coordination of the interlocutors, the organization of the interaction and the structuring of verbal exchange. The application of S-T words is considered as a linguistic device used to affirm in-group membership and establish boundaries and social norms for language use (Drescher, 2000; Rayson et al ., 1997; Stenstrom, 1995, 1999). Furthermore, usage of S-T words varies both diaphasically (i.e. stylistic variation) and diatopically (i.e. geographic variation.)

L1 studies on S-T words

So far, monolingual speakers have widely studied the application and the perception of S-T words. Psychologists have studied whether S-T words are apart from neutral words in the L1. Lieury et al., (1997) analyzed the role of emotion in word memory, using vulgar or taboo words of spoken French. An experiment involving short- and long-term recall revealed superior recall of words with emotional value in relation to neutral words. This effect was most significant for the vulgar/taboo words (four times greater than neutral words in long-term recall). As stated by (Pesta et al., 2001), Emotion words also seem more prone to the so-called 'false memory effect' i.e. false remembering of items in recall tests.

Sociolinguists have investigated the influence of independent variables such as gender, age and social class on the application of S-T words. Rayson et al. (1997) conducted a study considered with a frequency analysis of vocabulary items in the conversational component of the British National Corpus. They concluded that males and speakers under 35 used more taboo words and the use of swearwords was not affected by the social class. In a similar vein, Stenstrom (1995), in her analysis of taboo words in The Bergen Corpus of London Teenager Language, confirmed the generational difference in that teenagers tend to swear more than adults, possibly as a way to establish group identity. Moreover, she investigated qualitative differences, with teenagers primarily using taboo words related to sex and drinking, and adults taboo words derived from religious subjects. Among the teenagers, no gender differences were observed in choice and frequency of swearwords although adult women were found to use more but 'weaker' taboo words than adult men. Stenstrom (1999) analyzed a 21,000-word subcorpus of the same corpus, equally divided between females and males, aged 16, presumed to be upper-middle-class, engaged in same-sex conversations. She found that girls use intensifiers (bloody, fucking) more often than boys, but use a more restricted set of terms than boys, who include more swear words in their expanded set.

Bayard and Krishnayya (2001) studied New Zealand university students' expletive usage through quantitative analysis of casual unstructured dialogue and purpose-oriented, more structured conversation. The researchers found little gender difference in the strength of the expletives used. However, males were found to have a tendency to use stronger ones. They also realized that females swore slightly less than males, but reduced expletives to a lesser extent in more structured contexts.

Lacking in the field of the acquisition of taboo words in literature are why children acquire swear words somewhat faster than ordinarily real life words and what factors influence this phenomenon. The present study tried to shed lights on whether there are systematic or unsystematic factors such as

linguistic, social, environmental, and personal issues involved in children`s acquisition of taboo words.

3. Method
Introduction
The present study explored the role of three different major factors; frequency, social and physical location, and one's relationship with the speaker and two pragmatic features; close verbal interaction and formality involved in Iranian children taboo words acquisition. In this section four parts will be depicted which are carried out under researchers' investigations. To start with participants, their personal characteristics are discussed, and then information about instruments, procedures, and data analysis are considered respectively.

Participants of the study
At first, a total number of 100 Iranian families having children were randomly selected and given, especially to mothers, a survey having some already designed demographical and linguistic, especially, pragmatic questions. Then, 50 families having children aged 3 to 5 were finally chosen as the main participants of the present study in order to collect data based on the types of taboo words and processes involved in acquiring swear words.

Instruments
In order to conduct this research, the researchers capitalized on a survey made by them based on special types of data elicitation focused on both demographical and linguistic information. The linguistic section of survey was mostly based on two major pragmatic aspects of L1 acquisition, conversational skill and styles/registers, in order to elicit some information on children taboo words acquisition.

Procedure
First, 50 families among 100 families were selected according to the age of the children ranged from 3 to 5. Next, an intended survey, including specific information, constructed. Each family, especially mothers, was given the survey in order to elicit demographical and linguistic information about their children. Then the descriptive statistics of the obtained data were analyzed and reported.

Data Analysis
In order to answer the first research question, the descriptive statistics of the three major factors influencing children taboo words acquisition: frequency, speaker-listener relationship, and location, were calculated. In response to the second research question, the pragmatic features of the elicited swear words facilitating the process of acquisition were analyzed and investigated. Linguistically, all words taken from the survey were pragmatically analyzed and the features involved easing the process of acquiring and retaining taboo words were reported.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis of the data regarding the first research question which investigated the degree of the influence of three major factors; frequency, location (social and physical), and speaker-hearer relationship in the acquisition of taboo words.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of three major factors

N=60 (Taboo words)	Frequency		Location		Speaker-hearer relationship			
	Once	Several times	Home	Public places	Family members	Relatives	Friends	Strangers

Frequency	31	29	20	40	10	10	12	28
Percentage	51%	49%	33.3%	66.6%	16.6%	16.6%	20.2%	46.6%
The degree of influence (Parents` ideas)	17%		32%		51%			

Table 4.1 above illustrates the frequency and percentage of three main factors as well as parents` ideas towards the importance of three issues. According to the first research question and the findings of the study, among 60 taboo words, 51% of them were heard once while 49% of them were picked up over time. Therefore, the number of times hearing a swear words did not have a great impact on its acquisition. With regard to the second factor; location, public places with the percentage of 66.6% had a greater significant influence than home. And with regard to speaker-hearer relationship, acquiring swear words through strangers was 46.6% percent which indicated that among four types of relations the possibility of picking up taboo words through strangers is by far the most. According to parents` opinions, speaker-hearer relationship with the percentage of 51% is by far the most influential factor in attracting children`s attention towards acquiring swear words.

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics of pragmatic features

N=60 (Taboo words)	Pragmatic features				
	Interaction		Degree of formality		
	Close	Distance	Slang	Colloquial	Casual
Frequency	47	13	18	27	15
Percentage	78.3%	21.7%	30%	45%	25%

Table 4.2 above shows the frequency and percentage of two major pragmatic features. According to the second research question investigating the effect of the form of verbal interaction and the degree of formality in children`s acquisition of swear words, 78.3% of heard taboo words were the result of close interaction with the speaker.
Swear words which were mostly colloquial in Persian culture and language were the most frequent words among the intended taboo words used by children in their interaction with others.

Discussion
In general, the current study was an attempt to shed lights on the factors involved in children's acquisition of taboo words. The factors under investigation were linguistic, social, environmental and personal ones which were categorized as systematic or unsystematic. Acquisition of swear words seems a complex communicative act which is influenced by contextual variables; namely, speaker-hearer relationship, location or social and physical setting and finally the frequency in which the S-T words are heard. The degree of influence of each of these factors was estimated through a survey given to the children's parents eliciting linguistic and demographical information. As an analysis of the variables involved, according to parents' answers, one might conclude that the frequency had the least role. The obtained data revealed that the number of times an item was heard did not make a remarkable difference in its acquisition. That is, no matter the word is heard once or several times, it has been picked up by the child acquirer (about 50 % each). Therefore, frequency may not be an influential factor. With regard to the social setting where the word was heard, public places gained greater importance than home as the quantitative analysis of the data showed. It seems that lack of

control over the language children are exposed to in public places, may lead them to grab whatever inappropriate they hear in those contexts. 66.6 % of the acquired S-T words investigated in the survey were said to be learned in public places like park, cinema, and kindergarten where 3-5 year old kids spend a lot of time during the day and total control over what they hear and who they communicate with, seems impossible. Considering the third factor, the data obtained in the study revealed that among four types of relation involved in physical setting, the most possibility was with learning swear words through strangers. Family members, relatives, friends and strangers were the four factors taking roles in acquisition of taboo words through speaker-hearer relationships among which family members and relatives turned to be the least influential; 16.6%, each, while strangers received the most active role (46.6%). Parents' ideas were also surveyed concerning the extent to which each of the linguistic, social, environmental and interpersonal issues were of importance in drawing children's attention towards swear words. The findings indicated

that as parents believed, speaker-hearer relationship stood the most effective factor with 51% of the opinions. Overall, speaker-hearer relationship, location and frequency are ordered from the most to the least effective respectively. The second research question dealt with pragmatic features (close verbal interaction and formality) involved in children`s acquisition of swear words. Pragmatic features explored in present study fell into two categories of forms of verbal interaction and the degree of formality of the taboo words. Considering the mode of interaction, greater percentage was attributed to close interaction, 78.3%, whereas distance gained 21.7%. It might indicate that most heard taboo words were articulated somewhere around the children where they had close access to them. The other investigated issue, degree of formality, was studied as well. The most frequent heard words were categorized as colloquial in Persian culture, 45%. That is to say, most words were included as a variety of language which is commonly employed in conversation or other communicative settings in informal situations. 30 % of taboo words were of slang category which consisted of a lexicon of non-standard words and phrases in a given language. It is worth mentioning here that slang words or phrases may convey prestige in some contexts. Moreover they may indicate group membership. Regarding the degree of formality, the least percentage was received by casual words heard and used by child acquirers of first language.

References

Drescher, M. (2000) Eh tabarnouche! c'e´tait bon. Pour une approche communicative des jurons en franc¸ais que´becois. Cahiers de praxe´matique 34, 133/160.

Krishnayya, S. (2001). Gender, expletive use, and context: Male and expletive use in structured and unstructured conversation. Women and Language, 24, 1–15.

Lieury, A., Boissie`re, I., Jamet, E. and Marinkovic, K. (1997) Les mots grossiers et sexuels sont-ils mieux me´morise´s que des mots neutres? Le Langage et l'Homme 32 (1), 17/37.

Pesta, B.J., Murphy, M.D. and Sanders, R.E. (2001) Are emotionally charged lures immune to false memory? Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition 27 (2), 328/338.

Rayson, P., Leech, G. and Hodges, M. (1997) Social differentiation in the use of English vocabulary: Some analyses of the conversational component of the British National Corpus. International Journal of Corpus Linguistics 2 (1), 133/152.

Slobin D I (1973). 'Cognitive prerequisites for the development of grammar.' In Ferguson C A & Slobin D I (eds.) Studies of child language development. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 175–208.

Stenstrom, A.B. (1995) Taboos in teenage talk. In G. Melchers and B. Warren (eds) Studies in Anglistics (pp. 71/79). Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International.

Stenstrom, A.B. (1999) He was really gormless / she's bloody crap. Girls, boys and intensifiers. In H. Hasselgard and S. Oksefjell (eds) Out of Corpora: Studies in Honour of Stig Johansson (pp. 69/78). Amsterdam: Rodopi.

GENERAL ENGLISH UNIVERSITY COURSEBOOK EVALUATION BASED ON LITZ'S MODEL AND PROFESSORS' PERCEPTIONS ON SUCH BOOKS

Zahra Monazzah
Department Of English, Abadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadeh, Iran
Email: baranaseman3582@gmail.com

Fateme Behjat (PhD)
Department Of English, Abadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadeh, Iran
Email:Fb_304@yahoo.com

Arash Zareian (PhD)
Department Of English, Abadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadeh, Iran
Email: arashzareian60@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
ELT MATERIALS AND TEXTBOOKS PLAY A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE IN MANY LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS, BUT IN RECENT YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF DEBATE IN THE ELT PROFESSION ON THE ACTUAL ROLE OF MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND/FOREIGN LANGUAGE. IN THIS REGARD, THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY WAS TO EVALUATE GENERAL ENGLISH UNIVERSITY COURSE BOOKS BASED ON LITZ'S MODEL AND FROM PROFESSORS' STANDPOINTS. THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE PRESENT STUDY WERE 30 PROFESSORS WHO WERE TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES. THE SAMPLING METHOD IN THIS STUDY WAS NON-RANDOM AVAILABILITY SAMPLING. CONTENT ANALYSIS WAS DONE, AND DATA ANALYSIS WAS PERFORMED DESCRIPTIVELY AND INFERENTIALLY. THE RESULTS OF THIS RESEARCH INDICATED ACCORDING TO RESPONDENTS' VIEWPOINTS, GENERAL ENGLISH UNIVERSITY COURSE BOOKS BASED ON THE COMPONENTS OF LITZ MODEL ARE NOT AT AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL. MEANWHILE, THERE ARE NOT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROFESSORS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING THEIR AGE, GENDER AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE.

KEYWORDS: GENERAL ENGLISH UNIVERSITY COURSE BOOK, LITZ'S MODEL, PROFESSORS' PERSPECTIVES.

1. Introduction
ELT textbooks play a very important role in many language classrooms, but in recent years, there has been a lot of debate in the ELT profession on the actual role of materials in teaching English as a Second/Foreign Language (TESL/TEFL). In the first chapter, for a better perception of this research, the overall research concepts are defined: statement of the problem, research objectives, and significant of the study. Research questions and hypotheses and the definition of key terms are the other parts explained in the first chapter.

2. Literature Review

For evaluating textbooks many checklists have been made by researchers (e.g., Litz, 2005; Eriksoussy,1993; Skierso, 1991; Sheldon, 1988; Tomlinson, 2001;Tucker,1975; Williams, 1983). Reviewing the related concepts of academic books, some of the most important related studies have been presented in this section. A review of research on textbook evaluation revealed that there was a lack of enough material evaluation studies addressing General English course books. In most evaluations, the researchers have used checklists in order to facilitate their evaluation and also precede their evaluation in a systematic way. However, the process of book evaluation is ultimately a subjective practice (Angell, DuBravac, & Gongleweski, 2008; Sheldon, 1988).

A number of studies have also been done in Iran on the book evaluation.

Eslami Rasekh, Eslami, Esmae'li, Ghavamnia, and Rajabi (2010) have evaluate four ESL textbooks: Top Notch, Interchange, Headway, and On your mark at elementary-level in order to find out which one is a better option for an EFL class. *Interchange* third edition has also been evaluated according to Littlejohn's framework by Sahragard, Rahimi and Zaremoayyedi(2009) to find out the values of the newest version of Interchange and the strengths and weaknesses of the series. Riazi and Mosalanejad (2010) studied English textbooks instructed at three high schools and pre-university level to examine the learning objectives in them applying Bloom's taxonomy.

Also Amalsaleh (2004) examined the representation of social factors in three types of textbooks, including junior and senior high school textbooks, based on Van Leeuwen's model (1996). According to the results, generally, textbooks demonstrated a deferential representation of social factors that tended to portray female as performers belonging to a home context and having limited job opportunities in society. In particular, high school textbooks tended to shape normative views of gender and class relations in which a middle-class urban male has been considered to be the norm.

Jahangard (2007) developed an evaluative checklist to evaluate four EFL textbooks which had been prescribed for use in Iranian high schools by the Ministry of Education. The merits and demerits of the textbooks are discussed in details with reference to thirteen common features extracted from different material evaluation checklists. These criteria were explicit objectives, vocabulary explanation, educational approaches, review and test sections, visual materials, topics and tasks, clear instructions, layout, organized and graded content, authentic language, grammar presentation and practice, fluency practice in all four skills, and developing learning strategies.

Pishghadam and Motakef (2008) analyzed two texts (taken from New Interchange series and high school English books). Their study was conducted with the aim of making a connection between, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), critical thinking, and, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The results of their study, which focused on reading texts, exhibited that most of the texts were laden with hidden ideologies and power relations, and teachers were responsible for making students aware of these hidden ideas.

Azizifar, Koosha, and Lotfi (2010) carried out an evaluation of two series of ELT textbooks used for the teaching of English language in Iranian high schools from 1965 to the present. In this study, Tucker's (1975) textbook evaluation model was used. The results suggested that ELT textbooks were one of the fundamental factors in learners' English language achievement.

Karamouzian (2010) analyzed the content of a reading comprehension series entitled *Reading through Interaction* used at the university level in Iran. A newly developed checklist was applied. The results indicated that the overall quality of the three books was suitable, but there was a lack of materials on grammar and pronunciation.

Kamili and Fahim (2011) investigated the relationships between critical thinking ability, resilience (a measure of successful stress-coping ability) and reading comprehension of texts containing unknown vocabulary items. The results indicated that EFL learners' critical thinking levels have significant effects on their resilience levels. The study also revealed that learners' critical thinking levels have significant effects on their reading comprehension ability when faced with unknown vocabulary items. In addition to the above native studies, a number of similar studies in different contexts were conducted as well.

3. Research Questions
3.1 First Research Question

From professors' view, what is the standpoint of general English university books based on Litz model?

3.2 Second Research Question

What are the possible differences between professors' point of view about general English university books in terms of professors' age, gender, and teaching experience?

4. Method
4.1 Participants

The participants of the present study were 30 professors who were teaching at the University of Applied Sciences. The sampling method in this study was non-random availability. From all available professors, 16 males and 14 females at the age range of 28 years old to over 55 years old and having various years of teaching experience were chosen. These professors had a good command of the content and objectives of the intended books.

4.2 Instruments

In this research, three General English books were selected for evaluation. They were taught in various fields of human sciences and engineering at associate and bachelor level in the University of Applied Sciences. The first selected book is English Through Reading (36th) released by Zaban-e-Daneshjoo in 2013, including 18 units, each having a separate topic, grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and supplemented by a CD.

The second book is A Basic Course in Reading English for University Students released by Tadvin in 2013, comprising 22 units, each having grammar, vocabulary exercise, and reading comprehension. The third book is Reading for General English released by SAMT (2014), including 23 units, including class activities as pre-reading questions, contextual clues, word form-action, matching, synonyms, contextualized vocabulary, cloze paragraphs, cross-word puzzles, mapping activities, and comprehension questions.

The data collection instrument was a teacher book evaluation questionnaire, the 40 items of which were on Likert Scale ranging from highly agree to highly disagree on a 10 point scale. The questionnaire started with demographic information in order to identify the characteristics of the respondents (professors), and also was intended to examine different components in a textbook including activities, conclusion, language type, layout and design, practical considerations, subject and content, and skills the questionnaire was first developed and used by Litz (2005).

4.3 Data Collection Procedures

To conduct this study, Litz's teacher textbook evaluation form was distributed to 60 professors. They were asked to fill the questionnaires. Also they were asked to give necessary demographic information like age, gender, and teaching experiences. After collecting the questionnaire, data were obtained through counting the number for each item and adding them up to get the final score.

5. Result & Discussion

To answer the first question, the researchers compared the total means of the data obtained from the questionnaire to see the teachers' attitude on the textbook they are teaching. The questionnaire was based on a 10-point Likert scale; the mean of above 5 indicates the satisfaction of the participants with the textbook while a mean of below 5 could show the characteristics of the book were not appealing to the participants. Below table shed more light on the attitudes of teachers.

Descriptive Indicators of the First Measure(Litz' Model)

Statistics							
	Active	**Conc**	**Langua**	**Layout**	**Practi**	**Skills**	**Subject**
Valid	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.9238	3.6500	4.1900	3.6208	4.8600	3.9467	2.9067

According to above table, with regard to practical considerations of the textbook, which deals with the issues such as availability, and price of the textbook, teachers' ideas mean reached 4.86. Most of the professors believed that the price of the textbook is quite affordable for the students, but the mean score of teachers regarding their attitude for the

Layout section was 3.62. This section focused on the clarity of the design and organization of the textbook for exercises, activities, etc. It was not satisfactory. With regard to the activities of the textbook, the mean of this section for teachers was (M=2.92). This section focused on the number, distribution, meaningfulness and quality of the activities in the textbook which were not at satisfactory level. Regarding skills, which focused on the inclusion and equal work on the four skills and subskills, the mean of teachers' ideas was (M=3.94). It means these three books did not have these sections. For the language type used in the textbook, the teachers reached an average of (M=4.19). Nearly all the teachers asserted that the language used in the textbooks was not authentic. With regard to the subjects and content of the textbook, the participants rated the questionnaires and based on the results, the mean score of teachers' attitudes was (M=2.90). The results indicated that the attitudes of teachers regarding the variety, authenticity, attractiveness and cultural factors of topics and content in the textbook were negative.

The last section of the questionnaire dealt with the concluding remarks of the participants on whether the textbook was motivating enough or flexible enough for different contexts. The results (M=3.65) indicated the attitudes of participants in this regard was not at an acceptable level.

On the whole, partially none of professors were satisfied with the textbook they were teaching.

With regard to the second question, the researchers examined the attitudes of male and female professors. The results obtained from the ratings of both groups are presented below

Independent Samples Test for the Second hypothesis by the gender

	Independent Samples Test					
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Active	.150	.703	.459	18	.651	.13658
			.500	15.597	.624	.13658
Conc	.183	.674	.705	18	.490	.35165
			.704	12.350	.495	.35165
Langua	1.293	.270	1.441	18	.167	.59121
			1.495	13.761	.158	.59121
Layout	.057	.813	-.799	18	.434	-.18132
			-.824	13.498	.424	-.18132
Practi	.049	.827	.381	18	.708	.13846
			.381	12.427	.710	.13846
Skills	.169	.686	-1.677	18	.111	-.25275
			-1.849	16.100	.083	-.25275
Subject	4.354	.051	.904	18	.378	.28132
			.757	7.924	.471	.28132

The results of Table 4.5 indicated that with regarding to significant (2-tailed) of all seven items of questionnaire, (P>0.05) there is not a significant difference between the attitudes of male and female teachers regarding all components of the questionnaire about textbooks they are using.

ANOVA Test for Age

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Active	Between Groups	1.329	3	.443	.750	.532
	Within Groups	15.354	26	.591		
	Total	16.683	29			
Conc	Between Groups	3.507	3	1.169	.986	.415
	Within Groups	30.818	26	1.185		
	Total	34.325	29			
Langua	Between Groups	3.698	3	1.233	1.552	.225
	Within Groups	20.654	26	.794		
	Total	24.352	29			
Layout	Between Groups	.413	3	.138	.619	.609
	Within Groups	5.789	26	.223		
	Total	6.203	29			
Practi	Between Groups	1.021	3	.340	.717	.551
	Within Groups	12.351	26	.475		
	Total	13.372	29			
Skills	Between Groups	.435	3	.145	1.613	.211
	Within Groups	2.339	26	.090		
	Total	2.775	29			
Subject	Between Groups	.405	3	.135	.330	.804
	Within Groups	10.630	26	.409		
	Total	11.035	29			

The results of the ANOVA test in above table showed that there is not a significant difference between the attitudes of professors regarding the textbook in terms of age (P>0.05).

ANOVA Test for Teaching Experience

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Active	Between Groups	1.184	2	.592	1.032	.370
	Within Groups	15.499	27	.574		
	Total	16.683	29			
Conc	Between Groups	3.802	2	1.901	1.682	.205
	Within Groups	30.523	27	1.130		
	Total	34.325	29			
Langua	Between Groups	2.128	2	1.064	1.293	.291
	Within Groups	22.224	27	.823		
	Total	24.352	29			
Layout	Between Groups	.505	2	.252	1.196	.318
	Within Groups	5.698	27	.211		
	Total	6.203	29			
Practi	Between Groups	.000	2	.000	.000	1.000
	Within Groups	13.372	27	.495		
	Total	13.372	29			

Skills	Between Groups	.748	2	.374	4.984	.014
	Within Groups	2.026	27	.075		
	Total	2.775	29			
Subject	Between Groups	.083	2	.042	.102	.903
	Within Groups	10.952	27	.406		
	Total	11.035	29			

The result of ANOVA(above table), revealed that there was not a significant difference regarding the attitudes of experienced and inexperienced teachers about all items of questionnaire (P>0.05) except *Skill*, the significance of which is less than 0.05. So there are different views about general English textbooks in terms of teaching experience in case of *Skill* (P<0.05).

6. Discussion

The present study indicated that from professors' view, the general academic English books are not at an acceptable level according to its *activities*. The results of this study are consistent with the results of conducted research by Litz (2005) and Miekley (2005). Litz (2005) carried out a complex evaluation process of a textbook. The purpose of the study was to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the book towards the specific language program.

Miekley (2005) also provided a textbook evaluation checklist that could be used to evaluate students and teachers' book. For the students' book, he suggested different categories including content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities, and attractiveness of the text and physical make-up.

Regarding its conclusion in line with the results of research conducted by Williams(1983) and Litz (2005) .

Based on language type support the results of previous research by by Azizifar, Koosha, and Lotfi (2010) and Mukundan. (2011). Azizifar, Koosha and Lotfi (2010),carried out an evaluation of two series of ELT textbooks used for the teaching of English language in Iranian high schools from 1965 to the present.

Based on Layout and Design and also Practical Consideration the results are consistent with the results of research by Garinger (2001). Garinger (2001) stated that content areas needed to be addressed when evaluating a textbook's content: teaching objectives, depth and breadth of the material, and whether the textbook needs to be supplemented or not. Along with this, he claimed that the general design of the book should be carefully examined.

The present study indicated that considering teachers' age, gender, and teaching experience, no differences could be seen between professors' point of view about General English university books. In this regard, the results are consistent with the results of conducted research by Litz (2005)& Mukundan (2011) who claimed that no matter how old a male or female teacher is and whether she or he is experienced or not, usually teachers' perceptions of the same book based on one single framework turn out to be similar.

7. Conclusion

In English language teaching, textbook evaluation helps curriculum developers and syllabus designers choose the best possible materials for a course of study. Considering the importance of textbook evaluation in language teaching and language syllabus design, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, and EFL teachers may find the findings useful in field. In the present research, Litz' checklist was used including activities, conclusion, language type, layout and design, practical consideration, subject and content, and skill as it almost is an update and complete available checklist.

The results obtained from this study revealed that the textbooks under study were not at a satisfactory level from professors' perspectives. The shortage of colorful pictures, authentic language, practical exercises and dialogues, and speaking and listening activities are a number of negative points regarding the textbooks under the study.

The other issue concerns the representation of the skills in the textbook. The inclusion of all four skills and maintenance of a balance in presenting them can certainly have an impact on the learners overall competence in English. Regarding the fact that the textbook had not paid enough attention to the skills of listening and speaking based on the results, it could be helped if publishers try to include these two skills in the textbooks. Moreover, the authors and publishers should consider this in the textbook and try to find a way as to solve it.

In conclusion, the role of textbooks in English classrooms could not be neglected. Of course one should consider the characteristics of an efficient textbook to make the best choice when it comes to textbook selection. Considering the role of textbooks, different researchers have proposed different methods regarding the evaluation of ELT materials, and schemes and checklists could be developed to this end.

References

Ahali Abade, A., &Naghib-al-ghora, A. (2013) A Basic Course in Reading English for University Students. Tadvin.

Amalsaleh, E. (2004). *The representation of social factors in the EFL textbooks in Iran*. (Doctoral dissertation). Shiraz University, Shiraz.

Angell, J., DuBravac, S., & Gonglewski, M. (2008). Thinking globally, acting locally: Selecting textbooks for college-level language programs. *Foreign Language Annals*. *41*(3), 562 – 572.*Azizi, M. / Journal of Language, Culture, and Translation 1(3) (2013), 15–36* 32.

Azizifar, A., Koosha, M., &Lotfi, A. R. (2010). An analytical evaluation of Iranian high school ELT textbooks from 1970 to the present. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 3*, 336–44.

Baradaran, A., & Khademzadeh,M.(2013) General English Through Reading .Gohar andishe.

Eslami Rasekh, A., Esmaeli, S., Ghavamnia, M. and Rajabi, S. (2010). 'Don't judge a book by its cover: Textbook evaluation in the EFL setting'. *The Journal of International Social Research*, *3*(14), 448-461.

Garinger, D. (2001). *Textbook evaluation.* Retrieved December12, 2005, from http://www.teflweb–j.org/v1n1/garinger.html

Jahangard, A. (2007). The evaluation of the EFL materials taught at Iranian public high schools. *Karen's Linguistics Issues*. Retrieved October 2008 from:

Journal, 51(1), 36-42.

Kamali, Z., & Fahim, M. (2011). The relationship between critical thinking ability of Iranian EFL learners and their resilience level facing unfamiliar vocabulary items in reading. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research,* 2 (1), 104-111

Karamoozian, F. M. (2010). Development of a new checklist for evaluating reading comprehension textbooks. *ESP World, 7*(3). Retrieved from: http://www.esp-world.info

Litz, D. R. A. (2005). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: a South Korean 46 Iranian EFL Journal case study. *Asian EFL Journal.* Retrieved from: http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Litz_thesis.pdf

Long, M. H. *(*1990*).* Methodological issues in learner needs analysis*. In* Long M. H. *(Ed.), Second language needs analysis.* Cambridge, UK*: Cambridge University Press Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research, , 2(5) 31.*

Miekley, J. (2005). ESL textbook evaluation checklist. *The Reading Matrix, 5*, No. 2, September 2005. Retrieved from: http://www.readingmatrix.com/reading projects.

Miekly, J. (2005). EFL evaluation checklist. *The Reading Matrix,* 5(2), 1-9.

Mukundan, J. (2003). *Readings on ELT Material.* Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Putra Malaysia Press.

Mukundan, J. (2007). Evaluation of English language textbooks: some important issues for consideration. *Journal of NELTA*, *12*(1&2), 80-4.

Pishghadam, R., & Motakef, R. (2008). CDA, Critical Thinking, and ZPD: A Comparative Study. Iran: Language Teaching Conference.

Pourgive, F., &Tajalli, Gh, &Sadighi, F., &Yamini,M. (2014) Reading for General English. Samt.

Riazi, M., & Mosalanejad, N. (2010). *Evaluation of learning objectives in Iranian highschool and preuniversity English textbooks using Bloom's taxonomy.* TESL-EJ, *3*(4), 1-16.

Sahragard, R., & Rahimi, A., & Zaremoayeddi, I. (2008). An in-depth evaluation of interchange series (third edition).*Porta Linguarum, 12*(1), 37-54.

Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating English language teaching textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42 (4), 237-246.

Skierso, A. (1991). Textbook selection and evaluation. *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 432-453.

Tomlinson, B. (2010). Principles of Effective Materials Development. In N, Harwood (ed.) (2010).*English language teaching materials: Theory and Practice.* New York: Cambridge University press.

Tucker, C. (1975). Evaluating beginning textbooks. *English Teaching Forum, 13*, 335-361.

Williams, D. (1983). Developing criteria for textbook evaluation. *ELT Journal*, 37(2), 251- 255.

METHODOLOGY CHOICE AMONG EFL TEACHERS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN IRAN

Zahra Najafi
najafiz55@yahoo.com

Hamidreza Gobadirad
Epic14_h@yahoo.com

Parsa Tabatabaei
Tabatabaei.2013@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
CLT HAS BEEN WIDELY EXPLORED AND STUDIED BY MANY RESEARCHERS IN THE FIELD OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING. THERE HAVE BEEN MANY STUDIES CONDUCTED ON THE USE OF CLT IN EFL SETTINGS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE ONLY FEW STUDIES IN NUMBER THAT SPECIFICALLY DEAL WITH CLT AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN THE IRANIAN HIGH SCHOOLS. HENCE THIS STUDY INTENDED TO IDENTIFY WHAT PRINCIPLES IDENTIFY THE METHODOLOGY CHOICE AMONG LANGUAGE TEACHERS TO THIS END, 50 IRANIAN MALE AND FEMALE LANGUAGE TEACHERS, TEACHING AT HIGH SCHOOLS IN ISFAHAN WERE OBSERVED WHILE TEACHING ENGLISH IN THEIR CLASSES. A QUESTIONNAIRE BASED ON KARAVAS- DOUKAS (1996) WAS ALSO USED. THE FINDINGS SHOWED THAT IN GENERAL, THREE CATEGORIES OF AGENTS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING CLASSROOMS, NAMELY THE LESSON, THE PUPIL AND THE TEACHER DETERMINE THE METHODOLOGY WHICH IS USED IN LANGUAGE CLASSES, AND THE USED MATERIALS IN IRANIAN HIGH SCHOOLS IN MOST CASES DO NOT PROVIDE FOR A METHODOLOGY LIKE CLT. THE IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY IS THAT ENGLISH TEACHING IN IRAN NEEDS TO BE BETTER PLANNED.

Introduction
There has been an increase in demand for English courses due to the global needs for communication and improvement in technological advancements and globalization. In general, the most popular language in the world is English. English is the language of social media networks and websites. English is the language used in every activity at the institutions of higher learning. Although, English is not the most widely spoken language in terms of native speakers, it is the most widely used language worldwide, including native and non-native speakers. The primacy of English in the world may be to the fact that it is the language through which international trade and diplomacy are conducted and news and information are disseminated, and as a communicative tool, English functions as a mediator between different socio-cultural and socio-economic paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

English plays a crucial role in the Iranian educational system. During the last decade a higher demands for learning English has been seen in Iranian society The higher importance of English language, leads to more attention to language classes.Among so many factors affecting the tidal and changing atmosphere of language classes is the role of the teacher.

In recent decades, teachers of foreign languages in many countries, including Iran, have been encouraged to use the approach known as CLT. This approach advocates the development of communicative competence as a primary goal via the extensive use of the foreign language as a means of communication during classroom lessons. CLT has been welcomed by English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum and syllabus designers of Iran. Moreover, English teachers and instructors have shown eagerness and enthusiasm to incorporate it in their classes. However, we do not know whether CLT is practiced at all, and if practiced how and to what extent. Understandably, education authorities and teacher educators are keen to know how teachers assimilate CLT and how well they incorporate this approach into their foreign language teaching.

Since the concept of CLT originated in the West, it seems that this approach is not applicable to other contexts and because of misunderstanding surrounding the theory and practice of CLT (Savignon, 2002), this exploratory study seeks to investigate the practicality of CLT in two educational domains of Iran as an expanding circle (where English is practiced as a foreign language), namely, public and private institutes. Moreover, due to the fact that EFL instructors and teachers claim that they apply the CLT in their classes, this study, also, probes the extent to which the teachers in these two

In spite of four years of education in a raw, Iranian high school graduates do not acquire the necessary expertise to be able to communicate fluently. Problems such as the above, and the like fueled this study. Therefore this study intends to find out the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran.

Research question: What are the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran?

Literature Review

In trying to provide a framework for teacher knowledge, Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) defines seven categories as follows:

1. Content knowledge
2. General pedagogical knowledge eg. classroom control, using group work
3. Pedagogical content knowledge
4. Curriculum knowledge
5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
6. Knowledge of educational contexts eg schools and the wider community
7. Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values

Brant (2006, as cited in Cogill, 2008) suggest that general pedagogic knowledge is often learned from practice.

Brown (2001), in describing the key principles of CLT, offers the following six characteristics:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.

2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable learner to accomplish those purposes.

3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.

4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.

5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others. (p. 43)

Furthermore, Richards (2006) notes that with the introduction of CLT, language teachers and teaching institutions all around the world soon began to reorganize their teaching, syllabuses, and classroom materials. In planning language courses within a communicative approach, grammar was no longer the starting point. It was claimed that meaningful communication provides the learner with a better opportunity for learning than through a grammar-based approach. He then summarizes the overarching principles of CLT as follows:

• Make real communication the focus of language learning.

• Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.

• Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learners are building up their communicative competence.

• Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.

• Link the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world.

• Let students induce or discover grammar rules. (Richards, 2006, p. 13)

The next section will focus on classroom activities that are typical to be found in CLT classroom.

Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) believes that general pedagogical knowledge include the principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to excel subject matter. Brown and McIntyre (1993, as cited in Cogill, 2008) provides 10 qualities that create good teaching (p39:(

Creation of a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom

Retention of control in the classroom

Presentation of work in a way that interests and motivates

Providing conditions so that pupils understand the work

Making clear what pupils are to do and achieve

Judging what can be expected of a pupil

Helping pupils with difficulties

Encouraging pupils to raise expectations of themselves

Development of personal mature relationships with pupils

Teachers' personal talents.

Shulman defines pedagogical content knowledge as the knowledge of how to teach within a particular subject area. It enables teachers to ease the learning for students through use of clear explanations, appropriate analogies and presenting learning in interesting, motivating and even entertaining ways. Pedagogical content knowledge identifies the distinctive bodies of knowledge for teaching. It represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction.

Curriculum knowledge is knowledge of what should be taught to a particular group of pupils. It requires understanding of learner's learning potential, national syllabuses, school planning documents and year group plans. In addition any examination or testing syllabuses must to be taken into account and any local or contextual requirements considered. There has been the introduction of National Curricula and Primary and Secondary National Strategies. The secondary national strategies not only define what is to be taught but also set out or at least advise on how teachers should teach. This has not caused debate (Brown 2001) but one which is too wide to embark on within this discussion. The arguments made earlier on PK, CK and PCK suggest that teacher knowledge may be influenced through change in their experiences.

CLT was initially developed as a Western ELT methodology in the 1970s. However, since then, it has been extensively adopted in both ESL and EFL contexts all around the world. Although implementing CLT in EFL contexts results in a number of problems and challenges, it would be dubious to claim that these problems cancel out its potential usefulness as a language teaching methodology in EFL environments. Larsen-Freeman (2000) warns that in the battle against imported methods, "we may fail to understand the cause of the problem and run the risk of overacting and losing something valuable in the process" (p. 67).

In this framework, along with the growing popularity of CLT in most EFL countries, there have been many studies conducted on the feasibility of CLT innovation and potential problems in its use in EFL contexts such as China, Greece, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Vietnam and so on.

In fact, CLT is not a uniform approach to language teaching (Ellis, 2003). In accordance with a classification proposed by Howatt (1984), CLT consists of a 'weak' and a 'strong' version. The weak version of CLT is based on the assumption that the components of communicative competence can be identified, and thus systematically taught (Ellis, 2003). From this perspective, CLT can be thought to be an analytic approach to language teaching, which means that CLT does not display a fundamental difference from the earlier traditional approaches. This weak version of CLT highlights the significance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching (Howatt, 1984).

Howatt (1984) describes the weak version of CLT as "learning to use English" (p. 279). It is possible to claim that this version is manifested in the proposals for notional/functional syllabuses put forward by Wilkins (1976) and Van Ek (1976).

On the contrary, a strong version of CLT is based on the claim that "language is acquired through communication" (Howatt, 1984, p. 279). In other words, learners do not go through a learning experience in which they acquire the structural properties of a language and then learn to use this structural system in communication. As a matter of fact, they discover the system itself as they learn how to communicate in a language. This version proposes that teachers provide learners with ample opportunities to familiarize themselves with how language is used in actual communication. As Howatt (1984) puts it, the strong version of CLT entails "using English to learn it" (p. 279).

Breen and Candlin (1980), in defining the role of the teacher in CLT classroom, notes the following central roles:

The first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. A third role of the teacher is that of a researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities. (p. 99)

It has been argued by researchers and writers that taking a set of teaching methods developed in one part of the world and using it in another part bring about problems and challenges (Holliday, 1994; Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996; Pennycook, 1989). According to these authors, education is bound to a particular cultural environment, and good teaching practices are socially constructed in this environment. Accordingly, as cited in Hiep (2007), assuming that what is suitable in one particular educational setting will naturally be suitable in another is to disregard the fact that ELT methodology is rooted in an Anglo-Saxon view of education. Likewise, Phillipson (1992) maintains that since Anglo-American ELT trends lack appreciation of various distinct linguistic, cultural, and educational contexts around the world, they cannot thus produce appropriate teaching and learning materials that will address the local and culture- specific needs of learners.

In Iran some studies have addressed this issue. For instance Razmjoo and Riazi(2006)studies the practicing CLT language teachers in shiraz. They concluded that teachers have a positive attitude towards CLT but they do not practice it much. These results are not consistent with the common sense view that the public school teachers might not view CLT positively in EFL contexts, including Iran. The present study, therefore, is intended to check some reasons behind this short coming in order to form a body of research addressing similar issues of concern in EFL in Iran. Hence this study intended to identify what principles identify the methodology choice among language teachers.

Methodology
Participants

In this study, in order to improve the reliability and generalizability of the results, the researcher tried to choose a high number of participants. From among 150 male and female language teachers, teaching at high schools in Isfahan 30%, around 50 were selected on the basis of accessibility. To put it differently, convenience sampling was used to choose 50 teachers, that is the 50 participants were selected from the language teachers teaching in Isfahan city. The rest of the respondents (N=100) were chosen from among the language teachers teaching in Isfahan province. In order to choose the rest of the participants, necessary co-ordinations were done with the ministry of education, Isfahan office, and the needed consent was received from them. A list of language teachers was taken from the education office and from among them 100 language teachers from different cities of Isfahan province were chosen randomly. However, the variables of sex, age, number of years of experience and degrees was considered in the final choice.

Research instruments

The used instruments for the present thesis included:
1: A questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996) and modified by the researcher was used in collecting data regarding the principles of CLT.
2: An observation form was also completed when observing the teachers in practice to see how they apply CLT principles in real contexts.

The modified questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996)

A questionnaire including the major principles of communicative language teaching, namely group work, quality and quantity of error correction, the place and importance of grammar, the role and contribution of the learners, and the role of the teacher, served as the instrument of the study. This questionnaire, which was originally developed by Karavas- Doukas (1996), consisted of 24 statements (12 favorable and 12 unfavorable) which followed the Likert scale.

According to Karavas-Doukas (1996), the maximum score that can be obtained in the attitude scale and the one indicative of the most favorable attitude toward the CLT is 120, whereas the minimum score and the one indicating the least favorable attitude is 24. As such, the participants' responses would fall within the range of 24 to 120, the neutral point of the continuum being 72.(A copy of this questionnaire is available in Appendix A)

The observation form

Numerous methods of investigating language teaching and learning are in common use. One current method is direct classroom observation. In order to find out to what extent the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT) are applied in language classes, an observation form was used. The form was devised based on the principles of CLT. The principles which were studied through the observation included the following list. In fact, the teachers were evaluated based on the following criteria:

1-Emphasis on communication not mastery of language form
2- Lack of strict dependence of classroom on text book
3- Lack of formal/explicit teaching of grammar
4- Primacy of communicative activities over grammar
5- Primary interaction of learners with each other rather than with the teacher
6- Focus on group work which is a better way to learn a language than teacher-fronted class
7- Infrequent treatment of errors
8- Responsibility of teacher for responding learners' language needs
9-Helping students in any way that motivates them to work with language

The validity of the observation plan was approved by three experienced professors of the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics at Shahreza University. To get the reliability of the observation, it was tried to gain both intra-coder and inter-coder reliability for the scheme. For intra-coder reliability, one of the researchers observed and tape recorded the same class at different times

and the correlation between the observations and the recordings was computed. To gain inter-coder reliability, two classes were observed by three observers independently at the same time and the correlation of marking the activities done in those classes represented the inter-coder reliability. The intra-coder and inter-coder reliability of the observation plans was found to be .93 and .85 respectively.(A copy of the observation form is put in Appendix B.)

Procedures

This study was conducted through two phases. The first phase of this study was quantitative since the researcher collected numerical data through distributing the questionnaire explained above. The second phase was qualitative: the researcher observed the practice of some teachers. The study had two phases of collecting data including distribution of questionnaire, and observation. In the first phase of the study a questionnaire devised by Karavas-Doukas (1996) was used. The last step for the collecting data was unstructured observation of classroom practices of the teachers. The purpose of this phase was to know what principles of CLT the teachers who participated in the study apply in language classes. These two phases of data collection are complementary, and they complete each other. Analyzing the results of these phases of data collection and comparing and contrasting them would make the final result(s) more comprehensive and meaningful.

Data analysis

To find answer for the research question, first, the needed data were gathered through observation and questionnaire, then the collected data were coded into and analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 20). Then appropriate statistical procedures such as frequency and percentage were applied in analyzing the data. In addition, the open ended questions were qualitatively analyzed and discussed.

To analyze the data, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. For the purpose of quantitative data analysis, the answers to the questionnaire items were tabulated in SPSS and the percentage and mean of participants' responses to items of the questionnaire was calculated. As to qualitative data analysis, by utilizing classroom observations the researcher investigated which principles apply in CLT classroom. The two phases of this study were complementary, that is the findings of each phase explained and elaborated more on the findings of the other phases. In other words the qualitative data were used to explain the quantitative data.

Data Analysis and Results

As it was stated earlier, this study sought to investigate the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. In order to find answer to this question, a questionnaire which investigated the three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher, was used. It should be noted that each one of these categories has some subsections which play a crucial role in choosing what method language teachers choose to teach. The results are discussed below.

Table

High School Teachers' Performance in language Classes

A. The lesson	Poor	Fair	Good	Superior
Aims	27	10	13	
Achievement of aims	25	8	17	
Utilization of pupils' experience	25	8	17	
Quality of presentation	20	20	10	
Sequential development of lesson	25	14	11	
Teacher modeling of new material	28	17	5	
Use of gestures to elicit varied pupil participation	30	12	8	

Variety of practice activities	25	8	17
Skill in questioning	28	10	12
Use of teaching aids	28	10	12
Motivation	25	17	7
Skill in dealing with answers	20	20	10
Ability to maintain interests	28	12	10
Summary of lesson	30	8	12
B. The pupil			
Extend of participation	24	20	6
Quality of participation	30	10	10
Social interaction	30	15	5
C. The teacher			
Personal fitness, personality, vitality, speech, knowledge	22	20	8
Ability to establish rapport	25	10	15
Pronunciation and use of English	30	10	10
Classroom management(grouping	20	25	5
Attention to routine	25	10	15

Presents table the performance of high school teachers in English classes. According to the statistics presented in Table 4.7, the classroom context is divided into three major categories, each of which plays a crucial and determining role in choosing the methodology used in language classroom. The first category deals with the lesson.

14 subcategories are included under this class. These 14 items, to some extent determine which method to use in language classes. The first class deals with the aims of the lesson from among the 50 observed classes, in 27 cases the aim of the lesson was identified to be poor; in addition, in 25 observation cases, the amount of the achievement of the aims was shown to be poor. Utilization of pupils' experience was observed in 25 cases to be poor. The way the lesson was presented was also observed to be poor in 20 cases. In 25 cases the sequence of the lesson was seen to be poor. It was also observed that teachers do not model the lesson in 28 cases out of 50. In 30 cases the teachers did not use gestures to present materials and elicit pupils' participation.

As shown in Table ,other determining items such as variety in class activities and questioning skills were also observed to be poor. Furthermore, the teachers' motivation was observed to be poor in language classes, and in 28 case, the teachers did not use teaching aids. 20 cases of the observed classes showed that teachers were not skillful in answering the students' questions. In 28 cases, the teachers were not able to keep the students' interests. According to what was said, the materials in most cases do not provide for a methodology such as CLT. Another group of classroom related issues consists the students and their performance in language classes. According to the statistics presented in Table, the amount of pupils' participation was observed to be poor in 24 cases. In 30 cases, the quality of students' participation was seen to be poor. Similarly, in 30 cases the pupils were found not to have suitable interaction.

The last class of the items which was observed was the performance of the teachers in language classes. According to the observations by the researcher, personal fitness, personality, vitality, speech and knowledge of language teachers was observed to be poor in 22 cases. In new

trends of language teaching the focus is on communication; however, the teachers' ability to establish rapport was observed to be poor in 25 cases. Teachers' pronunciation and use of English was identified to be poor in 30 cases. In 20 cases the classroom management was evaluated to be poor, and finally, in 25 cases the teachers did not paid attention to the routines of the language classes.

All and all, as it was said, the performance of language teachers and the content of lessons along with the role that students had in high school classes, led to implementation of traditional methods of language teaching. These are all against the tenets of CLT. Accordingly, it can be said that in order for a language class to be communicative and active, the roles of language teachers and learners should change.

Discussions, Conclusion

Results in Brief

The above-mentioned procedure was carried out and certain significant findings were obtained as are presented in brief:

- More than 60% of all the participants agree with applying the five principles of CLT, namely, 1-the implicit role and indirect teaching of grammar rather than explicit grammar instruction and emphasizing the role of grammar as a tool rather than an end. 2-Focusing on group work and task activity rather than individualized teaching.3- Errors are natural part of language learning and error correction is wasting the time. 4- Focusing on a learner-centered class in which the content can be suggested by the learners.
- Although the language teachers to a great extent agreed with the principles of CLT, in practice the language teachers at Iranian high school were observed not to follow these principles.
- In general, three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher determine the methodology which is used in language classes.
- The used materials in Iranian high schools in most cases do not provide for a methodology like CLT.
- The performance of language teachers and the content of lessons along with the role that students had in high school classes, led to implementation of traditional methods of language teaching.

Detailed Discussion of the Results

The research question of the current study shed light on the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. In a quest for finding the answer for this question, a questionnaire which investigated the three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher, was used. It should be noted that each one of these categories has some subsections which play a crucial role in choosing what method language teachers choose to teach. Classroom context, for example, is divided into three major categories, each of which plays a crucial and determining role in choosing the methodology used in language classroom. The first category deals with the lesson. 14 subcategories are included under this class. These items, to some extent determine which method to use in language classes. In this study it was observed that the classroom related issues of determining the teaching methodology along with teacher-related issues and pupil-related issues are poor according to what is taking place in language classes in Iran and this leads to implementation of the traditional method in language classes.

Among studies conducted in this regard is the study done by Karavas-Doukas (1996) who investigated teachers' attitudes toward the language teaching methodology in Greece. It was reported that although the English curriculum in Greece was based on the premises of communicative language teaching, teachers showed a tendency to carry on the traditional teacher-oriented instruction style. The findings of this study suggested that teachers either did not understand or were unable to see the practical implications of the CLT principles.

Conclusion

the study tried to investigate which principles lead to the selection of the methodology in language classes. issues such as teacher-related issues, pupil-related issues and lesson-related issues determine which methodology to be planted in language classes which do not lead to the selection of CLT in Iranian high schools. the implication of the study is that English teaching in Iran needs to be better planned. English is one of the core subjects in Iranian education system. This study, like almost all studies done in the field of teaching English as a foreign language, is not free of limitations. In the present study the necessary data were obtained using observation and questionnaires, other studies can be conducted using other data gathering instruments such as opinionaires and interviews with language teachers in Iranian high schools.

As far as the scope of this study is concerned, there are some questions which are remained unanswered, and could potentially serve as research questions for further studies. some of these questions are listed below as recommendations for further research:

1. What are the perceptions of administrators regarding teaching methodologies utilized in Iranian EFL classrooms? The answer to this question can suggest a clear understanding of the perceptions and expectations of administrators who run language institutes.

2. How can Iranian EFL teachers balance grammar instruction and communicative competence in their language classrooms? The answer to this question is crucial to provide more direct assistance to classroom English teachers since Iranian EFL teachers feel and believe that grammar instruction is necessary for Iranian teachers. Yet, they are not well informed as to how to balance grammar teaching with that of communicative abilities.

3. How do demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, years of experience), as well as the school settings (i.e., public vs. private, urban vs. rural) affect teachers' perceptions and practices of CLT in their English classrooms? Answers to these questions are useful since this research did not extend the analysis to determine how much demographic factors and school settings affect teachers' perceptions and use of CLT in the Iranian context.

Reference

Brown, H. D. (2001). Teaching by principles: *An Interactive approach to language pedagogy.* New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Breen, M. P., & Candlin, C. (1980). The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 89-112.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hiep, P. H. (2007). Communicative language teaching; unity within diversity. *ELT Journal, 61(3), 193-201.*

Holliday, A. (1994). The house of TESEP and the communicative approach: the special needs of state English language education. *ELT Journal, 48(1), 3–11.*

Horwat, E. K. (1984). Using student beliefs about language learning and teaching in the foreign language methods course. *Foreign Language Annals 18(4), 333-340.*

Karavas-Doukas, E. (1996). Using attitude scales to investigate teachers' attitudes to the communicative approach. *ELT Journal, 50(3), 187-196.*

Kramsch, C., & P. Sullivan. (1996). Appropriate pedagogy. *ELT Journal, 50(3), 199-212.*

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000*). Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford University

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inqu*iry. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage

Pennycook, A. (1989). The concept of method, interested knowledge, and the politics of language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 23(4), 589–618 .*

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Razmjoo, S. A. & Riazi, A.M. (2006). *Do high schools or private institutes practice communicative language teaching? A case study of Shiraz teachers in high schools and institutes.* The Reading Matrix. 6340-364 (3).

Richards, J. C. & Rodgers, T. S. (2001*).Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.*(2ndEd). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Savignon, S. J. 1983. *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Shulman, L. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57 (1), 1-22.*

Van Ek, J. (1976). *The threshold level for modern language learning in schools*. London : Longman.

Wilkins, D. (1976). *Notional syllabuses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Appendices
Appendix A
The questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996)

Items	Strongly agree	agree	undecided	disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Grammatical correctness is one of the criteria to judge the learner's performance.					
2. Group work activities are essential					
3. Grammar is as a means not an end					
4. Learners can suggest the content of the lesson					
5. Training learners to take responsibility for their own learning					
6. The teachers' feedback must be focused on the appropriateness					
7. The teacher is no longer an "authority" and "instructor"					
8. The learner-centered approach to LT encourages responsibility					
9. Group work allows students to explore problems					
10. Errors are a natural part of learning language					
11. Organizing the teaching so as to suit the needs of all is impossible in a large class					
12. Knowledge of the rules of a language is not sufficient.					
13. Group work activities are practical					
14. Much correction is wasteful of time					
15. CLT learners are fluent and accurate					
16. The teacher has many different roles while					

Teaching					
17. Mastering the rules of grammar is not enough					
18. Language is effective as a vehicle for doing something					
19. Activities such as explanations, writing and examples are not the only role of the teachers					
20. Tasks and activities should be based on the students' needs					
21. Small group work can replace whole class and formal instruction					
22. Through group work the teacher can monitor the students' performance					
23. To communicate effectively, direct instruction in the rules and terminology of grammar is NOT essential					
24. The teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks					

Appendix B
Observation checklist

	Very much	Much	Average	A little	Little
1. Focus on language as a medium of communication					
2. Classroom activities maximizing communication Opportunities					
3. More pupil-oriented					
4. Tolerating error correction					
5. Rehearsal of real-life situations and for real-life Communication					
6. More emphasis on pair-work and group-work.					
7. Emphasis on both oral skills & written skills					
8. Teaching grammar but less systematically					
9. Use of idiomatic/everyday language					
10. Use of authentic resources					
11. Emphasis on Inferential questions					
12. Emphasis on meaning					

13. Use of variety of language structure					
14. Emphasis on both fluency and accuracy					
15. The teacher as the facilitator					
16. Focus on all the components of Communicative Competence (including Grammatical, Discourse, sociolinguistic and Strategic competence)					

INSTRUCTIONAL EFFICACY OF SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

Fatemeh Neamatollahi [1*]
1- Department of English Language Teaching, Islamic Azad University, Maybod Branch, Maybod, Iran
fneamatollahi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT
THE PRESENT STUDY WAS AN ATTEMPT TO EXPLORE THE INSTRUCTIONAL EFFICACY OF SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS. THE STUDY ALSO AIMED TO FIND OUT WHETHER THERE IS ANY POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNERS' SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THEIR READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY. TO THIS END, 60 EFL LEARNERS (30 FEMALE AND 30 MALE) AGED 14 TO 29 YEARS WERE SELECTED FROM FOUR INSTITUTES IN ARSANJAN THROUGH CLUSTER RANDOM SAMPLING. THE PARTICIPANTS WERE THEN RANDOMLY DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS, THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS, EACH CONTAINING 30 EFL LEARNERS. THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP WAS TREATED ON HOW TO USE SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES WHILE THOSE IN THE CONTROL GROUP DID NOT. ONE QUESTIONNAIRE, THE SELF-REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE, PLUS TWO READING COMPREHENSION TESTS WERE GIVEN TO THE PARTICIPANTS. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY SUGGESTED THAT THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE TREATMENT GROUP USED SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES MORE FREQUENTLY THAN THOSE IN THE CONTROL GROUP. MOREOVER, NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES WERE OBSERVED BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE PARTICIPANTS' REPORTED USE OF SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES. FINALLY, IT WAS NOTICED THAT THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES USE.

KEYWORDS: SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES, EFL LEARNERS, READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

1. Introduction
Over recent decades, a considerable change has occurred within the field of education, resulting in less focus on teachers and teaching and greater emphasis on learners and the learning process. In other words, one of the major aims of education is to raise students' ability in learning to learn. As such, language teachers along with other practitioners in the field of education started to put learners at the center of classroom organization by paying more attention to their needs, strategies, and styles. To do so, teachers are required to instruct students both knowledge and skills. In contrast, learners need to acquire knowledge and skills to become capable independent learners after leaving school. It seems sensible for language teachers to make their students less dependent on teachers so they can reach a level of autonomy. At the same time, a shift of focus has emerged in second/foreign language acquisition research from product-oriented language learning to processes-oriented language learning. As a result, language learning strategies are being employed as a way to achieve learner's autonomy. An old proverb says: "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day; teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime." When it comes to the fields of language teaching and learning, this proverb might mean if learners are provided with answers, the immediate problem is solved. However, if they are taught to use strategies to find the answers by their own, they are empowered to control and

monitor their own learning. Learning to learn is in the skills of following consistent learning, to set one's learning goals via efficient handling of available time and information. This concept is closely linked to the theory of self-regulated learning that was introduced in the 1980s. By employing self-regulated learning, learners can monitor and adjust learning strategies they use.

Self-regulated learning is the employment of motivational and learning strategies to the extent that learners become active motivationally, meta-cognitively, and behaviorally in their own learning processes (Zimmerman, 1989; Pintrich, 1995). In this process, learners are required to define their learning objectives, make plans, select the learning strategies that fit them, observe how their learning gets along, assess their learning results, and overcome possible problems. Similarly, Pintrich (1999) maintains that self-regulated learning deals with the strategies employed by students to manage their cognition and resources used. This amounts to operating and regulating the learning environment. For Pintrich, self-regulation activities serve as mediators between learners, the contexts, and their learning performances. Self-regulatory processes also improve achievement in basic reading skills. By teaching learners how to use reading comprehension strategies, they will become more autonomous; so they will exercise more control over their learning inside and outside classrooms. Students must, thus, organize their motivational beliefs and cognitive self-regulated learning strategies to lower their reading comprehension anxiety and succeed in mastering English language in general, and developing reading skills in particular. More studies have been conducted on the relationship between the self-regulated learning strategies and different aspects of language learning such as reading comprehension skills. Consequently, the use of self-regulated learning strategies may improve learners' reading comprehension. Based on what was mentioned, the present study tends to explore instructional impacts of self-regulated learning strategies on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension ability.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Self-regulated Learning
Self-regulation as a dynamic notion refers to those activities and cognitive processes that learners can engage in. Such activities and processes are exposed to change, and they are not fixed characters that are possessed or lacked by individual learners. Self-regulation emphasizes how learners handle their feelings and motivations in the learning process. Moreover, self-regulation is improved through practice as learners employ previous experiences to build a collection of beliefs and strategies that are used to improve learning. Pintrich (2000, p. 435) defines self-regulated learning (SRL) as "an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and contextual features of the environment". Besides, Zimmerman (2000) defines self-regulated learning as the extent to which learners are interested, use meta-cognitive strategies, and become active in their learning process and in attaining their goals. Self-regulation involves monitoring and control of cognition, motivation, and behavior to achieve pre-determined goals (Wolters, Pintrich, & Karabenick, 2003). Pintrich and Garcia (1994) argue cognitive learning strategies, meta-cognitive control strategies, and resource management should be employed effectively in self-regulated learning. Learners should attain the characteristics of self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions arranged to reach their personal objectives (Zimmerman & Campillio, 2003). Moreover, teaching learning strategies aims to enable learners to intentionally control their learning process so that they can become efficient, motivated, and independent language learners (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Robbins, 1999). Self-regulation (SR) may be generally described as attempts made by learners to expand, observe, manipulate, and develop their own learning (Corno & Mandinach, 1983). In addition, SR takes account of factors including resource management, setting goals, expecting success, and deep involvement of cognitive processes (Trawick & Corno, 1995).
2. 2 Self-regulated Learning and Reading Comprehension in Iran
Noroozi and Birjandi (1998), compared the effects of reflective reading strategy instruction on male and female Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension and strategy use among advanced, intermediate and starter language learners. Results showed that female participants at all three proficiency levels employed the instructed strategies more frequently than the male participants.

Besides, Fotovatian and Shokrpour (2007), explored impacts of employing reading comprehension strategies such as cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies on learners 'comprehension in an empirical study. After identifying the most beneficial and problematic strategies for readers' comprehension, they introduced the most helpful category of strategies. It was shown that the good readers used mainly metacognitive strategies. They also found that some strategies negatively affected the efficiency but not effectiveness. They claimed that some strategies such as simplification, translation, or paying attention to single words are more time-consuming. Besides, the poor readers use local, text-based or bottom-up strategies when trying to comprehend the passage. In contrast, good readers use both types of strategies.

Moreover, Aliakbari and Hayatzade (2008), conducted a study aiming to investigate the type and frequency of language learning strategies employed by Iranian EFL learners and investigated the potential relationship between using language learning strategies and gender. The results showed that Iranian EFL learners used metacognitive strategies more frequently than memory strategies. The results also pointed to the dominant role of cognitive strategies due to their strongest association with other strategies. Although males reported a higher frequency of strategy use than females, gender was found to have no significant effect on the strategy use.

In addition, Fatehi Rad (2011), studied the effectiveness of reading strategies awareness on advanced Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension performance. To this end, a version TOEFL test was given to 280 learners to check their homogeneity in terms of English proficiency. The experimental group was instructed on Oxford's reading strategies including metacognitive, cognitive, memory, social, affective, and compensatory strategies. The pretest and posttest included reading comprehension passages. The results showed that reading strategies are associated with reading comprehension. It was also suggested that unsuccessful should be assisted with their second language in order to increase their reading skills. It was also shown that successful students use more frequently reading strategies than unsuccessful ones.

Similarly, Tavakoli and Hayati (2011), explored reading strategies use by Iranian EFL learners while inferring the meaning of unknown words from the context. They also examined whether learners' L2 proficiency level affects their use of reading strategies. Forty Iranian EFL learners were included as the participants in the experiment. Then, they were divided into low and high intermediate levels based on their scores from FCE test. Four short stories were given to them and they were asked to read the story, underline the unknown words, guess their meaning, and then determine the sources that employed to guess the meaning of the unknown words. The results indicated that there were some differences among the two groups of learners concerning knowledge sources used and achievement in lexical inference.

Finally, Motallebzade and Heirany (2011), examined the impacts of thematic clustering of L2 vocabulary on the reading comprehension skills of two intact groups of intermediate EFL adult learners. The results showed a significant improvement of the participants' reading comprehension performance in the treatment group. It was found that learning new vocabularies in thematic clusters may help the learners to improve their reading comprehension ability. Further, thematic clustering can be seen as a stimulus for learning new lexical items. Actually, thematic clustering as a group of similar words with psychological associations and shared thematic concepts is easier learned than the words based on semantic and syntactic resemblance.

3. Methodology
3.1. Participants

The research sample consisted of 60 male and female Iranian learners of the upper intermediate level, studying English in four English language institutes in Arsanjan, Iran. The rationale for selecting institute learners was that in learning environments of English institutes, learners are more homogeneous concerning their language skills, their age, and cultural and socioeconomic factors than other language learning contexts such as high schools or universities where learners are of different English language skills and backgrounds with no predetermined level of proficiency. Besides, in the context of language institutes especially those teaching English, learners spend more hours regularly studying and improving their language skills. The last but not the least reason is that leaners often

take a placement test before their admission and enrollment into a language course in language institutes so they are regarded as more homogenous concerning their level of language skills.

The participants aged 14 to 29 years. Their native language was Persian and they were studying English for two (two hours) sessions per week at the time of conducting this study. They were randomly divided into two groups: the control group and the experimental group, each with 30 participants. The control group took the normal course of instruction while the experimental group were exposed to the treatment in the form of instructions on how to use self-regulated learning strategies. The aim of the treatment was to find out whether the awareness of self-regulated learning strategies affects the participants' reading comprehension or not.

3.2 Instruments

The data were mainly collected through the administration of two instruments to the participants: two reading comprehension tests, and a Self-Regulation Questionnaire.

Two reading comprehension tests with 13 multiple-choice items from Reading 1 (Mirhassani, 1995), were used as both pretest and posttest to check for the participants' level of reading comprehension ability before and after conducting the study.

The Self-Regulation Learning Questionnaire (Brown, Miller, & Lawendowski, 1999), was also given to both groups as the second instrument. It consisted of 63 items that were scored using a five-point Likert scale.

3.3. Data Collection procedure

In order to determine the exact level of the learners' reading comprehension ability, the reading comprehension test was administered as the pre-test among 60 Iranian EFL learners which took approximately 30 minutes for each group to answer the items.

Then the participants in the experimental group received the treatment in the form of some instructions on how to use strategies in ten (one-hour) sessions. However, in the middle of the study, the reading comprehension mid-test was given to the participants in both groups to see if the participants'' reading comprehension ability has changed or not and whether they are making any progress in this regard or not after four weeks of the instruction. After the treatment that lasted for about 2 months, both groups set for the same reading comprehension exam which was used as a post test to see whether these strategy instructions had a significant effect on reading comprehension of the learners or not. The participants were required to answer the questions in about 30 minutes.

In addition, the Self-Regulated Learning Questionnaire with 63 items was administered among the learners of both groups in about 20 minutes to understand if their level of independency increased after the treatment or not. The collected data through instruments were then codified and entered into SPSS to perform the subsequent data analysis. The collected data were analyzed via descriptive statistics, t-test, and Pearson correlation test in order to answer research questions:

1. Does self-regulated learning strategies awareness play a significant role in reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female learners with regard to their self-regulated learning strategies?

4. Results

4.1 Self-Regulated Learning Strategies Awareness and Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners

Before examining the effects of using self-regulated learning strategies on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension, the participants' performance was analyzed to see if there is any difference between the reading comprehension ability of the control and experimental groups or not and whether the participants in both groups were homogenous just before starting the treatment on the treatment group to inform them how to employ the self-regulated learning strategies. In order to be assured of homogeneity of the participants in both groups concerning their reading comprehension skill, two reading comprehension tests with thirteen multiple choice items were administered to the participants. Table 1, shows the descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on the pretest:

Table 1, Descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on the pretest

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	sig(2-tailed)
Pretest	Control	30	1.50	1.009	.184	.566
	Experimental	30	1.63	0.765	.140	.566

As shown in the above table, the mean score of the participants in the control group is 1.50 out of a total score of 13. Besides, the mean score of the participants in the experimental group is 1.63. This shows that the participants in both groups had a poor performance on the pretest. In other words, they had a low level of reading comprehension ability at the beginning of the study. In addition, the participants in the experimental group slightly outperformed those in the control group as the mean score of the latter is slightly greater than the former (1.63 vs. 1.50). However, as the results of the independent samples t-test for the participants' performance on the pretest suggest, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the participants in both control and experimental groups ($P > 0.05$), so the participants in both groups had a similar performance on the reading comprehension test. Accordingly, it can be said that there was no significant difference between the reading comprehension ability of the two groups at the beginning of the study and the participants were homogeneously assigned to both groups. Then the participants' performance on the reading comprehension pre-mid- and posttest is compared to see if there is any difference between their reading comprehension ability before, during, and after the study. Table 2, presents the descriptive statistics for the performance of the participants in the control group on the reading comprehension pretest and mid-test:

Table 2, Performance of the control group on the pre- and mid-test

Control group		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	PreCo	1.5000	30	1.00858	.18414	
	MidCo	1.4000	30	.56324	.10283	.522

The mean scores of the reading comprehension pretest and mid-test by the participants in the control group are 1.5 and 1.4, respectively; as shown in the above table. The participants' mean score on the mid-test is slightly higher than their mean score on the pretest. However, as the results of the paired samples t-test for performance of the participants in the control group on these two tests indicate, there is no significant difference between the performance of the participants in the control group on the pre- and mid-tests ($P > 0.05$). Accordingly, it can be said there was not a significant increase in the reading comprehension ability of the participants in the control group during the performance of the present study.

Table 3, Results of paired samples t-test for performance of control group on the pre- and mid-test

Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
.10000	.84486	.15425	-.21548	.41548	.648	29	.522

As mentioned above, there was no significant difference between the reading comprehension ability of the participants in the control group before and during the performance of the present study. It seems that they did not show much progress in their ability to read and comprehend materials because they were taught reading comprehension skills using traditional methods. Here the question is if there is any difference between the reading comprehension mean scores of the same participants

on the pretest and posttest or not. Table 4, presents the descriptive statistics concerning the performance of the participants in the control group on the pretest and posttest:

Table 4, Performance of the control group on the pre- and posttest

Control group		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	sig(2-tailed)
Pair 1	PreCo	1.5000	30	1.00858	.18414	
	PostCo	1.6333	30	.92786	.16940	.502

As it is evident in the above table, the mean score of the participants' reading comprehension ability on the pretest is 1.50 and their mean score on the posttest is 1.63, suggesting that the participants in the control group had a slightly better performance on the reading comprehension posttest than on pretest. Table 6, illustrates the results of the paired samples t-test for the performance of the participants in the control group on the pre- and posttest. As it can be seen in the above table, there is no significant difference between the performance of the participants in the control group on the pre- and posttest (P > 0.05). Accordingly, it can be said that although a slight improvement can be seen in the reading comprehension ability of the participants in the control group at the end of the study, there was not a significant increase in their reading comprehension ability in the course of the present study or in the course of instruction. This may seem quite natural as the participants in the control group, unlike their counterpart in the experimental groups did not receive any instruction on how to use self-regulated learning strategies when reading materials that are presented to them. Now the question is that how the participants in the experimental group performed on three reading comprehension tests and if there are any differences between their performances on the pre-, mid- and posttest.

Table 5, shows the descriptive statistics for the performance of the participants in the experimental group on the reading comprehension pretest and mid-test:

Table 5, Performance of the experimental group on the pre- and mid-test

Control group		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean	sig(2-tailed)
Pair 1	PreEx	1.6333	30	.76489	.13965	
	MidEX	2.6333	30	.85029	.15524	.000

As it can be seen in the above table, the mean scores of the reading comprehension pretest and mid-test gained by the participants in the experimental group are 1.63 and 2.63, respectively. The participants' mean score on the mid-test is higher than their mean score on the pretest. It suggests that they have a considerably better performance on the mid-test than on the pretest with a mean difference of 1 (2.63 – 1.63 = 1). In other words, there is a great difference in the reading comprehension ability of the participants of the second group before and in the middle of the study. In addition, as the results of the paired samples t-test for performance of the participants in the experimental group on the reading comprehension pretest and mid-test indicate, there is significant difference between the performance of the participants in the experimental group on the pre- and mid-tests (P < 0.001).

Accordingly, a significant increase can be observed in the reading comprehension ability of the participants in the experimental group even in the middle of the study compared to their reading comprehension just at the beginning of the study, i.e. the time they were not familiar with self-regulated learning strategies and their applications for the purpose of reading comprehension. Table 6, presents the descriptive statistics for the performance of the participants in the experimental group on the pretest and posttest:

Table 6, Performance of the experimental group on the pre- and posttest

Experimental		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	sig(2-tailed)
Pair 1	PreEx	1.6333	30	.76489	.13965	
	PostEx	4.5667	30	.62606	.11430	.000

The mean score of the participants in the experimental group for the reading comprehension pretest is 1.63 and their mean score on the posttest is 4.56, indicating that they had a considerably better performance on the posttest than on the pretest. In the other words, there is a great difference in the reading comprehension ability of the participants of the second group before and after the study. What's more, as the results of the paired samples t-test for performance of the participants in the experimental group on the pre- and posttest indicate, there is a highly significant difference between the performances of the participants in the experimental group on the pre- and posttest (P > 0.001).

As the results of the paired samples t-test indicate, there is a considerable improvement in the reading comprehension scores of the participants in the treatment group upon the completion of the treatment. However, it is not clear whether such improvement is due to participants' awareness and the use of learning strategies or it is so just because of test familiarity as the same reading comprehension tests were used and administered as both pretest and posttest once at the beginning of the study and once at the end of the treatment period. In the other words, it is not known how much of the experimental group's progress in reading comprehension ability is due to test familiarity and how much is due to raising the participants' awareness on the use of different learning strategies. Of course, one point that is worth mentioning here is the considerable time-lapse between the administration and re-administration of the reading comprehension tests that may neutralize the familiarity effects so that one can say that the improvement of the ability of the participants in the experimental group to comprehend reading materials is mainly due to the participants' exposure to and, thus, their knowledge of using self-regulated learning strategies. To be assured of the effects of using such strategies on the reading comprehension ability, however, let's make a comparison of the performance of the both groups on reading comprehension mid-test and posttest will be made. Table 7, shows the descriptive statistics for the performance of the participants of both groups on the reading comprehension mid-test:

Table 7, Descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on the mid-test

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	sig(2-tailed)
Mid-test	Control	30	1.4000	.56324	.10283	.000
	Experimental	30	2.6333	.85029	.15524	.000

As it can be seen in the table, the mean score of the participants in the control group is 1.40 and that of the participants in the experimental group is 4.56, respectively, showing a relatively considerable difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the mid-test. In addition, there is a significant difference between the performances of the two groups on the mid-test (P < 0.001).

This finding shows that the participants in the experimental group had a better performance on reading comprehension mid-test than those in the control group as they have made a significant progress in their reading comprehension ability in the middle of the study.

Table 8, presents the descriptive statistics for the performance of the participants of both groups on the posttest:

Table 8, Descriptive statistics of the participants' performance on the posttest

Groups		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	sig
Posttest	Control	30	1.6333	.92786	.16940	
	Experimental	30	4.5667	.62606	.11430	.008

In this table, the mean score of the control group is 1.63 and that of the experimental group is 4.56, respectively. So there is a considerable difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the posttest. Besides, as can be seen, there is a significant difference between the performances of the two groups on the posttest (P < 0.001).

Obviously, the above finding indicates that the participants in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group on reading comprehension tests. In the other words, they made a significant progress in the reading comprehension ability during the course of instruction. Besides, it can be said that this progress was due to the participants' familiarity with self-regulated learning strategies because as mentioned earlier, the same reading comprehension tests were applied as both pretest and posttest. And since the familiarity effect did not affect the performance of the control group participants' performance on the posttest, this is probably the case with the experimental group participants' performance on the posttest as the participants in both groups were selected randomly and homogeneously at the beginning of the study. In addition, a considerable time interval between the two administrations of the reading comprehension tests might remove the familiarity effects. On the whole, the results of the study concerning the performance of both groups on the pretest and posttest suggest that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of the participants in both control and experimental groups so the participants in both groups had a similar performance on the reading comprehension tests and there was no significant difference between the reading comprehension ability of the two groups at the beginning of the study. In addition, there is no significant difference between the performance of the participants in the control group on the pre- and posttest and, thus, there was not a significant increase in their reading comprehension ability in the course of instruction as the participants in the control group did not receive any instruction on how to use self-regulated learning strategies when reading materials presented to them. On the other hand, there was a highly significant difference between the performances of the participants in the experimental group on the reading comprehension pre- and posttest so it can be said that they made a significant progress in the reading comprehension ability during the course of instruction and this is due to the fact the participants in the experimental group spent some time to get instructed on how to use self-regulated learning strategies when reading materials given to them.

4.2 Gender Differences in the Use of Self-regulated Learning Strategies
One of the objectives of the present study was to address gender-related similarities and differences with regard to the use of self-regulated learning strategies and if such differences or similarities are significant or not. Table 9, shows how male and female participants in this study reported their use of self-regulated learning strategies:

Table 9, The use of SRL strategies by male and female

Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	sig
Male	205.90	30	13.842	.113
Female	211.77	30	14.429	.113
Total	208.83	60	14.327	.113

The mean score of using self-regulated learning strategies by the male participants is 205.90 and mean score of using self-regulated learning strategies by the female participants is 211.77 so the female participants in this study reported higher use of self-regulated learning strategies than the male participants. Table 9, presents the results of the independent samples t-test for male's and female's use of self-regulated learning strategies:

As evident in the above table, the value of the significance level indicates that there is no significant difference between male and female participants' reported use of self-regulated learning strategies. That is to say although the female participants used self-regulated learning strategies more frequently than male participants, the use of such strategies is not significantly different for both groups. Accordingly, gender may not be considered as a contributing factor in the use of self-regulated learning strategies.

5. Conclusion
A summary of the findings of the study indicated that there was no significant difference between the performances of the participants in the control group on the reading comprehension pre- and posttests and there was not a significant increase in their reading comprehension ability in the course of study or in the course of instruction as they did not receive any instruction on how to use self-regulated learning strategies when reading materials presented to them. On the other hand, there was a considerable improvement in the reading comprehension ability of the participants in the treatment group in the end of the study because they were exposed to some instructions on how to employ and use self-regulated learning strategies when reading and comprehending texts. This is consistent with the findings of Dreyer and Nel (2003) and in particular Anjomshoaa, Golestan, and Anjomshoaa (2012) who observed that the learners who are aware of a range of efficient reading strategies can significantly enhance their reading ability. Additionally, it was noted that the participants in the experimental group outperformed those in the control group on reading comprehension because of a significant progress in the reading comprehension ability of the former during the course of instruction resulting from familiarity with self-regulated learning strategies as pointed out by Corno and Mandinach (1983), Trawick and Corno (1995), and Mahdavi and Azimi (2012).

Concerning the use of self-regulated learning strategies, the participants in the experimental group used self-regulated learning strategies more frequently and significantly than the those in the control group and this is can be attributed to the fact that the participants in the experimental group received some treatments in using self-regulated learning strategies so they improved their reading comprehension ability (Anjomshoaa, Golestan, and Anjomshoaa, 2012).

The results of the study concerning gender differences in the use of self-regulated learning strategies indicated that in line with Noroozi and Birjandi's (1998) study, female participants used self-regulated learning strategies more regularly than male participants but in the present study there was no significant difference between male and female participants' reported use of self-regulated learning strategies. Consequently, gender may not be considered as a contributing factor in the use of self-regulated learning strategies as confirmed by previous studies (Aliakbari and Hayatzade, 2008).

REFERENCES
Aliakbari, M., & Hayatzade, A. (2008). Variation of language strategies among Iranian English students: The effect of gender. International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning, 4(3), 72-87.
Anjomshoaa, L.; Golestan, S.; & Anjomshoaa, A. (2012). The influence of metacognitive awareness on reading comprehension in Iranian English undergraduate students in Kerman, Iran. International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 1(6), 193-199.
Brown J. M.; Miller W. R.; Lawendowski, L. A. (1999). The self-regulation questionnaire. In: VandeCreek L, Jackson TL, editors. Innovations in clinical practice: A sourcebook. Vol. 17. Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Press/Professional Resource Exchange; (1999). pp. 281–292.
Chamot, A., Barnhardt, S., El-Dinary, P., & Robbins, J. (1999). The Learning Strategies Handbook. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
Corno, L., & Mandinach, E. (1983). The role of cognitive engagement in classroom learning and motivation. Educational Psychologist, 18, 88-100.
Dreyer, C. & C. Nel (2003). Teaching reading strategies and reading comprehension within a technology-enhanced learning environment. System 31: 349-365.
Fatehi Rad, N. (2011). The role of reading strategies awareness on reading comprehension performance of advanced Iranian EFL learners. ELT Voices, 1(4), 27-30.

Fotovatian, S., & Shokrpour, N. (2007).Comparison of the Efficiency ofReading Comprehension Strategies on Iranian University Students'Comprehension. Journal of College Reading and Learning, 37(2), 47-63.

Iqbal, M., Noor, M., Muhabat, F. & Kazemian, B. (2015). Factors Responsible for Poor English Reading Comprehension at Secondary Level. Communication and Linguistics Studies. 1(1), 1-6.

Mahdavi.A., &Azimi, S. (2012). The effects of cognitive strategies i.e. note making and underlining on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 1(6), 1-6.

Mirhassani, S.A. (1995). Reading (1). Text printing: Mehr, Qom. University Books in Humanities (SAMT).

Motallebzadeh, K., &Heirany, N. (2011). Thematic clustering of L2 vocabularies: A technique for improving reading comprehension ability of Iranian intermediate EFL adult learners. Iranian EFL Journal, 7, 1-15.

Noroozi, I., & Birjandi, P. (1998).The effect of reflective strategies training on reading comprehension of male and female Iranian students. Foreign Language Teaching Journal, 87(22), 41-48.

Pintrich,P. R. (1999). The role of motivation in promoting and sustaining self-regulated learning. International Journal of Educational Research, 31, 459-470.

Pintrich, P. R. (2000). The role of goal orientation in self-regulated learning. In M., Boekaerts, & P. R., Pintrich. (Eds.) Handbook of self-regulation (pp.451-502). San Diego: Academic Press.

Tavakoli, M., & Hayati, S. (2011).The relationship between lexical inferencing strategies and L2 proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2(6), 1227-1237.

Trawick, L., & Corno, L. (1995). Expanding the volitional resources of urban community college students. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 63, 5,-70.

Wolters, C. A., Pintrich P. R. & Karabenick, S. A. (2003). Assessing academic self-regulated learning. Paper presented at the conference on Indicators of positive development: Definitions, measures, and prospective validity. Sponsored by child trends, national institutes of health, USA.

Zimmerman, B. J. (1989). A social cognitive view of self-regulated learning. Journal of Educational Psychology, 81, 329-339.

Zimmerman, B.J. (2000). Attaining self-regulation: a social-cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P.R. Pintrich and M. Zeidner (Eds.), handbook of self-regulation (pp.245-262), San Diego: Academic press.

Zimmerman, B J., & Campillio, M. (2003). Motivating self-regulated problem solvers. In J.E. Davidson & R.J. Sternberg (Eds.), The psychology of problem solving, (pp.233-262), UK: Cambridge University Press.

THE EFFECT OF OBSERVATION TASKS ON EFL STUDENTS' LEARNING OF POLITENESS MAXIMS

Afshineh Negini
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

Ali Gholami Mehrdad
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

S. Dariush Ahmadi
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT STUDY WAS AN ATTEMPT TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECT OF OBSERVATION TASKS THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES ON EFL STUDENT'S LEARNING OF POLITENESS MAXIMS. TO ACHIEVE THIS END, 40 PARTICIPANTS WERE SELECTED THROUGH CONVENIENCE SAMPLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PRESENT STUDY. THEN THEY WERE DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS I.E. CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL. IN THE PRESENT STUDY, TWO DIFFERENT INSTRUMENTS WERE USED. FIRST, TO ENSURE THAT ALL THE PARTICIPANTS WERE AT THE SAME LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY, INTERCHANGE OBJECTIVE PLACEMENT TEST (IOPT) WAS ADMINISTRATED TO THE PARTICIPANTS. THE SECOND INSTRUMENT, WHICH WAS USED IN THIS STUDY, WAS A RESEARCHER-MADE PRAGMATIC TEST TO MEASURE THE LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE OF POLITENESS MAXIMS. IT CONTAINED 30 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS ABOUT POLITE REQUESTS AND OFFERS. LEARNERS HAD TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS IN 40 MINUTES. AFTER THE TREATMENT, TO CHECK THE MEANINGFULNESS OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP, ANCOVA WAS RUN. THE ANALYSIS OF THE COLLECTED DATA WAS INDICATOR OF THIS POINT THAT THE MEAN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GROUPS (MD= 4.24) WAS SIGNIFICANT AT P< .05, WHICH POINTED TO A BETTER PERFORMANCE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ON THE POST TEST, IMPLYING THAT TEACHING POLITENESS MAXIMS TO EFL LEARNERS CAN HAVE POSITIVE EFFECTS ON THEIR PRAGMATIC KNOWLEDGE.

KEYWORDS: PRAGMATICS, TASK, POLITENESS MAXIMS

Introduction

Nowadays talking about language learning is synonymous with speaking skill. This mindset is very prevalent among language learners. To address this, most of the material developers try to design tasks for improving speaking skill in commercial course books (Barron, 2003). Although this emphasis is in parallel with the principles of communicative approach, the problem is the perfunctory view over teaching speaking (Nunan, 1989). Confining teaching speaking into a set of prefabricated structures that can be practiced through different kinds of task is like what structuralists tried to apply in the Audio-lingual era (Bouton, 1994).

Accordingly, one of the neglected areas in teaching speaking is pragmatics. Teaching pragmatics both implicitly and explicitly has recently found many advocates (e.g. Kasper, 1997) who believe that without teaching pragmatics and just by putting the learners in contact with the target language in and out of the classroom, most of them cannot acquire the pragmatics of the target language spontaneously (Bouton, 1994). Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989) report that, 'even fairly advanced language learners' communicative acts regularly contain pragmatic errors, or deficits, in that they fail to convey or comprehend the intended illocutionary force or politeness value' (p. 10). Those language learners who are exposed to pragmatics in an instructional environment may obtain a higher perception of the language and speakers of the language (Schmidt, 1993); therefore, there is a need for second language (L2) instruction to focus on the pragmatics of the language, and researchers in this area generally point out the positive impact of instruction aimed at raising learners' pragmatic awareness (Kasper, 1997). However, one of the neglected aspects of such competence is observing politeness rules (Leech, 1996).

Scholars suggest a number of activities, which are useful for pragmatic development. Such activities can be classified into two main types: activities aimed at raising students' pragmatic awareness, and activities offering opportunities for communicative practice (Kasper 1997). Through awareness-raising activities, the learners identify and acquire information of how different language forms are appropriately used in the intended context (Schmidt, 1993). For this aim, learners are made notice the pragmatic features in various sources of oral or written data, notice native speaker classroom guests, notice authentic videos of interaction, authentic interviews, broadcasts, or other audiovisual sources (Schmidt, 1993).

Offering activities for communicative practice, students are asked to observe open or structured conversations through observation tasks and notice to socio pragmatic and pragmalinguistic features (Schmidt, 1993). By observing these kinds of tasks students focus on connection between linguistic forms, pragmatic functions, their occurrence in different social contexts, and their cultural meanings. Paying attention to such tasks students will notice the kinds of information they need to develop their pragmatic competence in L2 (Schmidt, 1993). This study focuses on using observation tasks to teach language learners politeness maxims through communicative activities.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching pragmatics and specifically politeness maxims is a controversial issue (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Although speech acts are considered as a main component of pragmatic competence, scholars do not come to terms over teaching pragmatics. Many studies (e.g. Bialystok, 1993; Juhana, 2011; Tannen, 2006) have been done over teaching of different components of pragmatics. One of the main problems in foreign language classrooms is that foreign language learners have a plenty of problems in acquiring pragmatics knowledge. In most of foreign language classrooms, the instructor teaches grammar and the four main skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the instruction of pragmatic knowledge is neglected. Despite all this, there is a paucity of research about improving pragmatics competence.

On the other hand, one of the main components of pragmatics is politeness maxim (Brown & Gilman, 1989). Most of English as Foreign Language students have problem in requesting in a polite way. The reason is that they are not instructed the politeness maxims. To address this problem we have assessed the effect of observation tasks through communicative activities on Iranian EFL students' learning of politeness maxims.

Related Studies

Different studies have been implemented to investigate the teachability of pragmatics; for instance Billmyer(1990) and Bouton(1994) made a research on learners who received instruction in implicature and complementing, and found that they did better than control group who did not received treatment. Other scholars found that teaching approaches could also affect on pragmatic fluency. In these studies, different types of instructions were done on two or more groups of learners. House and Kasper (1981), house (1996), and Tateyama, Kasper, Mui, and Thananart (1997), Takahashi (2001) applied explicit and implicit teaching approaches . Wildner-Bassett (1984, 1986) compared eclectic

approach with a modified version of suggestopedia, and Kubota (1995) compared inductive approach where learners had to work in groups to find out how implicatures apply, to a teacher directed approach and zero instruction implicature. The findings of these studies are summarized as below:

First, the studies done on the teachability of specific features of pragmatic revealed it is possible, and the comparisons made between instructed and uninstructed learners revealed instructed students did better. Secondly, studies done on comparison between explicit and implicit approach revealed explicitly taught students did better that the implicit groups. Thirdly, the studies revealed both eclectic and suggestopedia approaches could noticeably affect on pragmatic fluency of learners; however, the eclectic group outperformed the suggestopedic group. Kubota (1995) reported both inductive and deductive instructed learners outperformed the control group.

The studies about the effect of observation tasks through communicative activities on EFL students' learning of politeness maxim are very scarce in the SLA domain literatures. For instance, Takahashi (2001, cited in Kasper, 2001) inspected the request speech act in the EFL context and found out that the request speech act is teachable and is helpful for the EFL students' communicative abilities. House (1996, cited in Kasper, 2001) inspected the role of observation tasks on the EFL students' politeness maxim. His study showed that there is a direct relation between EFL students 'speech act of politeness instruction and their use of observation tasks. Tateyama and Kasper (2008) studied an intact second-year class in Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Their view of how pragmatics is learned in the classroom builds on theories of using tasks in the classrooms. In this study, they demonstrated how using interactions and communication tasks between participants in different social roles (student, teacher, and classroom guest) may heighten the participants' pragmatic knowledge.

Methodology
Participants
For this study, a total of 55 female Iranian EFL learners whose age ranged from 18 to 25 years were conveniently sampled. To ensure the homogeneity of the participants Interchange Objective Placement Test (IOPT) (Cambridge,2008) was administered, based on the results of which, 40 learners whose score fell one SD minus or plus the mean participated in the study. They were studying English in Ahang Language Institute in Nahavand. All of the participants were studying English at pre-intermediate level. They had passed New Headway Elementary Book levels 1-3 in the institute and they had studied English for three to four years at school. Non of them have been abroad or have any experiences in direct contact with native speakers of English.

Instruments
For the purpose of the present study, two different instruments were used. First, to ensure that all the participants were at the same level of proficiency, Interchange Objective Placement Test (IOPT) was administrated to the participants. This test includes three sections including the listening section (20 questions), the reading section (20 questions), and the language use section (30 questions). All of the items are in multiple- choice format. The second instrument, which was used in this study, was a researcher-made pragmatic test to measure the learners' knowledge of politeness maxims. It contained 30 multiple choice questions about polite requests and offers. Learners had to answer the questions in 40 minutes. The questions of this test were chosen from Headway test book. This book was published by Oxford Press and it consisted of many questions about different skills and sub skills. There is one part in this book entitled 'Everyday English' which is all about pragmatic teaching and testing. It is important to refer to this point that each test consisted of 30 multiple-choice researcher-made items from the book *New Headway Pre Intermediate* and they were given as parallel pretest and posttest to participants. In order to measure the reliability of the test, it was administered to a group of 15 intermediate students other than the main participants of the study and its reliability was measured using split-half method. It turned out to be 0.73.

Procedure

First, in order to have a homogenized group, Interchange Objective Placement Test (IOPT) was administered to all of the participants. Taking the results of the proficiency test in to account 40 participants were selected from among 55 participants through convenience sampling. Then they were divided in to two groups i.e. control and experimental group. The treatment lasted for eight sessions. Each session took 30 minutes. In the first session of treatment a pretest was administered to both groups. This pretest was a Discourse Complement Task (DCT) test to measure the learners' knowledge of politeness maxims. It contained 30 multiple choice questions about polite requests and offers. The participants were given 40 minutes to answer the questions.

In experimental group, every session the teacher distributed the tasks which students had to work on. These tasks were taken from the book New Headway Pre Intermediate . The reason of choosing this book was laid in this point that there was a section in this book called "Everyday English". This section consisted of a set of observation tasks based on teaching pragmatics.

These tasks asked the students to use the politeness function to offer a suggestion or ask a request. The format of these tasks was designed in conversational formats. At the end, the participants of experimental group checked their answers with a listening item, which was produced by native speakers. In other words, the students' answers were compared with the native speakers' answers.

In control group, the same kinds of task was given to the participants. Every session, the teacher followed the routine procedure of teaching "Everyday English" section which was recommended in teacher's book of New Headway. The participants should listen to "Everyday English" section and repeat the dialogues. Then they should work in pair and practice those conversations. The control group did not receive any treatment. In the last session of treatment, the researcher administered a posttest, which consisted of 30 questions about polite requests and offers. The results showed the experimental group outperformed the control group.

Design

The present work reflects a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test, in which the subjects were conveniently sampled and assigned into an experimental and a control group.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, the result of pretest and posttest was compared to see whether observation task had any effect on teaching politeness maxims through communicative tasks or not. The ANCOVA was utilized for measuring the participants' answers statistically.

the data collected from the pre and posttests were checked for their normality at a descriptive and an inferential level as described in table 1.

Table .1 Descriptive Statistics for the Groups on the Pretest and Posttest

	Groups.Pre test	Groups.Post test	Pretest. Exp	Pretest. Cont	Posttest. Exp	Posttest. Cont
N Valid	40	40	20	20	20	20
Missing	0	0	20	20	20	20
Mean	19.7750	22.7250	19.9000	19.6500	24.8000	20.6500
Std. Deviation	4.62151	4.52337	4.56416	4.79336	2.89464	4.95533
Skewness	-.229	-.987	-.068	-.378	-.112	-.685
Std. Error of Skewness	.374	.374	.512	.512	.512	.512
Kurtosis	-.821	.770	-.688	-.874	-1.168	-.476
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.733	.733	.992	.992	.992	.992
Minimum	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00	20.00	11.00
Maximum	27.00	29.00	27.00	27.00	29.00	27.00

Descriptively the skewness and Kortusis values were checked. As the descriptive statistics in table 4.1 indicate, the values obtained were both within the acceptable range of ± 2 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007) implying that the scores were descriptively normal. However, to further ensure the normality of the data, data screening through the use of inferential statistics was done. These included checking the normal distribution of test scores, homogeneity of error variances, homogeneity of regression slopes, and linearity of slope of regression lines.

Normality of Distribution of Test Scores
Table .2 Kolmogrov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Statistics

	Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Groups.Pretest	EXPerimental	.111	20	.200*	.970	20	.758
Groups.Posttest	EXPerimental	.133	20	.200*	.937	20	.206
Pretest.Exp	EXPerimental	.111	20	.200*	.970	20	.758
Pretest.Cont	EXPerimental	.138	20	.200*	.950	20	.366
Posttest.Exp	EXPerimental	.133	20	.200*	.937	20	.206
Posttest.Cont	EXPerimental	.157	20	.200*	.919	20	.093

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

As the data in Table 2 show, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-wilk values obtained, were all larger than the significance level of 0.05, which pointed to a normal distribution of scores. This normal distribution of test scores is also reflected in the normal distribution curves and box plots for outlier and extreme scores below.

Homogeneity of Regression Slopes
This assumption was checked by measuring the interaction between group and the covariate (pretest).

Table 3 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	334.520[a]	3	111.507	8.662	.000
Intercept	1852.726	1	1852.726	143.915	.000
Groups	6.394	1	6.394	.497	.485
Groups.Pretest	123.348	1	123.348	9.581	.004
Groups * Groups.Pretest	32.371	1	32.371	2.515	.122
Error	463.455	36	12.874		
Total	21455.000	40			
Corrected Total	797.975	39			

a. R Squared = .419 (Adjusted R Squared = .371)

As the data summarized in Table 3 show, the value obtained [F(1,36)= 2.515, P= .122] was found to be larger than .05, which indicated that interaction between the independent variable and covariate was not significant and the assumption of the homogeneity of the slope of regression lines was met.

Linearity of Slope of Regression Lines
To check this assumption a grouped scatterplot of the covariate, post-test scores of the dependent variable and independent variable was plotted. As Figure 1 below shows, there was a linear relationship between the dependent variable (scores of post-test) and the covariate (scores of pre-test) for our groups.
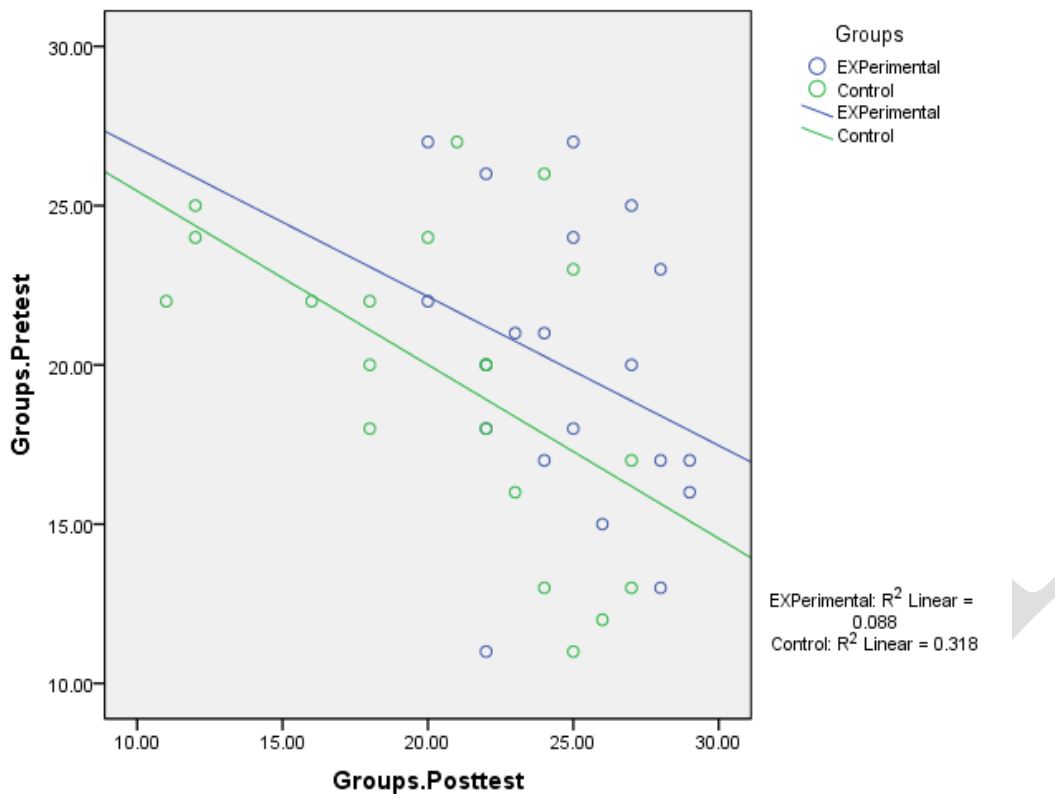
Figure 1 Linearity of slope of regression lines

Homogeneity of Variance
This assumption implies that the variance of the dependent variables for each combination of independent variables must be equal. In other words, it refers to equality of variances of internal variables for different levels of external variables. To test the assumption, Levene's test was used the results of which are reflected in Table 4.
Table 4 Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.179	1	38	.148

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.
a. Design: Intercept + Groups.Pretest + Groups

As it is clear from Table 4, the significance value obtained for Levene's test [$F(1,38)$= 2.179, Sig= .148], is higher than 0.05 which indicates the homogeneity of error variances.
Table 5 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	334.520a	3	111.507	8.662	.000
Intercept	1852.726	1	1852.726	143.915	.000
Groups	6.394	1	6.394	.497	.485
Groups.Pretest	123.348	1	123.348	9.581	.004
Groups * Groups.Pretest	32.371	1	32.371	2.515	.122

Error	463.455	36	12.874		
Total	21455.000	40			
Corrected Total	797.975	39			

a. R Squared = .419 (Adjusted R Squared = .371)

As the data summarized in Table 5 show, the value obtained [F(1,36)= 2.515, P= .122] was found to be larger than .05, which indicated that interaction between the independent variable and covariate was not significant and the assumption of the homogeneity of the slope of regression lines was met.

Testing the Research Hypotheses

The descriptive data presented in the Table 6 showed that after the instruction the mean score of experimental group in the post-test was 24.80 and the mean score of control group in the post-test was 20.65 which indicated a rather large difference. To check the meaningfulness of this difference, ANCOVA was run.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics for the Groups on the Posttest

Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	24.8000	2.89464	20
Control	20.6500	4.95533	20
Total	22.7250	4.52337	40

The main ANCOVA results are presented in Table 6**.**
Table 7
Analysis of Covariance
Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	302.149a	2	151.075	11.274	.000	.379
Intercept	1884.662	1	1884.662	140.639	.000	.792
Groups.Pretest	129.924	1	129.924	9.695	.004	.208
Groups	180.385	1	180.385	13.461	.001	.267
Error	495.826	37	13.401			
Total	21455.000	40				
Corrected Total	797.975	39				

a. R Squared = .379 (Adjusted R Squared = .345)

As shown in Table 6, the row for the pre-test shows that the pre-test was significantly related to the post-test (P<.05) with the magnitude of .208. The row for Groups is the indicator of the main effect of the treatment on the dependent variable. After adjusting for pretest scores, there was a significant effect of the group [F (1,37) = 13.46, p < 0.05, partial η² =.267]. As P-value was less than 0.05, it was concluded that there were significant differences between the mean scores of the groups on the posttest after removing the possible effect of their entry knowledge as tested through the pretest.

Although the F-value of 13.46 indicated significant differences between the mean scores of the groups on the posttest after removing the possible effects of the pretest and although the partial eta value of .267 indicated that the treatment was responsible for 26.7% of the variance, as summarized in Table 4.7, pairwise comparisons were made to decide about the direction of this difference.

Table 8
*Pairwise Comparisons*Dependent Variable:Groups.Posttest

		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.a	95% Confidence Interval for Differencea	
(I) Groups	(J) Groups				Lower Bound	Upper Bound

Experimental	Control	4.249*	1.158	.001	1.902	6.595
Control	EXPerimental	-4.249*	1.158	.001	-6.595	-1.902

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

As the data in Table 4.7 indicate, the mean difference between the groups (MD= 4.24) was significant at P< .05, which pointed to a better performance of the experimental group on the post test, implying that teaching politeness maxims to EFL learners can have positive effects on their pragmatic knowledge.

Discussion

This study was done to investigate the effect of observation tasks through communicative activities on Iranian EFL students' learning of politeness maxim. As the results show, the experimental group had a better performance than control group. It means observation tasks have positive effects on teaching politeness maxim. This finding subscribes to teachability of pragmatics. The importance of pragmatic competence in communication has been widely acknowledged in various models of language ability (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980).

Pragmatic competence encompasses a variety of abilities in the use and interpretation of language in context (Bialystok, 1993). These include a speaker's ability to use language for different purposes (such as greeting, requesting, informing, demanding and so on), the speaker's ability to adapt or change language according to the needs or expectations of the listener or situation, and the speaker's ability to follow accepted rules; the maxims for conversation and narrative (Bialystok, 1993).

Takahashi (2001, cited in Kasper, 2001) inspected the request speech act in the EFL context and found out that the request speech act is teachable and is helpful for the EFL students' communicative abilities. Kasper (1997) considers the state of incompatibility between linguistic proficiency and pragmatic performance as evidence that instruction in pragmatics is necessary.

In line with the finding of this study, House (1996, cited in Kasper, 2001) showed that there is a direct relation between EFL students 'speech act of politeness instruction and their use of observation tasks.

Tateyama and Kasper (2008) studied an intact second-year class in Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. In this study, they demonstrated how using interactions and communication tasks between participants in different social roles (student, teacher, and classroom guest) might heighten the participants' pragmatic knowledge.

Conclusion

Canal and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in the context of second language teaching. Their view of communicative competence is as:

> "a synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse" (p. 20).

As the above definition implies one of the crucial aspects of communicative competence is pragmatics. Teaching pragmatics and specifically politeness maxims is a controversial issue (Kasper & Dahl, 1991). Although speech acts are considered as a main component of pragmatic competence, scholars do not come to terms over teaching pragmatics. The instruction of pragmatic knowledge is neglected in the EFL classrooms and most of the EFL students have problems in acquiring the pragmatic knowledge and more specifically the politeness maxim (Bouton, 1994). More concentration is required to be paid to this issue. In line with this view, the present study was an attempt to investigate the effects of observation tasks through communicative activities on Iranian EFL student's learning of politeness maxim. As the results show, observation tasks have positive effects on teaching politeness maxim. Accordingly, observation tasks can be considered as facilitating factors in language learning.

References

Bachman, L.F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford etc.: OUP.

Barron, A. (2003). *Acquisition in interlanguage pragmatics: Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Press.

Bialystok, E.(1993). Symbolic representation and attentional control in pragmatic competence. In: Kasper, S.,& Blum-Kulka, S. (Eds.), *Interlanguage Pragmatics*(43-57). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Billmyer, K. (1990). I really like your lifestyle: ESL learners learning how to   compliment. *Penn Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 6 (2), 31–48.

Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (Eds.). (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologie*s. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Bouton, L. F. (1994). Conversational implicature in the second language: Learned slowly when not deliberately taught. *Journal of Pragmatics,* 22, 157-67.

Brown, R., & Gilman, A. (1989). Politeness theory and Shakespeare's four major tragedies. *Language in Society, 18*, 159-212.

Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. W. (Eds.), *Language and Communication,* 2-27. London: Longman.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). 'Theoretical bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing.' *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.

House, J. (1996). Developing pragmatic fluency in English as a foreign language*:* Routines and metapragmatic awareness. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition,* 18, 225–252.

House, J., & Kasper, G. (1981).Politeness markers in English and German. *Conversational Routine*, 15, 71-85.

Juhana, J. (2011).The use of apologizing speech acts realization by male and female students. *Journal Pengembangan Humaniora*, (11), 1, 1-10.

Kasper, G. (1997). *Can pragmatic competence be taught?* University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.

Kasper, G. (2001). Classroom research on interlanguage pragmatics. In Rose, K,R., & Kasper., G (Eds*.), Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 33-60). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kasper, G., & Dahl, M. (1991). Research methods in interlanguage pragmatics.   *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 13,* (2), 215-247.

Kubota, M. (1995). Teachability of conversational implicature to Japanese EFL learners. IRLT Bulletin, 9. Tokyo: *The Institute for Research in Language Teaching*, 35-67.

Leech, G . (1996). Pragmatic principles in Shaw's You Never Can Tell. In Michael Toolan (ed.), *Language, Text and Context*. London: *Routledge,* pp.259-278.

Schmidt, R. (1993). Consciousness, learning and interlanguage pragmatics. In: Kasper, G., Blum-Kulka, S. (Eds.), Interlanguage Pragmatics. Oxford   University Press, Oxford, pp. 21–42.

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using Multivariate Statistics* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Takahashi, S.(2001). The role of input enhancement in developing pragmatic competence. In: Rose, K.R., Kasper, G. (Eds.), *Pragmatics in Language Teaching.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 171–199.

Tannen, D. (2006). The pragmatics of cross-cultural communication. *Applied   linguistics*,5, (3), 189-195

Tateyama, Y., & Kasper, G. (2008). Talking with a classroom guest: Opportunities for   learning Japanese pragmatics. In E. Alcón & A. Martínez-Flor (Eds.), *Investigating pragmatics in foreign language learning, teaching, and testing*   (pp. 45-71). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Tateyama, Y., Kasper, G., Mui, L., Tay, H., & Thananart, O. (1997). Explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatic routines. In L. Bouton (Ed.), *Pragmatics and language learning,* Vol.8. Urbana-Champaign , IL: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Wildner-Bassett, M. (1984). *Improving Pragmatic Aspects of Learners' Interlanguage*. Tubingen, Narr.

Wildner-Bassett, M. (1986). *Teaching and learning polite noises: Improving pragmatic aspects of advanced adult learners interlanguage.* In: Kasper, G.   (Ed.), *Learning, Teaching and Communication in the Foreign Language   Classroom.* Arhus University Press, Arhus, pp. 163–178.

MA STUDENTS' VIEWPOINTS ABOUT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, ITS REASONS AND ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN IRAN

Azadeh Nemati (Ph.D.)
Department of English language Teaching, Jahrom Branch, Islamic Azad University,
Jahrom, Iran,
azadehnematiar@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT HAS BECOME WIDESPREAD IN THE UNIVERSITY AS A RESULT THE WAY OR RESPONDING TO THIS ISSUE IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. THE PURPOSES OF THE PRESENT STUDY WAS TO OBTAIN MA STUDENTS VIEWPOINTS ABOUT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, THE MOST COMMON REASONS OF DOING ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT AND ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE MEMBERS. TO THIS END A YES/NO QUESTIONNAIRE WAS USED AND DATA WERE GATHERED FROM 240 IRANIAN MASTERS STUDENT. THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT MOST OF THE STUDENTS WERE FAMILIAR WITH SHAM PARAPHRASING, ILLICIT PARAPHRASING, PURLOINING, AND PARAPHRASING PLAGIARISM. WHILE MOST OF THEM WERE NOT FAMILIAR WITH OTHER PLAGIARISM, VERBATIM COPYING, GHOST WRITING, PLAGIARISM OF SECONDARY SOURCES AND PLAGIARISM OF THE FORM OF SOURCES AS DIFFERENT TYPES OF PLAGIARISM. IT WAS ALSO FOUND OUT NOT HAVING A GOOD COMMAND IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, WRITING, AND COMPREHENSION WERE THE MOST COMMON REASONS FOR PLAGIARISM. FINALLY, IT WAS SHOWN THAT THERE IS NO REGULATION AND TRAINING REGARDING PLAGIARISM IN THE UNIVERSITY. THE FINDINGS HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED FOR INSTRUCTING STUDENTS IN THE ISSUE OF PLAGIARISM AND ITS DIFFERENT TYPES TO PREVENT PLAGIARISM IN THE ACADEMIC SETTING.

Introduction

University students can find all the information they need to do their assignments in the net and as a result this accessibility and popularity of the internet catapulted plagiarism to a new height. In 2001 McCabe and his colleagues reported that roughly 82 percent of the students cheat. The most common definition of plagiarism is using different sources without mentioning the source is called plagiarism which is a problem in higher education. McCabe (2005) believed that the problem of plagiarism is further aggravated by the advent of internet and the World Wide Web. Therefore, some certain rules must be observed to prevent the wanted or unwanted plagiarism and academic misconduct.

Plagiarism and academic misconducts appears to be steadily increasing not only across college and university campuses but also within other groups such as scholarly and scientific communities (Schrimsher, 2011). In the educational setting plagiarism can attack the goal of academic integrity (Loutzenhiser, Pita & Reed, 2006). Plagiarism is not bound to a culture or country. Glendinng (2014) reported of a complete research undertaken for project Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education across Europe (IPPHEAE). It is stated that Asian students have been proved of the largest number of students responding to plagiarism (Introna, et al., 2003). As a result it

is necessary for educators to have a comprehensive understanding of the status of plagiarism and its related issues in Iran. In this line the main purposes of the present study are to find the familiarity of the students with academic misconduct and its different types, the most common reasons for doing plagiarism, and anti-plagiarism policies and procedures on the side of university and faculties in Iran.

Review of literature

With the popularity of the word "plagiarism" academic misconduct remains rife on universities worldwide. Scholars argue that attitudes toward academic misconduct are different in different cultures and countries. At western universities plagiarism is widely assumed as ethically wrong and the risk of punishment is discovered (Wheeler, 2014). While Wheeler (2014) stated that in contrast negative connotations of plagiarism do not extend beyond the west. He argued in East Asian societies there is little concept of word owner ship. As a result students don't hesitate to copy and paste or they think citing the original author is unnecessary. The author exemplifies Japanese students as a case in point.

The first proposal for the Impact of Policies for Plagiarism in Higher Education across Europe (IPPHEAE) was developed during 2009. Before this time very little research had been conducted in European countries (Glendinning, 2014). McCabe (2005) reported data generated as part of Academic Integrity Assessment Project conducted by the Center For Academic Integrity at Duke University from 80,000 students and 12,000 faculty in the United states and Canada. The findings documented plagiarism and cheating in those universities. To promote students' academic integrity he proposed "honor code strategies".

Marshal and Garry (2006) compared the attitudes and perceptions of non- English speaking background (NESB) with English speaking background (ESB). The results indicated that plagiarism is not only common but also NESB students are more likely to engage in plagiarism than ESB students.

Academic misconduct can have different sources and can be considered from different aspects. Schrimsher (2011) gathered data from 681 students from Samford University about their attitude regarding plagiarism. The result indicated that faculty should clarify their expectations to prevent cheating or misconduct. The same results were obtained by Foltynek et al. (2014). It would appear that better understanding of student' educational need can help students to avoid plagiarism in a more effective way.

Moore (2014) researched on accuracy of referencing and patterns of plagiarism in electronically published theses in Finland. The researcher found inaccurate referencing, misleading referencing and plagiarism in the articles. Sousa-Silva (2014) presented the result of a forensic linguistic analysis of real plagiarism. It was concluded that detection software packages can be effective but not necessarily good plagiarism detective system.

Some researches were also done in Iran. Mahdavi Zafarghandi (2012) examined the understanding, perceived seriousness and rates of different forms of plagiarism in Iran. The findings again highlighted the need for instructing students in the issues related to plagiarism to minimize its rate. Riasati and Rahimi (2013) did a qualitative study on reasons of plagiarism. Finding indicated a number of reasons such as shallow understanding o the concept of plagiarism, poor linguistic abilities, research and writing skills, lack of familiarity and interest with the topic assigned to them.

Considering the above mentioned work there seems to be a dearth of research on plagiarism in Asian countries such as Iran. Such being the case the present investigation attempt to address the issue of academic misconduct, its reasons and anti-plagiarism procedures in Iran. Therefore, the author sought to answer the following three research questions:

Research question 1: How much students are familiar with academic misconduct and its different types?

Research question 2: What are the most common reasons for academic misconduct/plagiarism?

Research question 3: what are the students' opinions about anti plagiarism policies and procedures on the side of University and faculties?

Methodology

Participants

In this study Iranian Masters student (240) from three Islamic Azad Universities in Iran (Fars Province) participated. They were selected purposively from three universities of Shiraz, Marvdasht and Jahrom branches when they wanted to graduate from those mentioned universities. The selected participants were from different courses such as, Physical Education, Persian Literature, English litarture, Microbiology, Insectology. Their age ranged from 28 to 40 and more than half of them were female.

Instrument

In this study a yes/no self-report questionnaire was used. This survey instrument was in Persian and consisted of 36 questions which was prepared by the researcher. The questionnaire was based on some other reliable and valid researches developed by Zafarghandi et al. (2012) and Glendinning (2014). The questions measured three aspects namely students' familiarity with academic misconduct and its different types (17 questions), the most common reasons for academic misconduct (9 questions) and their opinion about anti plagiarism policies and procedures on the side of university and faculties (10 questions).

Data collection procedures

The questioners distributed by the office of higher education to the students' who were presented there to submit their theses and had no more classes for one semester. They were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses.

Results

The first research question focused on students' familiarity with academic misconduct and it different types. (Research question 1: How much students are familiar with academic misconduct and its different types?)

Table 1: Students' familiarity with academic misconduct and its different types?

	Yes %	No %	No idea %
1) I know the concept of plagiarism	86.4	15.4	-
2) I am well aware of the consequences of plagiarism	53.8	46.2	-
3) Plagiarism is using someone else's **words**, **ideas**, **results** as if they were your own.	92.3	7.7	-
4) When I use a question definitely I mention its source	76.9	15.4	-
5) I know different types of plagiarism detection soft wares	23.1	69.2	-
6) While doing group work I write the name of all co authors	92.3	7.7	-
7) I know different types of plagiarism	30.8	61.7	7.5
8) Sham paraphrasing	76.9	23.1	-
9) Illicit paraphrasing	59.2	23.1	8.7
10) Other plagiarism	30.8	69.2	-
11) Verbatim copying	16.9	65.7	17.4
12) Recycling	23.1	69.2	7.7
13) Ghost writing	14.6	85.4	-
14) Purloining	86.2	15.4	-
15) Plagiarism of secondary sources	46.2	23.1	30.8
16) Paraphrasing plagiarism	69.2	30.8	-
17) Plagiarism of the form of the source	38.5	53.7	7.8

As noted in Table 1 the majority of the students (86.4) stated that they knew the concept of plagiarism and more than half of them (53.8) believed that there were aware of the consequences of plagiarism. Nearly most of them (92.3) agreed with the general concept of plagiarism while most of

them (61.7) did not know different types of plagiarism and 69.2 percent of the participants were not familiar with plagiarism detection software.

The result showed that the most of the students were familiar with sham paraphrasing, illicit paraphrasing, purloining, and paraphrasing plagiarism. While most of them were not familiar with other plagiarism, verbatim copying, ghost writing, plagiarism of secondary sources and plagiarism of the form of sources as different types of plagiarism.

The second research question pertained to the most common reasons for academic misconduct and plagiarism (Research question 2: What are the most common reasons for academic misconduct/plagiarism?). The results are shown in Table 2 and Figure 1 respectively.

Table 2: Reasons for academic misconduct/plagiarism

	Yes %	No %	No idea %
18) I don't have a good command in writing English articles	**61.5**	38.5	-
19) I have research and it is easier to copy and paste from the net	30.8	42.5	26.7
20) In the university no body explained plagiarism to me	46.2	53.8	-
21) I have written some papers but I don't know if I was right or not	**61.7**	30.8	7.5
22) My writing skills is weak because it is not taught in the university	**75.5**	16.7	7.8
23) My English is weak so I have to copy materials	69.7	23.1	7.2
24) My comprehension is weak so I need to copy sentences	60.7	30.8	8.5
25) Everybody plagiarize I also do	23.1	69.2	7.7
26) The topic is so hard that I have to copy the martial from the net	23.1	76.9	-

Table 2 illustrated that most of the students believe that they do not have a good command in English language, writing, and comprehension as the most common reasons for plagiarism. Based on Table 2 More than half of them (61.7) mentioned that they have written some papers before but they were not sure of doing plagiarism or no. Almost 75.5 percent of the students acknowledged that their writing skills are weak and that is the reason why they have to plagiarize. Figure 1 shows the same results in the form of a graph.
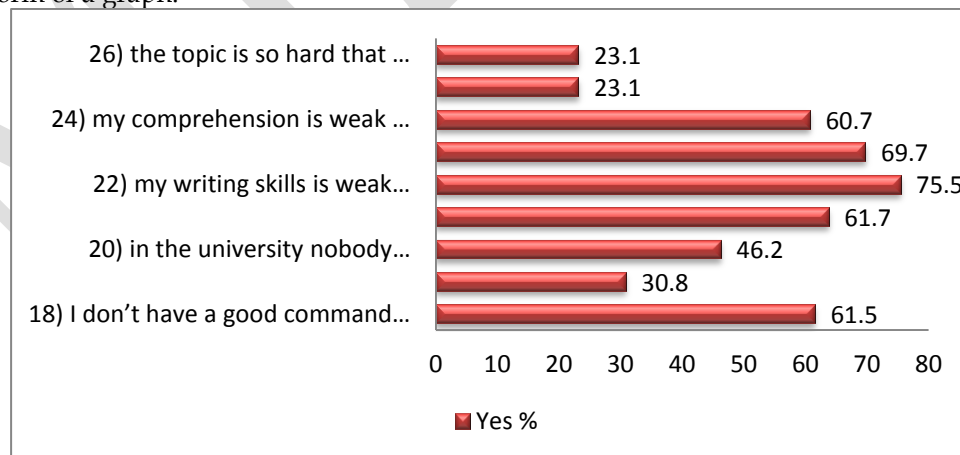

Figure 1: Common reasons for academic misconduct

From Figure 1 it is clear that questions 25 and 26 got the lowest rank. In other words master participants did not agree that if most of the students plagiarize they also should do and also the topic was not difficult for them to do academic misconduct.

The focus of the third research question was on the students' opinion about anti plagiarism policies and procedures on the side of university and faculties (Research question 3: what are the

students' opinions about anti plagiarism policies and procedures on the side of University and faculties?)

Table 2: Students' opinions about anti plagiarism policies and procedures on the side of University and faculties

	Yes %	No %	No idea %
27) There is no regulations regarding plagiarism in the university	61.5	28.5	-
28) There are training courses for freshmen regarding plagiarism	6.7	30.8	62.5
29) There are workshops and seminars regarding plagiarism in the university	15.4	53.8	30.8
30) There is an online pamphlet in the site of the university about plagiarism	7.8	73.7	18.5
31) There are training courses about plagiarism and ways of prevention	6.7	63.5	30.8
32) University faculties explain plagiarism while teaching	46.2	23.1	30.8
33)University faculties react if they find plagiarism in term projects	23.1	53.8	23.1
34) University faculties have plagiarism detective soft wares	15.4	23.1	61.5
35) University faculties may not recognize the students plagiarized documents due to their trust to their students	30.8	53.8	15.4
36) Avoiding plagiarism is a great concern of faculty members	23.1	76.9	-

According to the results of Table 3 61.5 percent of the participants agreed that there is no regulation regarding plagiarism in the university and 62.5 percent of them had no idea about training courses for freshmen. Even 63.5 percent of the respondents answered that there are no training courses about plagiarism and ways of prevention. Most of them (73.7) mentioned that there is not any pamphlet in the site of the university regarding plagiarism and 76.9 of them explained that avoiding plagiarism is not a great concern of faculty members.

Discussions and conclusions

Academic misconduct and plagiarism is becoming an important issue of increasing concern these days. Plagiarism does not need much with the advent of technology, just a few stroke of the keyboard or movement of a mouse. Although, the existence of tools like Google and other plagiarism detection software has also made detection easier and this may, in part, explain the perception that plagiarism has become more prevalent (Marshal & Garry, 2006). A vast review of the related literature indicated a lack of proper understanding of plagiarism among students. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the statues of plagiarism is necessary.

In this article it was tried to reveal three research questions regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct in Iran. The first research question sought to answer familiarity of Iranian MA students with plagiarism and its different types. It was found that although most of the students were familiar with common concept of plagiarism which is copy and paste someone else's work without correct referencing most of them stated that they were not familiar with different types of plagiarism and plagiarism detection softwares. They did not consider verbatim copying, recycling and ghost writing as different types of plagiarism though they were familiar with them. Furthermore, the majority of them did not have any idea about plagiarism of secondary sources. This is in line with Marshal and Garry (2006). According to them there is a need to convey to all university students more effectively what is meant by plagiarism and how to avoid it. The increased access to information form the web does not necessarily mean "free for anyone to use".

The second research question examined the answer to the conducted survey with the focus of the most common reasons of plagiarism. The findings are useful for academicians to control, minimize and prevent plagiarism among university students. Delvin and Gray (2007) also believed that to better address plagiarism it is crucial to understand the factors that cause plagiarism. Based on the students answer it was concluded that the most common reasons for plagiarism and academic misconduct is lack of good command in English, writing and comprehension. The results are in line with Palmquist (2013) and Foltynek et al., (2014). Although, writing plays an integral part in higher education the Iranian students lack reading and writing skills in English. Devos and Rosati also (2002) stated that students plagiaries because of laziness, lack of reading comprehension skills or they think nobody will care or be able to recognize plagiarism. It is recommended that higher education students are encouraged to read scientific articles in their own subject area more in English and use the latest knowledge offered in articles (Moore, 2014). Introna, et al., 2003 among many cited cases for plagiarism stated that Asian students have resort to plagiarism more, and McDonnell, K. (2003) believed that the reason of such tendency can be students' interest in quoting from well-known authority. Or grades and results can be the things to receive more values and emphasis (Lahur, 2004).

Policies and procedures of anti- plagiarism were asked in the third research question from MA students. McCabe and Trevino (1993) mentioned that academic misconduct is correlated with instructor attention to the issue. In this study it was found out that faculty members explain plagiarism while teaching though plagiarism is not the main concern of the university. There are no seminars, workshop, pamphlet or any other sorts of technique for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism information or at least the students are not aware of that. Based on Table 2 in many cases the students stated that they had no idea regarding anti-plagiarism issues. The results proved absence of clear educational instruction. According to McDonnell (2004) the concept of plagiarism is embedded in the academic culture and in Iran the process of acculturation should be unfold by university and members of the university in an effective way.

This is against the result of Foltynek et al. (2014) in European countries. They concluded that "the majority of European Universities (EU) students and teachers agreed that the students receive training techniques for scholarly academic writing and anti-plagiarism issues during their studies" (p. 23). In Britain also there is a reference tariff developed to standardize penalties for students' plagiarism. According to this tariff (AMBER project, 2010) penalty points will be applied for cases even less than two sentences! In case of detecting plagiarism the students will receive a formal warning and the assignment is failed (Moore, 2014). For doing plagiarism in thesis the sanction is more severe.

References

AMBER Project, (2010). Plagiarism reference tariff. Plagirismadvice.org. Retrieved 10 October 2015 from http://www.plagiarismadvice.org/resources/institutionalapproaches/item/tennant-referencetariff.

Delvin, M., & Gray, K. (2007). In their own words: A qualitative study of the reasons Australian university students plagiarize. *Higher Education Research and Development, 26*(2), 181-191.

Devos, D., & Rosati, A. C. (2002). It wasn't me, was it? Plagiarism and the web. Computers and Composition 19 (2002) 191–203.

Foltynek, T., Rybicka, J., Demoliou, C. (2014). Do students think what teachers think about plagiarism? *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 10*(1), 21-30.

Glendinng, I. (2014). Responses to students' plagiarism in higher education across Europe. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 10*(1), 4-20.

Introna, L., Hayes, N., Blair, L., & Wood, E. (2003). Cultural attitudes toward plagiarism: Developing a better understanding of needs of students from diverse backgrounds relating to issues of plagiarism. Lanchester University, UK.

Lahur, A.M. (2004). Plagiarism among Asian students at an Australian university offshore campus: Is it a cultural issue? A pilot study. In Proceedings of the HERDSA Conference

2004, Miri, Sarawack, Malysia, Non-refereed paper. Retrieved July 19 2015 from http://herdsa2004.curtin.edu.my/contributions/NRPapers/A033-jt.pdf.

Loutzenhiser, K., Pita, A., & Reed, J. M. (2006). Revisiting plagiarism in an internet era: How modern technology contributes to the problem and solutions. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning, 3*(8), 55-62.

Mahdavi Zafarghandi, A., Khoshroo, F., & Barkat, B. (2012). An investigation of Iranian EFL masters students' perceptions of plagiarism. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 8*(2), 69-85.

Marshal, S., & Garry, M. (2006) NESB and EBSE students' attitude and perceptions of plagiarism. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 2*(1), 26-37.

McDonnell, K. (2003). Academic Plagiarism rules and ESL learning-mutually exclusive concept. American University, Washington, DC.

McCabe, D. (2005). It takes a village: Academic dishonesty and educational opportunity. *Liberal Education, 91*(3), 26-31.

McCabe, D. (2005). Cheating among college and university students: A North American perspective. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 1* (1), 1-11.

McCabe, D., & Trevino, L. K. (1993). Academic dishonesty: Honor codes and other contextual influences. *Journal of Higher Education, 64*, 522-538.

McCabe, D., Trevino, L. K., & Butterfield, K. D. (2001). Cheating in college: Why students do it and what education can do about it. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Moore, E. (2014).accuracy of referencing and patterns of plagiarism in electronically published thesis. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 10*(1), 42-55.

Palmquist, M. (2013). Cheating and plagiarism and what we can do about it? Retrieved October 17 2015 from http://ricro.colostate.edu/EventArchive/Documents/Mike%20Palmquist.CSU-Cheating_and_Plagiarism_and_what_we_can_do_about_it.pdf

Riasati, M. J., & Rahimi, F. (2013). Why do Iranian postgraduate students plagiarize? *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research*, 14(3), 309-3017.

Schrimsher, R. H., Northurp, L. A. (2011). A survey of Samford university students regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 7*(1), 3-17.

Sousa-Silva, R. (2014). Investigating academic plagiarism: A forensic linguistics approach to plagiarism detection. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 10*(1), 31-41.

Wheeler, G. (2014). Culture of minimal influence: A study of Japanese university students' attitude toward plagiarism. *International Journal for Educational Integrity, 1* (2), 44-59.

IRANIAN TERTIARY LEVEL FIRST-YEAR EFL STUDENTS' AUDITORY PERCEPTION PROBLEMS

Sara Nowrouzi (Corresponding Author)
English Language Department, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya,
saranoroozi@gmail.com

Gholamreza Zareian
Department of English Language and Literature, School of Humanities, Hakim Sabzevari University,
Iran.
g.zareian@hsu.ac.ir

Esmat Noroozi
Department of Mathematics, East Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.
esnoroozi55@yahoo.com

Tam Shu Sim
English Language Department, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya
tamss@um.edu.my

ABSTRACT
THIS STUDY WAS CONDUCTED ON 100 RANDOMLY SELECTED IRANIAN TERTIARY LEVEL
FIRST-YEAR EFL STUDENTS (MORE-AND LESS-SUCCESSFUL) TO IDENTIFY THEIR LISTENING
COMPREHENSION PERCEPTION PROBLEMS. A MIXED METHOD DESIGN WAS USED IN
WHICH THE QUANTITATIVE DATA DERIVED FROM A QUESTIONNAIRE ON AUDITORY
PERCEPTION PROBLEMS WERE ANALYZED BOTH DESCRIPTIVELY (MEANS & STANDARD
DEVIATIONS) AND INFERENTIALLY THROUGH INDEPENDENT T-TESTS. THE QUALITATIVE
DATA COLLECTED BY THINK ALOUD PROTOCOLS AND SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS
WERE ANALYZED INTERPRETIVELY SUPPORTED WITH EXAMPLES. ALTHOUGH THE
QUANTITATIVE RESULTS REVEALED A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO
GROUPS REGARDING THE QUESTIONNAIRE PERCEPTION ITEMS, THE QUALITATIVE
FINDINGS SHOWED THAT BOTH MORE AND LESS SUCCESSFUL GROUPS HAD LISTENING
PERCEPTION PROBLEMS WITH VARYING DEGREES OF SEVERITY. THE FORMER WERE
MOSTLY SUCCESSFUL IN PERCEPTION REGARDING SHORT SENTENCES AND SOMETIMES
MANAGED TO PERCEIVE WORDS CLEARLY IN LONG UTTERANCES, BUT THE LATTER
ALMOST ALWAYS FAILED TO DO SO IRRESPECTIVE OF THE UTTERANCE LENGTH. IT WAS
ALSO FOUND THAT IRANIAN ADULT FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PROBLEMS IN
PERCEPTION ARE NOT LIMITED TO COGNITIVE FACTORS BUT ALSO INFLUENCED BY
METACOGNITIVE, SOCIAL, PEDAGOGICAL, AND AFFECTIVE FACTORS.

KEY WORDS: LISTENING COMPREHENSION, LISTENING STRATEGIES, PERCEPTION PROBLEMS

1. Introduction

Speech perception is a process that involves the employment of cognitive, motor and sensory skills to hear and understand speech (Kuhl, 1994). Such a process is not immediate, but an output of long term operations of forming mental conceptual maps of the speech it hears in its environment, storing them in the brain as blueprint guidelines for speech production, as well as transforming, reducing, elaborating, recovering and using that information to make different types of decisions. It is well known that L2 learners have great difficulty when attempting to learn L2 sounds (Escudero, 2005) and when trying to to segment a continuous acoustic flow into discrete lexical units (Toro, Sinnett, & Soto-Faraco, 2005).

1.2 The Importance of Perception in Listening Process

In almost all L2 classrooms, the purpose is to improve students' high-levels of comprehension based on top-down processing such as the use of real world knowledge (Mayberry, 2006). However, learners' inability in low-level processes such as "sound-to script and word-referent automatization, as well as limited short-term memory capacity" may lead to problems in high level communication (Goh, 2000; Field, 2003, cited in Mayberry, 2006, p. 3). In other words, in Anderson's three-stage model of listening comprehension, success in perceptual processing is a prerequisite to parsing and utilization. Moreover, failure in speech perception may cause failure in speech production that is one of the major goals of second language (L2) learners who want to become fluent speakers and pronounce the sounds of the target language without a foreign accent (Rallo Fabra & Romero, 2012).

1.3 Speech Perception Models

The process of phonology acquisition is explained by some models and four of the most prominent ones are Speech Learning Model (SLM), the Native Language Magnet Model (NLM), the Perceptual Assimilation Model (PAM), the Phonological Interference Model (PIM), and the Second Language Linguistic Perception Model (L2LP). These models are briefly introduced in this section.

1.3.1 Speech Learning Model (SLM)

According to this model (Flege 1987, 1995b), if the given L2 category is very similar to some LI category, the bilingual speaker is hypothesized to fail to notice the difference between the two and will not establish a new phonetic category for the L2 sound. Therefore, the speaker will not produce or perceive the L2 phonetic categories accurately. However, if the L2 sound is sufficiently different, the model predicts that a new phonetic category will be successfully established and that this will result in more native-like perception and production. The SLM has focused mainly on learners who acquired the L2 in a naturalistic setting and have reached their ultimate attainment, but it is still the model most commonly used in research on L2 phonological acquisition within formal instructional settings (Fullana, 2006).

1.3.2 Native language magnet model (NLM)

This theory explains the development of speech perception from infancy to adulthood. Similar to SLM, it suggests that LI system has a major influence on how non-native phonetic categories are perceived. The prototypes formed by native speech experience pull the non-prototypical neighbors closer to them and consequently cause the loss of children's abilities to detect non-native contrasts (Makarova, 2011). However, the model suggests that the sensitivity to the non-native boundaries can be regained with training (Logan, Lively, & Pisoni, 1991).

1.3.3 Perceptual assimilation model (PAM)

According to Marcova (2010), PAM refers to the degree of the difficulty that the L2 learner will experience with non-native contrasts will depend on how well they can discriminate non-native contrasts based on the assimilation of the foreign sounds to native sounds. There are four types of

assimilation: (1) single category assimilation in which L2 sounds are perceived as two variants of the same L1 phoneme (English /r/~/l/ contrast, which, to Japanese speakers, sounds like variants of the same Japanese phoneme /ɽ/ and is the most difficult contrast to discriminate for them), (2) opposing category assimilation when the two contrasting L2 sounds are perceived as corresponding to two L1 sounds (the Hindi /th/~/dh/ contrast that English speakers perceived as corresponding to the English /t/~/d/ distinction), (3) "category-goodness": one of the two L2 segments assimilates more to the L1 sound because it is perceived as a better match than the other sound, Farsi contrast /g/~/G/. While Farsi /g/ is perceived by English speakers as a better exemplar of the English /g/, the sound /G/ is perceived as a less typical English /g/, not as easily discriminated as an opposing-category contrast. (4) "nonassimilated" sounds, which means some contrasts are not perceived in relation to the L1 phonemic system. The perception of the Zulu click consonants by English speakers provides an example of nonassimilated sounds.

1.3.4 Second language linguistic perception model (L2LP)
According to Escudero (2005), statistical distribution is the first stage for children's acquisition of phonetic categories. After these categories are formed, they become more abstract by the child giving them arbitrary labels. As the lexicon is acquired, the categories might become further optimized to deal with the lexical information more efficiently, in the process allowing for additional arbitrary features to be mapped onto them. The phonetic level of representation is seen as 'automatic' and not accessible to consciousness, whereas the lexical level is responsible for semantic and pragmatic interpretation and generates words that can be accessed consciously. In respect to L2 acquisition, the L2LP model posits that the statistical learning mechanism used in LI acquisition remains accessible throughout one's life and can be utilized to 'redraw' the phonetic/phonological boundaries as more L2 input is received. In addition, the lexical information is seen as helping the speakers to adjust the boundaries to conform to the L2 target. The influence of the native language is formalized by proposing that L2 speakers' distribution-based categories become the initial state for L2 learning. However, besides the initial state, the LI and L2 learners are posited to not differ fundamentally in the way they acquire phonology (Makarova, 2011).

Table 1: A summary of speech perception models

Model	Description	Areas of Focus
Speech Learning Model (SLM)	The more similar the sounds, the less likely to establish a new phonetic category for L2 sounds; the less similar the sounds are, the more likely it will be that a new category will be successfully established.	critical role of L1 and predictions about L2 phonological learning stages based on the similarities & differences between L1 & L2 and L2 experience
Native Language Magnet Model (NLM)	The prototypes formed by native speech experience pull the non-prototypical neighbors closer to them and consequently cause the loss of children's abilities to detect non-native contrasts.	
Perceptual Assimilation Model (PAM)	The degree of the difficulty that the L2 learner will experience with non-native contrasts will depend on how well they can discriminate non-native contrasts based on the assimilation of the foreign sounds to native sounds.	
Second language linguistic perception model (L2LP)	Initial state (statistical distribution in the input) → Learning Task (Bridging mismatches between L1 and target optimal perception)→ Development (Category formation and boundary shifts)→ End state (Language activation modes, through language setting variables)	Optimality Theoretic: L1 + universalities + markedness

1.4 A Critical Comparison of Speech Perception Models
A review of these perception models reveals that all of them provide insights into explaining the L2 perceptual processing and that there are some relevant points in each theory that can be considered as

predictors of success or failure in foreign language speech perception. For example, the first three models (SLM, NLM, and PAM) focus on the critical role of L1 and predictions about L2 phonological learning stages based on the similarities and differences between L1 and L2. More specifically, PAM explains about how adult naïve listeners try to discriminate diverse non-native contrasts based on the assimilation of the foreign sounds to native sounds, but it is limited to naïve listeners in naturalistic settings not foreign language contexts. SLM posits that L1 interference poses a problem when there are similarities between the two languages, but new phonetic categories are formed more easily when they are perceived to be different. The problem depends on the "age of onset of L2 learning" and learners' experience in L2 (Flege, Bohn, & Jang, 1997 cited in Fullana, 2006, p 324). Nevertheless, SLM focuses "mainly on learners who acquired the L2 in a naturalistic setting and have reached their ultimate attainment" (Kissling, 2012, p.3).

Similar to SLM and PAM, NLM considers L1 as an important factor in the development of speech perception. In this model, L1 prototypes act as magnets that pull the different sounds to themselves so that L2 sounds are perceived as exemplars of L1 prototypes. However, L2LP considers the statistical distribution of both L1 or L2 as important factors in ease or difficulty of perception.

1.5 Objectives and Research Questions

The present study researchers try to investigate Iranian tertiary level first-year EFL students' self-perceived auditory perception problems, their perceptual problems during listening, and the ways to overcome these problems. Accordingly, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are Iranian tertiary level first-year EFL students' self-perceived auditory perception problems?
2. What perceptual problems do they experience during listening?
3. How can they overcome these problems?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants and Setting

The participants were 100 Iranian tertiary level first-year EFL students selected through stratified random sampling to ensure the desired representation of relevant subgroups (gender in this study) within the sample as suggested by Gay and Airasian (2003) and Babbie (2007). For eliciting the qualitative data, a sub-sample of eight students representing both genders volunteered to participate in think aloud protocols and semi-structured interviews. All these students were taking Conversation II Course in which both speaking and listening modules were taught. The students' listening scores in Conversation Course I (a prerequisite course that should be passed as an eligibility criterion for taking Conversation Course II) was used to for dividing the students into more and less successful students by using the median split, as recommended by Knüppel and Hermsen (2010) through which students who are above the median are considered as more successful and the ones below it are categorized as less successful ones.

2.2 Instruments

In most perception studies, listeners are examined by pairs of isolated sounds (Rallo Fabra & Rumero, 2012; Tsukada, 2012; Davidson & Shaw, 2012; Archila-Suerte, Zevin, Bunta & Hernandez, 2011; Marcova, 2010; Escudero, 2005) or sets of more than two words (Hung, 2008) for phoneme identification, discrimination, and classification. In some studies, sentences are presented to students to test their phonemic awareness (Mayberry, 2006). In this study, think aloud protocols were used in which running speech was presented and the researcher stopped the audio player after each sentence for the listeners to verbalize what they had perceived, and sometimes they signaled the researcher to stop the player after some phrases too. No certain phoneme was specified and the learners' general perceptual abilities were measured. Moreover, a questionnaire on the listening perception problems and a semi-structured interview were employed to measure the learners' self-perceived perceptual problems, their ideas on the reasons for such problems, their views on how they can overcome these difficulties, and any other information that can add to the depth or our knowledge on perception problems.

2.3 Procedure
After the questionnaire validation through the three stages of self-validation, expert judgment, and pilot testing, it was administered among 100 students to determine their self-perceived problems in listening perception problems. Then, in order to verify the questionnaire results and capture the learners' online and task-based speech processing problems, introspective think aloud protocols during listening and retrospective semi-structured interviews after listening were used, as suggested by Macaro, Graham, and Vanderplank (2007). Semi-Structured interviews were used to ask any necessary follow-up questions relevant to the specific situation.

3. Results
Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16) was used for both descriptive and inferential analyses of the questionnaire data. The results are first presented descriptively through tables to summarize the findings and to display the mean and standard deviations of the frequency of listening perception problems. Then, the inferential analysis of the data through the Independent Samples T-test is also tabulated to show if there are significant differences between the more and less successful students regarding the auditory perception problems.
The perception problems related to the first 10 items in Listening Comprehension Problems Questionnaire (LCPQ) consist of missing words, misperceptions, missing the beginning and the subsequent parts of an utterance, difficulties in concentration, and the problems associated with recognizing all the words particularly in case of long sentences, following the fast speech rate, sound-symbol association, and the real-time recall of the meaning of familiar words.

3.1 Quantitative Analysis of Questionnaire Data on Perception Problems
In this section, the overall summative results pertaining to perception problems (items 1 to 10) in the LCPQ for the two groups (less and more successful students) are first presented through a frequency distribution table. In this way, each group could have a possible mean score between 10 and 50 on 10 perception related questions. Then, all of these 10 items are also analyzed individually to show the within-and-between group mean differences. And finally, the results are inferentially analyzed through independent t-test procedure to show if there is a significant difference between more and less successful students with regard to these problems. Following Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996, cited in LaDuke-Pelster, 2011: 41), the .05 level of statistical significance was used for the inferential statistical analyses since it is the "common level of significance used in educational research".

3.1.1 Descriptive Results
The summative data on listening perception problems in both groups are presented in table 2 below. According to this table, less successful students have more perception problems in comparison with their more successful counterparts. Moreover, it can also be seen that even the more successful group have considerable problems (60%) in perception because of their mean of 30 out of 50 that shows a pretty high frequency.

Table 2: The summative descriptive results for perception problems in both groups

	Listening Success	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perception Problems	Less Successful	37	40.18	2.88
	More Successful	63	29.74	4.63

More specifically, Table 3 shows the frequency of 10 perception problems one by one and since a 5-point Likert scale (1: never, 2: rarely, 3: sometimes, 4: usually, and 5: always) is used to measure the

frequency of such problems, the means below 3 show a low frequency of problems while a mean of 3 and above indicate a high frequency.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of perception problems in less and more successful students

	Listening Success			
	Less Successful Students		More Successful Students	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Per 1: Hearing Sounds but not Clear Words	4.08	.54	3.44	.61
Per 2: Fast Speech Rate	4.21	.53	3.57	.58
Per 3: Missing the Beginning of the Text	4.08	.49	2.68	.77
Per 4: Knowing the Meaning of a Word When Seeing it	3.97	.49	2.85	.75
Per 5: Slow in Recalling the Meaning of Familiar Words	3.67	.62	2.26	.67
Per 6: Mistaking one Word for another	4.13	.53	3.12	.65
Per 7: Too Many Unfamiliar Words or Expressions	4.13	.67	3.01	.60
Per 8: Not Recognizing so many Sound and Words	4.00	.57	2.76	.64
Per 9: Missing the Next Part of the Text while Thinking about the Meaning	4.02	.55	3.39	.61
Per 10: Difficulty in Concentration	3.86	.53	2.61	.77
Total	**4.02**		**2.97**	

As displayed in this table, it can be seen that less successful students have more problems in all 10 perception problems with a mean slightly above 4, whereas the more successful students have a mean just blow 3. Despite the noticeably higher mean for the less successful students and the generally low mean for the more successful students, the latter group also has considerable problems especially in hearing sounds but not clear words, fast speech rate, mistaking one word for another, too many unfamiliar words or expressions, and missing the next part of the text while thinking about the meaning.

3.1.2 Inferential Results
Now in order to show whether the difference between the two groups is significant or not, the independent samples t-test is used and the results are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Differences between less and more successful students in perception problems

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	MD	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Perception Problems	Equal variances assumed	8.04	.006	-12.3	98	.000	-10.4	.85	-12.1	-8.8
	Equal variances			-13.9	97.6	.000	-10.4	.76	-11.9	-8.9

not
assumed

As shown in table 4.3, the results of the comparison of scores for perception problems in two groups with a sig value lower than 0.05 reveal that there is a significant difference between less and more successful students regarding the perception problems in listening.

3.2 Qualitative Analysis of Think Aloud Protocol Data on Perception Problems
In addition to the confirmation of the questionnaire items regarding perception, think aloud protocols revealed some specific details about these problems. In this section, the findings regarding students' perception problems based on their verbalizations during listening tasks are presented. Examples for both more successful and less successful students are also provided and the following coding conventions are used:

TXT: Text
S: Students' Verbalization
P: Prompts (by the researcher)

Examples from more Successful Students
During the think aloud sessions, most of the learners missed some parts, particularly the beginnings of utterances. These perceptual problems, also reported in the questionnaire, were clearly verified and shown in practice when the students were given a listening task and encountered the problems. The following section is about how think aloud protocol sessions provided many examples of specific perceptual problems.
In dealing with most of short sentences such as "let's start with power" and "let's not forget that EVs are cleaner", these students had no problems and revealed their understanding either by using the same words they had heard or through paraphrasing the sentence or even by providing the gist of it. Occasionally, these students understood longer sentences too (Example: "but, as we know, of all these alternative fuel vehicles, the most practical are EVs"). And sometimes, they had no problem in perception but a misinterpretation occurred. In the following example, the word "motor" is perceived correctly but misinterpreted as "engine" (a common mistake by most Iranians who have borrowed the English word "motor" to be used instead of "engine" which is another English word):

TXT: Now today's presentation will show how we see the development of the **motor car**.
S: Development in the field of **car engines**.
However, they had perceptual problems in some short sentences such as the one given below:
TXT: They are in fact zero emissions vehicles.
S: The **fuel** has no **damage**.
P: Which word means "damage"?
S: **Recycles**
As revealed by the example above, the only word that is correctly perceived and paraphrased as "no" is the word "zero". However, the first part of the sentence is missed; the phrase "in fact" is misperceived as "fuel"; and the last two words are wrongly perceived as "damage". It is also found that the last misperception is tentative and changed into "recycles" when asked for confirmation.
More problems appeared as the sentences became longer; that is, when the simple sentences contained more phrases and compound or complex sentences were heard. As to such sentences, different types of perception problems with different degrees of resulting understandings were discovered. First, they missed only one or two words but managed to understand the rest of the sentence. In the following example, the listener has missed the phrase "independent thinkers" but has perceived the other parts of the sentence that are sufficient for reasonable understanding and compensate for the missed parts.

TXT: Some **independent thinkers** have even produced cars that run on vegetable oil.
S: Some (**I don't know who**) have used vegetable oil as fuel.

In another example with more words missed, some more successful students perceived some words but managed to guess the sentence or clause meaning:

TXT: ---and very few **recharging points**, which **limited** their use.

S: It means that it finishes soon.

In this example, the learner has perceived the words "recharging" and "limited" that are enough for understanding that the batteries have some limitations in recharging and finish soon.

Similarly, some words related to the sentence structure are misperceived. For instance, the past tense in the following sentence has been wrongly perceived as future but the rest of the sentence is perceived accurately.

TXT: Sure, **in the past**, EVs had their problems; namely, in their limited driving range.

S: EVs **wil**l also have problems in future, the most important of which is driving range.

The second type of perceptual problems occurs when some words from both independent and dependent clauses are misperceived. In such an instance that in turn causes problems in comprehension, the independent clause is misperceived as "like" and the subject of the dependent clause as "petroleum".

TXT: **It's clear that petrol-driven engines** have no future.

S; **Like petroleum** that has no future.

In the third kind of perceptual problems, nearly all parts are missed and comprehension is almost impossible:

TXT: This forward thinking allows us to advise our clients so they can be first on the market.

S: To explain for the **clients** how the sales will be.

In this example, only the word "client" is perceived and the rest seems to be the result of wild guessing. In another similar example but with more words, the same problem happens but with relatively less wild guessing:

TXT: Now, however, recent developments in EV technology mean they can match conventional petrol engines in terms of **performance and safety**.

S: I think it's about the **performance and applications** of EVs.

Here, of 20 words only one (performance) is perceived correctly and another word (applications) is thought to be perceived and is actually added to the sentence. Similarly, during most of the listening process, the listeners just caught some words or phrases and guessed about the rest of what they heard. As a result, although they were sometimes successful in guessing what was said, they made mistakes most of the time because of missing or misunderstanding the meaning-carrying words or most parts. An example follows:

TXT: Already there are AFVs (for those of you who don't know, that means **Alternative Fuel** Vehicles) on the market.

S: Alternative fuel for car engines -------. He says that they invited the customers to talk about an alternative fuel. That is, they should not use petroleum, petrol or diesel oil for cars.

In this example, the listener has understood the phrase "alternative fuel" only and has wrongly guessed about the main idea of the sentence: the availability of the AFVs on the market. In other words, she has missed the more important words "already" and "on the market". A closer analysis of the verbalization shows that such a wild guessing leads to illogical interpretation (the use of petroleum for car engines) that never happens in L1 listening or even in L2 speaking. Another example of perceiving only one or two words and that led to missing or misperception is provided below.

TXT: As you know, it is our job here at Future Design Technology to predict market trends before they happen.

S: -------, he says "our **marketing** for advanced **technology**", ----- um something like this.

As observed above, the listener has perceived only the words "marketing" and "technology" that have caused a misperception of the independent clause and the missing of the dependent clause.

In general, more successful students' perception problems can be summarized into what is missed or misperceived as presented in table 5. It can also be seen that these students are mostly successful in case of missing or misperceiving words, phrases, clauses, and short sentences. However, when such problems occur in listening to longer and complex sentences, students are mostly confused so that they resort to typically inconclusive wild guessing.

Table 5: Summary of more successful students' perception problems

Type of Perception Problem	Problem Area & Scope	Comprehension Result
Missed	Few words in phrases, clauses, & short sentences	Mostly success
	More words in longer & complex sentences	Mostly confusion
Misperceived	Few words in phrases, clauses, & short sentences	Mostly success
	More words in longer & complex sentences	Mostly confusion

Examples from Less Successful Students

The less successful students had many perception problems during the TAP sessions except for few phrases and short sentences. In the following two examples, a short sentence and a phrase that are highlighted are perceived correctly. In the second sentence, most parts are missed and the word "alternative" is misperceived as "effective".

> TXT: Sure, in the past, EVs had their problems
> S: EVs had many problems in the past.
> TXT: But as we all know, of all these alternative fuel vehicles, the most practical are
> EVs or electrical vehicles.
> S: As we all know, it is mostly effective on EVs.

In other parts of the listening task, these students experienced confusion and frustration. Some examples are provided below:

> TXT: As you know, it is our job here at Future Design Technologies to predict market
> trends before they happen.
> **S**: It's about a job for designing future planning in technology.

As it can be seen through this example, the listener has missed the beginning of the utterance, has perceived some words (job, design, and technology), has misperceived one word ("predict" misperceived as "plan"), and has missed the rest. In other words, after missing the beginning of the sentence, the listener discerns some words (correctly or mistakenly), misses the rest of the input and finally tries to put the words together to make sense albeit mostly nonsensical.

In most cases, less successful students encountered frustration irrespective of the sentence length and asked for replaying the text. First, the researcher encouraged them to listen to the rest of the text in order to use the context and the redundancy to get the main idea, but after no success and repeated requests, she replayed the text for two or three times that led to limited success in only some phrases and even sometimes added to their confusion. Some examples follow:

> TXT: This forward thinking allows us to advise our clients so they can be first on the
> market.
> S: I didn't get anything. Could you play it again?
> P: Please listen to the rest. They may help you understand.
> TXT: Now today's presentation will show how we see the development of the motor
> car.
> S: Now another **development** on **model car**. Model car? **Modern**? **Car models**?

In this example, most parts are missed and the word "motor" is first misperceived both as "model" and "modern" and then self-corrected but with a reverse order and the total result is confusion. In the

following example, the text is replayed and the result is very limited understanding (That part is highlighted.)

> TXT: Now, however, recent developments in EV technology mean they can match conventional petrol engines in terms of performance and safety.
> S: And she says this new technology was very long. I understand it if you play it again. She says this new technology is equal to ------. If you play it again, I will tell you what it is about.
> P: Ok, I play it again for you
> (Played again) TXT: **Recent developments in EV technology.**
> (Played again) TXT: mean they can match conventional petrol engines
> S: match with ------- compensional, that is, more self-confidence.
> P: Shall I play again?
> S: Yes please
> (Played again for the 3rd time) T: they can match conventional petrol engines in terms of performance and safety.
> S: She says with petrol engines; that is, predetermined factors with this technology.
> TXt: And that's why we invited all of you here today.
> S: And we evaluate your knowledge about this.

As a result of missing most parts and misperceiving some others, the listener could not complete a sentence even in Farsi and most of the interpretations were accordingly nonsensical. Numerous similar examples were observed during TAP and some of them are presented below.

1. TXT: Let's start with power. It's clear that petrol-driven engines have no future.
   S: She says first let's ------ (no verb used) with your power on petroleum or petro-chemistry I think. Like to serve it power.
2. TXT: --- powered by anything from propane to solar to natural gas.
   S: The power of protein and the guess that you make.
3. TXT: In fact, as long as the 1930s, vehicles were running on natural gas.
   S: Now, with your power about this date in 1930s, about a natural thing and a guest or guess or a natural guess.
   P: So far, what was this talk about?
   S: About people's knowledge about something they can do.
4. TXT: Some independent thinkers have even produced cars that run on vegetable oil.
   S: She says it seems their work is independent.
5. TXT: Namely a limited driving range
   S: Now it is directed towards ----- Now driving, it means that it is enforced.
6. TXT: Let's not forget that EVs are cleaner.
   S: Let's start with EVs
7. TXT: They are in fact zero emission vehicles
   S: And they are under the level of -------.
   P: Which word is "under the level of"?
   S: Zero.
8. TXT: Plus importantly, the power source is rechargeable.
S: And their power for getting recharged.

A considerable number of sentences were completely missed. Related examples are also provided:

1. TXT: Already there are AFVs (for those of you who don't know, that means Alternative Fuel Vehicles) on the market.
   S: Are you ready in few ---? I don't know what.
   P: didn't you get any word?
   S: Well, no.

To sum up, less successful students' perceptual problems can be also classified into missed and misperceived parts (table 6). However, in comparison with their more successful counterparts, these students encountered rare success in short sentences and complete confusion as well as frustration in long ones.

Table 6: Summary of less successful students' perception problems

Type of Perception Problem	Problem Area & Scope	Comprehension Result
Missed	Few words in phrases, clauses, & short sentences	Mostly confusion
	More words in longer & complex sentences	Confusion & frustration
Misperceived	Few words in phrases, clauses, & short sentences	Mostly confusion
	More words in longer & complex sentences	Confusion & frustration

3.3 Qualitative Analysis of Semi-Structured Interviews on Perception Problems

Immediately after the introspective think aloud protocols, the same students were interviewed retrospectively to elicit more detailed information about their listening problems. As a result, some more listening problems in addition to those found in the questionnaire and think aloud protocols were identified.

Examples from More Successful Students

During the interview, more successful students reported some perception problems such as sound symbol association, the interference of mother tongue phonological features, lack of practice in listening, exposure to non-native teachers' accents, inappropriate teaching of sounds, affective problems such as embarrassment and low self-confidence. With regard to sound symbol association, one student said:

> "While I am watching movie I sometimes know some of the words but do not understand when I hear them. However if I see them through the caption they become easy for me".

A perception problem reported by more successful students during the semi-structured interview was the interference of mother tongue phonological features to which most Iranian students are accustomed specially when their teachers are non-native speakers and have the same problems in producing them. For example one student stated:

> "Although I am familiar with the British and American accents, I have problems in understanding the native speakers since listening is not practiced as much as grammar, vocabulary, the use of a dictionary, and reading".

Consequently, when they listen to native speakers in original materials, they encounter unexpected sounds. Some other students claimed that they could be better listeners if they had access to videos. Such students have better visual abilities that can improve their listening performance. One student said:

> "I prefer video to audio listening practice because the setting helps me understand better specially the ones with captions that help me see the right word without being doubtful about what I hear".

Sound-symbol association is another problem that can be solved by presenting films with captions as mentioned by the same student:

> "I sometimes know some of the words but do not understand them when I hear them but when I see them, they become easy for me".

And when asked about the types of captions and whether they should be in L1 or in L2, she believed that L2 captions are better but sometimes Persian ones help overcome the perception problem through seeing the word or phrase and remembering the equivalents.

According to Walters (2010), some students have unique visual abilities that can facilitate their listening ability or even compensate their auditory deficits. Such visual-perceptive abilities often remain hidden, neglected, and underutilized in educational pedagogies.

Similarly, a frequently stated problem experienced by Iranian students is their lack of practice in listening and one mode of such practice is watching movies. Some studies (Tsai, 2010) provide convincing evidence on the usefulness of video materials (specially with subtitles) in listening comprehension. In addition to visual listening, students may need other modes of practice because of their different learning styles or perceptual preferences, mainly aural, reading/writing or kinesthetic (Leite, Svinicki, & Shi, 2010). Such practice should not be in the form of mere "exposure to natural L2 speech" but under the supervision of the teacher who highlights the problematic areas and makes the students aware of the L1 and L2 contrasts as well as the "crucial cues to discriminate the L2 sounds" (Grenon, 2010). The reason is that students distinguish the L2 contrasts better and have better perceptual ability if sufficient information is provided regarding the "phonetic and phonotactic contexts in which the same non-native distinction occurs" (Polka, 1992).

When asked for more detailed explanation during the interview, they stated that pronunciation was not as important as grammar, vocabulary, and reading in their curriculum. Sound instruction was limited to those in isolation not as what produced by native speakers in stream of speech. One student stated:

"The only type of sound practice in our classes is the presentation of some word lists (minimal pair drills) and our repetition".

These students believed that such a perceptual problem could be avoided if they were familiar with the sounds. A recent study (Counselman, 2010) also emphasizes on the importance of sound perception instruction to direct students' attention to key aspects of the L2 speech sounds.

More affective problems, in addition to those revealed through the TAP sessions were found in the interviews. One student said she usually feels embarrassed as a result of not understanding native speakers particularly in presence of others who are watching a movie and ask her about what they hear. Consequently, this leads to her loss of self-confidence which is an important factor in listening comprehension (Vandergrift et al., 2006).

To summarize, as shown in table 6, more successful students also reported linguistic, pedagogical, and affective problems that could cause or worsen the perceptual difficulties.

Table 6: Some perception-related problems revealed through semi-structured interviews by MSS

1	Mother tongue interference
2	Exposure to non-native teachers' accents
3	Sound symbol association
4	Lack of practice in listening and insufficient visual exposure
5	Inappropriate teaching of sounds
6	Affective Problems (Embarrassment and low self-confidence)

Examples from Less Successful Students

Less successful students reported some problems as the difficulty in concentration especially at the beginning of the text, pronunciation and sound symbol association, and affective problems. One of the important problems mentioned by less successful students was the difficulty in concentration especially at the beginning of the text. For example, one student commented:

"The speaker talks too fast and although I try to focus on what I hear, I don't know why I become distracted; therefore, I have to listen to it two or three times".

Although this student states that more listening time may solve her perception problem, the results during the TAP sessions were not promising even after several times of listening to the same phrase or sentence. Almost always, the listeners became more confused with more misperceptions and misinterpretations.

Another problem that may be related to the first one and also mentioned by more successful students was related to pronunciation and sound symbol association. Another student noted:

"My problems in listening are more related to pronunciation rather than words that most of them are easy when I see them".

Similar to their more successful counterparts, these students also encountered affective problems and reported embarrassment as well as low self-confidence. However, a surprising finding during the

interview that was conducted immediately after the TAP sessions was the lack of error perception in some students. Although they experienced many confusions and frustrations during the concurrent verbalization tasks, they were generally satisfied with their listening as if they were not aware of their problems or as a strategy to avoid public embarrassment. This phenomenon did not happen for more successful students.

Table 6: Some perception-related problems revealed through semi-structured interviews by LSS

1	difficulty in concentration especially at the beginning of the text
2	pronunciation and sound symbol association
3	lack of error perception in some students
4	Affective Problems (Embarrassment and low self-confidence)

4. Discussion

The results of this study reveal that although less successful students had significantly more problems in perception in comparison with their more successful counterparts, the latter had noticeable perceptual difficulties too. More specifically, unlike the less successful students who missed or misperceived most of the utterances irrespective of their length, more successful students perceived most phrases, clauses, and short sentences correctly but had problems in long and complex sentences containing different ideas. As a result of such perceptual problems with long and complex sentences, these students caught few words, either correctly or incorrectly, and then tried to guess the rest of the input that was missed. They were sometimes successful but most of the time made mistakes because of missing or misperceiving the meaning carrying words or most parts. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate this difference between the two groups.
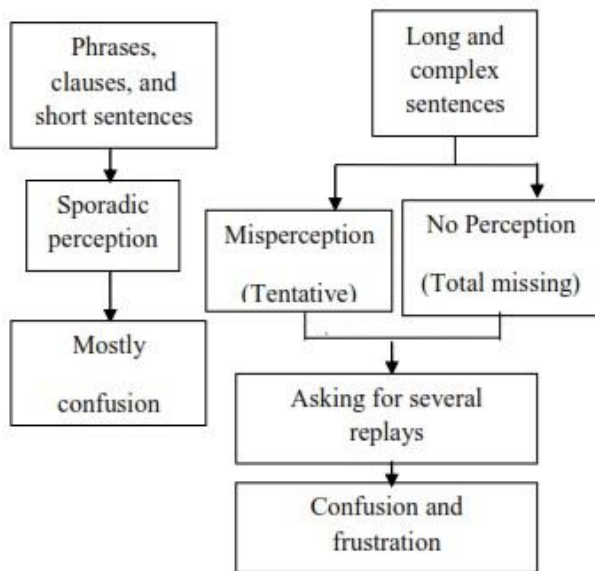
Figure 1: The general pattern of LSS perception problems revealed through TAP
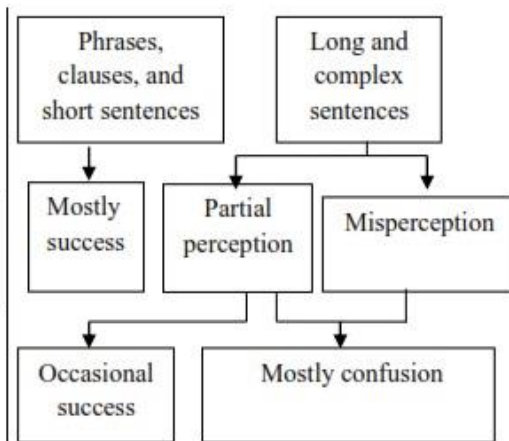
Figure 2: The general pattern of perception problems for MSS

More specifically, in contrast with more successful students who experienced few problems in dealing with phrases and short sentences, less successful ones had frequent tentative misperceptions that led to more confusion and ultimate frustrations. Moreover, an important difference between the

two groups was that more successful students did not ask for replaying the text but the less successful ones insisted on re-listening that proved useless in almost all cases even after several repetitions.

In addition to all these cognitive difficulties, this study revealed that there are some metacognitive, social, pedagogical, and affective problems that cause or deteriorate the cognitive perceptual problems. Figure 3 displays this phenomenon as vicious circle of cognitive and affective problems. Confusion or frustration as a result of perception problems lead to a number of affective problems such as embarrassment and low self-confidence. These negative feelings bring about cognitive distractions leading to loss of listening motivation and nervousness that in turn cause more confusion and frustration.
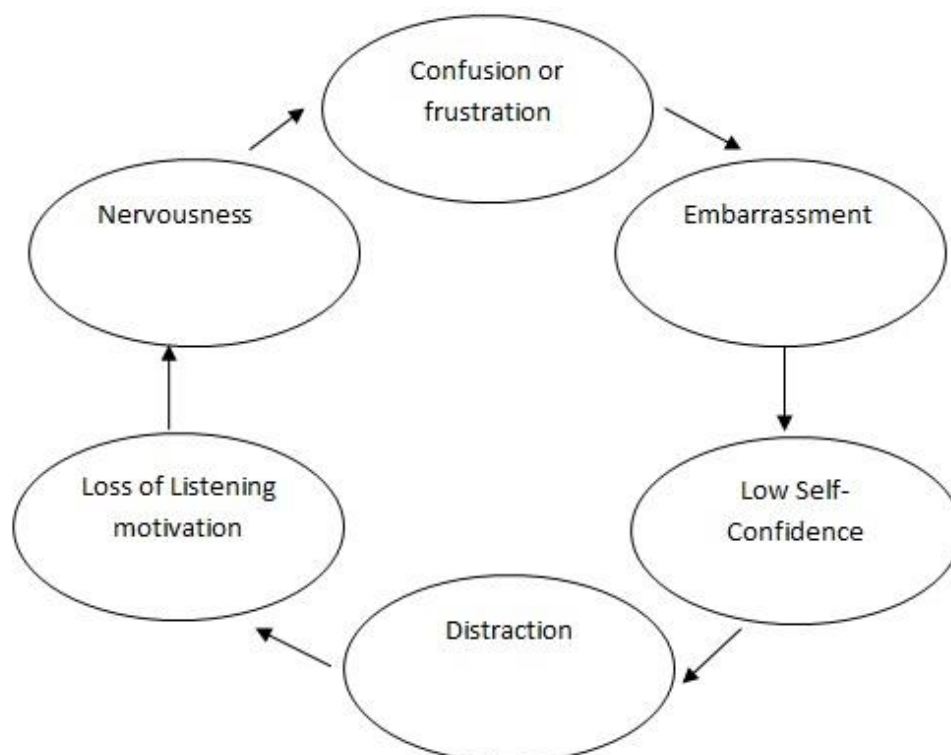
Figure 3: A vicious circle of listening and affective problems for both MSS and LSS

The results of this study conducted in a foreign language setting, support some of the findings in different speech perception models even though such theories are based on experiments on either naïve or experienced listeners in naturalistic settings. For example, Speech Learning Model (SLM) focuses "mainly on learners who acquired the L2 in a naturalistic setting and have reached their ultimate attainment" (Kissling, 2012, p.3). This study similarly revealed the importance of time in speech learning (the age of starting learning English), and learners' experience in L2 (Flege, Bohn, & Jang, 1997 cited in Fullana, 2006, p 324). The findings also confirm all four PAM predictions that are based on experiments on naïve listeners in naturalistic settings. As to NLM, the results concur with its predictions that non-native sounds are difficult to perceive because of insufficient acoustic experience in L2 sounds. The importance of the statistical distribution of the input in Second Language Linguistic Perception Model (L2LP) is also confirmed in this study. In fact, all those four perception models emphasize the importance of social factor related the learners' experience or the statistical distribution of language. In addition to this common feature in all these models, the present study revealed affective, pedagogical, and personal (metacognitive) aspects that have a bearing on the mainly cognitive process of perception.

Therefore, based on the results of the present study and the insights from the existing speech perception models, it can be claimed that cognitive, metacognitive, social, pedagogical, and affective

factors are involved in speech perception. The cognitive transition from L1 to L2 is the core element that is influenced by metacognitive, social, pedagogical, and affective factors.
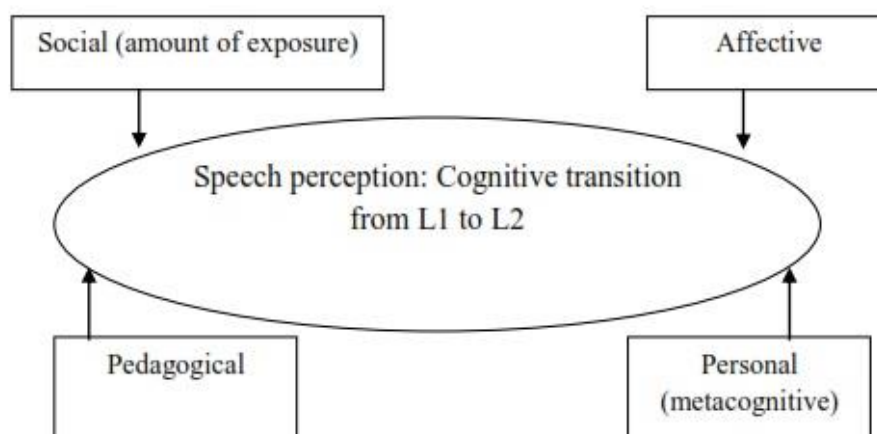

Figure 4: The cognitive process of perception influenced by social, affective, pedagogical, and metacognitive factors in a foreign language context

Accordingly, this study reveals that affective and pedagogical problems as well as lack of strategic knowledge (here metacognitive) should be added to the existing listening comprehension problem questionnaires if all problems (not only cognitive ones) are to be investigated. This is in part concurrent with Bachman and Palmer's (1996) claim that lack of strategic knowledge is also a listening problem.

5. Conclusion
To recapitulate, both more and less successful groups have listening perception problems with varying degrees of severity. The former were mostly successful in perception regarding short sentences and sometimes managed to perceive words clearly in long utterances, but the latter almost always failed to do so irrespective of the utterance length. It was also found that adult foreign language learners' problems in perception are not limited to cognitive factors but also influenced by metacognitive, social, pedagogical, and affective factors.

References
Counselman, D. (2010). *Improving pronunciation instruction in the second language classroom.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved on May 5, 2010 from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 3436059)
Davidson, L., & Shaw, J. A. (2012). Sources of illusion in consonant cluster perception. *Journal of Phonetics, 40*(2), 234-248. doi: 10.1016/j.wocn.2011.11.005
Escudero, P. (2005) *Linguistic perception and second language acquisition. Explaining the attainment of optimal phonological categorization*. Utrecht: Utrecht Institute of Linguistics (LOT Dissertation Series, 113).
Gilbert, J. (1995). Pronunciation practices as an aid to listening comprehension. In D. J. Mendelson and J. Rubin (Eds.), *A guide for the teaching of Second Language Learning* (pp. 97-111). San Diego: Dominic Press.
Goldinger, S. D., & Azuma, T. (2003). Puzzle-solving science: The quixotic quest for units in speech perception. *Journal of Phonetics, 31*(3-4), 305-320.

Grenon, I. (2006). *Adults still have direct access to UG: Evidence from the perception of a non-native feature contrast.*

Grenon, I. (2010). The bi-level input processing model of first and second language perception. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved on May 5, 2010 from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. NR74106)

Kuhl, P. K. (1994). Learning and representation in speech and language. *Current opinion in neurobiology, 4*(6), 812-822.

Leikin, M., Ibrahim, R., Eviatar, Z., & Sapir, S. (2009). Listening with an accent: speech perception in a second language by late bilinguals. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, *38*(5), 447-457. Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19259819

Leite, W. L., Svinicki, M., & Shi, Y. (2010). Attempted Validation of the Scores of the VARK: Learning Styles Inventory With Multitrait–Multimethod Confirmatory Factor Analysis Models. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 70*(2), 323.

Makarova, A. O. (2011). *Acquisition of three vowel contrasts by Russian speakers of American English.* Harvard University.

Polka, L. (1992). Characterizing the influence of native language experience on adult speech perception. *Attention, Perception, & Psychophysics, 52*(1), 37-52.

Pruitt, J. S., Jenkins, J. J., & Strange, W. (2006). Training the perception of Hindi dental and retroflex stops by native speakers of American English and Japanese.*The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *119*(3), 1684-1696.

Rallo Fabra, L., & Romero, J. (2012). Native Catalan learners' perception and production of English vowels. *Journal of Phonetics, 40*(3), 491-508. doi: 10.1016/j.wocn.2012.01.001

Toro, J. M., Sinnett, S., & Soto-Faraco, S. (2005). Speech segmentation by statistical learning depends on attention. *Cognition, 97*(2), B25-B34.

Tsai, F. H. (2010). Integrating Feature Films with Subtitles to Enhance the Listening Comprehension of Students Attending College in Taiwan. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved on March 12, 2010 from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No.3407273)

IMPACT OF LEARNING TASKS ON RETENTION OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE IN PERSIAN EFL LEARNERS

Fariba Rahimi Esfahani
Department of English, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, shahrekord, Iran.
Rahimi_Fariba@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

ONE OF THE DIMENSIONS BY WHICH L 2 LEARNERS' LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED IS THE RECEPTIVE VS. PRODUCTIVE DISTINCTION . THIS PAPER INVESTIGATED DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE TASKS ON RETENTION OF VOCABULARY . TO ACHIEVE THIS END, A QUICK OXFORD PLACEMENT TEST (OPT) WAS ADMINISTERED TO THE JUNIOR STUDENTS POPULATION STUDYING ENGLISH TEACHING AT ESFAHAN UNIVERSITY . BASED ON THEIR OPT SCORES, THREE INTERMEDIATE CLASSES WERE RANDOMLY GROUPED AS RECEPTIVE, PRODUCTIVE, AND CONTROL GROUPS. FIFTEEN TARGET WORDS WERE EXPLICITLY TAUGHT AND PRACTICED WITH RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE TASKS. THE GROUPS WERE TESTED ON RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE TESTS BEFORE, IMMEDIATELY AFTER, AND FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE APPLICATION OF WORDS. THE RESULTS WITHIN GROUPS REVEALED THAT ALL GROUPS SHOWED A STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THEIR SCORES BOTH IN RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE PARTS FROM PRE TEST TO POST TESTS. WITH REGARD TO RECEPTIVE TESTS, NO SIGNIFICANT DECREASE WAS OBSERVED IN TASK GROUPS FROM IMMEDIATE TO DELAYED POST TEST. IN THE PRODUCTIVE TESTS, ON THE OTHER HAND, ALTHOUGH RECEPTIVE TASK GROUP WAS ABLE TO RETAIN ITS GAINS FROM IMMEDIATE TO DELAYED POST TEST, THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN THE OTHER GROUPS OVER TIME. THE PRESENT STUDY ALSO EXAMINED THE RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN GROUPS TO FIND OUT WHETHER THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN STUDENTS' RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE VOCABULARY GAINS AMONG THE GROUPS. BOTH IN THE RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE TESTS, THE GROUPS RECEIVING TASKS SIGNIFICANTLY OUTPERFORMED THE CONTROL GROUP. HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GROUPS WHICH RECEIVED DIFFERENT TASKS, WHICH MAY SHOW THAT NONE OF THE TASKS (RECEPTIVE, PRODUCTIVE) WAS BETTER THAN THE OTHER TO INCREASE RECEPTIVE OR PRODUCTIVE VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE.

KEYWORDS: RECEPTIVE LEARNING, PRODUCTIVE LEARNING, EFL (ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

1. *Introduction*

Vocabulary is central to English language teaching and learning because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their own ideas. In most of the educational settings, it has been customized that language learners find it the easiest to learn new words by referring to their equivalent meaning in their own language, or resorting to antonyms or synonyms. Read (2004) states that these procedures are either time-consuming, or are considered as abstract ways of learning words, resulting in the non-durability of words. He notes that in EFL contexts, it

would be effective for teachers to provide students with target vocabulary items through tasks and ask them to read only the texts that include the target words. Nation and Meara (2010) define English vocabulary as complex, possessing three main aspects which are concerned with meaning, form and use. It has also layers of meaning which are related to the stems or roots of individual words.

In a study on L2 vocabulary retention, Hulstijn (1992) concluded that using inferencing strategy to gain word meaning was much more effective than explaining it through synonyms. He noted that inferring the meaning of target vocabulary items had longer retention than when explained by their synonyms. Joe's (1995) viewpoint on the retention of unfamiliar words is notable, too. He claims that unfamiliar words are retained longer periods of time as learned through task-based activities, requiring higher level of generativity. On the importance of production-based task on vocabulary retention, Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) assert that production task promote target words retention longer and better than reading comprehension or fill-in-the-blank task which is a sample of recognition task. This finding reveals that the learners who are engaged in production tasks of vocabulary learning are able to remember target words better than those who are involved in vocabulary recognition.

According to Henriksen (1999), the construct of lexical competence should consist of three dimensions: a "partial-precise knowledge" dimension in which levels of knowledge equal to different levels of word comprehension, a "depth of knowledge" dimension which also covers knowledge components identified in the vocabulary depth dimension discussed above (e.g., Qian, 1999; Qian & Schedl, 2004), and a "receptive-productive" dimension which concerns how well a learner can access and use a word. According to Henriksen (1999), when learners cannot use a word correctly or cannot access it freely for production it does not mean that they do not "know" the word; but they have not yet achieved adequate control over word access. The receptive and productive dimension of lexical knowledge is "a bridging dimension between lexical competence and performance" (Zareva et al., 2005:570).

Therefore, With regard to the acquisition of L2 vocabulary knowledge and its use, on the other hand, we also need to distinguish between receptive (passive) and productive (active) vocabulary knowledge, since these types of lexical knowledge – receptive vs. productive - require different amounts of learning time, different effects on vocabulary acquisition, and different learning methods (Laufer & Paribakht, 1998; Nation, 2001; Mondria & Wiersma, 2004; Webb, 2005).

Up to now, many scholars have made definitions from different perspectives for receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge. "Receptive knowledge" is defined as "being able to understand a word" (Schmitt; 2000); and it includes words which can be understood or recognized as individuals can assign their meanings while listening or reading (sometimes imperfectly) and which are also less well-known and less frequent in use and not used spontaneously (Hiebert & Kamil, 2005); it is the ability to perceive the form of the word and to retrieve its meaning(s) (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004); it entails going from the form of a word to its meaning (Nation; 2001); it is the knowledge of the meaning of an L2 word; prototypically, being able to translate a word from L2 to L1 (Mondria & Wiersma, 2004); and it refers to the ability of the learners to understand a word's meaning (Read; 2000 cited in *Uygun,2009*).

In regard to productive vocabulary knowledge, it includes the production of a word of "one's own accord" (Schmitt; 2000:4); it refers to words that can be written or spoken frequently without hesitation as they are well-known and familiar (Hiebert & Kamil; 2005); it requires retrieving the appropriate spoken or written word form of the meaning to be expressed (Laufer & Goldstein; 2004); it includes being able to express a concept by means of an L2 word; prototypically, being able to translate a word from L1 to L2 (Mondria & Wiersma, 2004), and it also refers to eliciting the target word from one's memory with some stimulus (Read, 2000).

2. Review of the related Literature

Various researches conducted on word pairs comparing receptive and productive learning and contradictory results have been obtained. In one study, Griffin and Harley (1996) used four groups of higher and lower ability ESL learners study 20 word pairs productively and another four groups study the word pairs receptively for eight minutes. They found that there was little difference between the combined mean scores on both measures for receptive and productive learning , and suggest that they are equally effective tasks. The results also showed that gains in knowledge were highest if the learning task matched the testing type.

In another experiment, Schneider et al. (2002) wanted to find out whether greater difficulty while learning the target words would bring superior retention and transfer of the learned material or not. The results indicated that both in learning and relearning trials receptive learning was more successful than productive learning: the receptive retentions test results were higher than productive ones. It was also revealed that while receptive learning led to certain amount of productive knowledge, productive learning led to a considerable amount of receptive knowledge. Besides these, words learned receptively decayed faster than the ones learned productively, which implies the words learned under more difficult ways, are less probable to be forgotten.

Mondria and Wiersma (2004) conducted a small scale research among 90 Dutch foreign language teachers to investigate whether the idea that the combination of receptive and productive learning leads to better receptive knowledge than receptive learning alone. At the end, receptive retention proved to be significantly higher than the productive retention. Receptive learning followed by receptive testing led to a significantly higher retention than productive learning followed by productive testing confirming that productive learning is more difficult.

The studies conducted by Barcroft (2004, 2006) show negative effects of production on L2 lexical acquisition. To find the effects of sentence writing on L2 lexical acquisition, Barcroft (2004) carried out two experiments focusing on 24 Spanish nouns. The results indicated that writing new words in sentences strongly negatively effects L2 lexical acquisition. The second experiment, conducted to examine whether the effects observed were due to differences in presentation order, again revealed a negative effect of writing new words in sentences on L2 lexical acquisition.

Choi (2007) gave receptive and productive tasks to ESL and EFL learners to find out whether these two task types contribute to productive and receptive unknown and partially known vocabulary knowledge differently. The results of the study indicated that receptive tasks had more facilitative effects on vocabulary gains than productive tasks for both unknown and partially known words, except immediate receptive posttest of the partially known words on which the writing task revealed higher scores than the reading task with a significant improvement in receptive immediate and delayed test scores, which suggests that writing task is possibly beneficial for the partially known words.

Uygun (2009) investigated the effects of receptive and/or productive tasks on vocabulary gains. The results of the total retention test which included 16 target words together and which was applied 6 weeks after the applications of the word sets revealed that there was no significant difference in receptive and productive tests between the task groups. However, all groups receiving tasks were significantly different from the control group as they had significantly better scores than the control group. Following the result, He concluded that the type of task (receptive and/or productive) was not found to have divergent effects on vocabulary retention.

In their study, Hashemi and Kassaian (2011) examined the effects of three different tasks on the acquisition of new EFL vocabulary items. The results of the MANOVA showed that the Negotiated Interaction group significantly outperformed the other two groups in acquiring receptive and productive vocabulary and their vocabulary knowledge was held up over time. It was also found that the Productive group attained a higher level of vocabulary than the Receptive group. Moreover, the findings showed that all treatment groups gained a higher level of receptive vocabulary than productive. They also concluded that the students' interaction and their productive use of vocabulary items were likely to result in the better acquiring of receptive and productive vocabulary.

Yamamoto (2011) investigated the extent to which extensive reading combined with writing tasks promotes productive vocabulary growth of Japanese university students. Contrary to expectations, no significant increase was shown in the amount of productive vocabulary size. However, the data suggested that one of the benefits of doing extensive reading with writing tasks is to retain receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge.

Hashemzadeh (2012) conducted a study on the effect of exercise type on EFL learners' vocabulary retention targeting at elementary EFL learners' vocabulary retention. The results showed that recognition exercises were more effective than production exercises in EFL vocabulary retention.

Vosoughi and Mehdipour (2013) carried out and presented a study on the Effects of Recognition Task and Production Task on Incidental Vocabulary Learning of Iranian EFL Learners. The findings

of the study indicated that both treatments (production and recognition tasks) had significant effect on incidental vocabulary learning but this effect was greater in production group.

Touti's (2013) research was an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of two types of tasks (fill-in-the-blank and writing) on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' vocabulary learning. The findings were in favor of the writing group, due to the laudably magnificent cognitive demand induced by such a task.

Although in some previous studies, receptive and productive tests have been administered to measure receptive and productive gains, only few of them focused on the effect of each of receptive and productive tasks on both receptive and productive vocabulary gains. Within these few related studies, the results about the effects of tasks on lexical gains are quite conflicting. While productive tasks are much more beneficial for lexical gains for some, the other studies prove that productive tasks hinder lexical gains, and they highly recommend receptive tasks because of the negative effects of production at initial stages of learning.

3. Research Questions

To investigate the impact of lexical learning tasks (productive vs. receptive,) the following research questions were put forward. The groups were named as "receptive task group", "productive task group", and "control group" according to the tasks they received.

1. Do groups receiving receptive and productive tasks respectively and the control group differ within themselves in terms of receptive and productive vocabulary gains of the students?

2. Are there any significant differences in the students' receptive vocabulary gains among the groups from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post test?

3. Are there any significant differences in the students' productive vocabulary gains among the groups from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post test?

4. Do the groups differ in receptive and productive vocabulary gains when the delayed post test(retention test) is applied four weeks after dealing with the words?

4. Methodology
4.1 Participants

The participants in this experiment were eighty Iranian EFL learners, 37 males and 43 females (approximately 20 to 25 years old) at Esfahan University. The participants were intermediate level students as determined by the Quick Placement Test. Subjects whose scores ranged from 30 to 47 were regarded as intermediate group. The subjects were in three intact groups which were assigned randomly to a control group and two experimental groups: receptive task group, productive task group.

All the groups received explicit vocabulary teaching. After the teaching part, receptive task group received receptive tasks, productive task group received productive tasks, and control group did not receive any of them. The treatment in all groups was carried out by the researcher.

4.2 Material

A quick OPT was used in this study to determine the level of proficiency of potential subjects. 15 target words (9 nouns and 6 verbs) were chosen from Nation's BNC list at 10th level of frequency. The number of target words was determined during pilot studies. The target words consisted of 8 nouns and 7 verbs because nouns and verbs are the most common parts of speech found in natural texts (Webb, 2005). Moreover, To measure the effects of different tasks on vocabulary knowledge ,each group was given the same test as pre-test, immediate post-test, and four-week delayed post-test . All the tests were same except for the order of the items so as to prevent the test gain effects.

4.3. Design and Procedure

A quasi-experimental pre-post test design was carried out with randomly assigned treatment and control groups. The subjects were in three intact groups which were assigned randomly to a control group and two experimental groups: receptive task group and productive task group. All the groups received explicit vocabulary teaching. After the teaching part, receptive task group received receptive tasks, productive task group received productive tasks, , and control group did not receive any of them. Receptive tasks consisted of three different activities. The first one was a matching activity. The target words were matched with their definitions. The second receptive task was a multiple-choice task consisted of 17 sentences to be completed with the target words choosing one of the options below each sentence. The final part was designed as an odd one out task. Productive tasks, just like receptive ones, consisted of three various activities. The first task was a 'finding the word' task. The students were given the L2 definitions and were supposed to provide the correct target word for each definition. The second productive task was a fill in the blank task. Students were required to fill in the blanks in 17 sentences with the target words from memory. The third part of the productive tasks included reconstruction of the target words. To measure the effects of different tasks on vocabulary gains, each group was given the same test as pre-test, immediate post-test, and four-week delayed post-test . All the tests were same except for the order of the items so as to prevent the test gain effects. The results of the groups were compared to determine how different learning tasks contributed to students' vocabulary retention .

5. Results

To determine whether there were any overall differences among the treatment groups and the control group, the following steps were done:

1. All groups, within themselves, were investigated to learn their gains from the tasks they received by using one way ANOVA for repeated measures. Students' test scores from pre-test to immediate post-test, from immediate post-test to delayed post-test, from pre-test to delayed post-test were compared.

2. Two way ANOVA for mixed measures were conducted to examine students' receptive and productive vocabulary gains between groups from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post test.

5.1 Within Group Differences in terms of Vocabulary Gains

In this part, receptive and productive vocabulary gains of the students in each group were scrutinized within themselves to see what differences came out in each group from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post test. In order to find out whether there was a significant difference in general among the test intervals applied to each group, one way ANOVA for repeated measures was used. Following that, pairwise comparisons were administered to determine from which test intervals this difference appeared.

Tables 6.1 illustrates the results of one way ANOVA for repeated measures and pairwise comparisons on the differences of receptive and productive parts' scores on the tests applied to all groups at three different intervals The results will be analyzed considering the research questions.

Table 5.1 Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Groups, One way ANOVA Results and Pairwise Comparisons

Groups	Part of Tests	Pre-test	Immediate Post-test	Delayed post-test	ANOVA for Repeated Measures	Pairwise Comparisons		
						Pretest-Immediate Post-	Pretest-Delayed	Immediate Posttest Delayed

		mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	f	p	test p	posttest p	posttest p
receptive	receptive	0.45	0.72	18.87	1.34	18.74	3.45	239.23	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.885
(n=31)	productive	0.00	0.45	16.00	1.56	15.50	4.36	134,33	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.885
productive	receptive	0.56	0.00	18.95	1.83	18.48	2.54	245,67	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.937
(n=29)	productive	0.00	0.62	17.50	1.07	16.45	2.67	244.78	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*
control	receptive	0.55	0.69	14.50	2.23	13.69	5.66	65.985	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.003
(n=31)	productive	0.45	0.79	12.00	0.78	8.67	3.77	32,345	0.00*	0.00*	0.00*	0.036

5.1.1 . Vocabulary Gains within the Receptive Task Group

In order to answer whether there were any significant differences in the students' receptive and productive vocabulary gains within 'the receptive task group' from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post-test, the group's scores in the tests were investigated.

As seen in Table 5.1, the group's mean scores in the receptive parts of pre test, immediate and delayed post tests were respectively 0.45, 18.87, 18.74. The results revealed that the group increased its scores after the treatments. Receptive test score differences of the receptive task group was found to be significant (Table 5.1) [(F(2-62)=239.23 p=0,000*) which means the scores of the receptive task group changed significantly depending on the tests applied at different intervals. As seen in Table 5.1, when the receptive part scores of the receptive task group were compared, their post test scores (both immediate and delayed) were significantly different and better than their pre-test scores (p=0.000*).

Although the group's mean scores decreased slightly in the delayed post-tests for both word groups, no significant differences between immediate and delayed post-tests were revealed (p=0,885).The same analyses were performed on the productive parts of the tests to explore whether there were differences in the scores of receptive task group's productive tests obtained at different intervals. As illustrated in Table 5.1, students' mean scores in the productive part in the same order were 0.00, 16.00, 15.50 . The mean scores of the group revealed to have increased after the treatments.

As summarized in Table 5.1, the results of the receptive task group in productive tests applied at different intervals (as pre-test, immediate and delayed post tests) indicate a significant difference [(F(2- 62)=134.,33 p=0,000*). In other words, the scores of the receptive task group differed significantly according to the tests applied at different intervals. Similar to the results gained in the receptive parts of the tests, the immediate and delayed post-test scores of the receptive task group were significantly different and better than their pre-test scores for (p=0,000). There is also a slight decline from the immediate post-tests to the delayed post-test, but the differences were not statistically significant (p=0,885).

5.1.2 Vocabulary Gains within the Productive Task Group

To see whether there were any significant differences in the students' receptive and productive vocabulary gains within 'the productive task group' from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post-test, the group's scores were investigated.

As seen in Table 5.1, the productive task group's mean scores in the receptive parts of the pre test, immediate and delayed post tests were 0.56, 18.95, 18.48. It can be said that the scores of the productive task group increased after the treatments. The results for the productive task group in the receptive parts of the tests with both word sets revealed a significant difference in the tests conducted at three different intervals [(F(2-64)=245,67 p=0,000*) . That is, the scores of the productive task group varied with regard to the intervals of the tests. As illustrated in Table 5.1, the comparison of the receptive test scores for the productive task group revealed that their immediate and delayed post-test scores were significantly different and better than their pre-test scores (p=0.000). Despite the slight decrease in the group's mean scores in the delayed post-tests, the difference between immediate and delayed post-tests was not significant (p=0.937)

The same analyses were conducted on the productive parts of the tests to explore whether productive test scores of the productive task group were statistically different or not. As seen in Table 5.1, the group's mean scores on the productive tests were respectively 0.00, 17.50, 16.45.
The results revealed the tests conducted at different intervals created a difference in the scores of the productive parts of the tests [(F(2-64)=244,78 p=0,000*) .

As summarized in Table 5.1, the comparison of the scores for the productive task group in the productive parts of the tests disclosed that their immediate and delayed post-test scores were significantly different and better than their pre-test scores (p=0.000*). However, a significant decrease in the productive task group's scores from immediate to delayed post tests was observed, and this revealed a significant amount of forgetting for the productive task group over time [(p=0,000*)

5.1.3. Vocabulary Gains within the Control Group

To investigate whether there were any significant differences in the students' receptive and productive vocabulary gains within 'the control group from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post-test, the group's scores were studied.

As given in Table 5.1, the control group's mean scores in receptive part of the tests were respectively 0.55, 14.50, 13.69. An increase in the receptive scores in the control group's mean scores after the treatments was obvious just like the task groups' even though the group did not deal with any tasks. Moreover, the results identified a significant difference for the control group in the receptive parts of the tests administered at three different intervals [(F(2-56)=65.985, p=0,000*) . Also, the immediate and delayed post-test scores for the control group were identified to be significantly different and better than their pre-test scores (p=0,000*). On the other hand, there was a statistically significant decrease in the delayed post-test scores of the group when compared to their immediate post-test scores, which refers to a significant amount of forgetting in the receptive parts of the tests (p=0,003*)

In order to research whether the scores of the control group's productive tests applied at different intervals were statistically different or not, the same analyses were conducted on the productive parts of the tests .As given in Table 5.1, the group's mean scores were 0.45, 12.00, 8.67. Depending on the scores, it can be said that the control group increased its productive scores as other groups despite receiving no tasks. As seen in Table 5.1, the results indicated that the tests administered at different intervals brought a difference in the scores of the productive parts of the tests (F(2-56)=32,345 p=0,000*)

This means the productive scores of the control group differed according to the intervals of the tests. When the productive parts of the tests were analyzed further, the group's immediate and delayed post-test scores were found to be significantly different and better than their pre-test scores (p=0.000*). However, a significant decrease was observed from immediate post-test to delayed post-test in the control group both (p=0,036*) which refers to a significant amount of forgetting over time in the productive parts of the test for the control group.

5.2. Between Group Differences in terms of Vocabulary Gains

5.2.1 Between-Group Differences in the Receptive Parts of the Tests

In this part, receptive vocabulary gains of the students in each group from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post-test were examined between groups. Two way ANOVA for mixed measures was conducted to find out whether there were significant differences in the scores of the groups from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post test. Then, to investigate among which groups these differences stemmed from, a Tukey HSD test was conducted. Table 5.2.1 presents between-group comparisons in the receptive parts of the tests.

Table 5.2.1 Between-Group Comparisons in the Receptive Parts of the Tests

	Tukey HSD Test		
Groups	Receptive	Productive	Control
Receptive		0.258 (p=0.99)	5.734* (p=0.00)
Productive			4.676* (p=0.00)
Control			

P*<0.05

The investigation of the groups revealed that the receptive and productive task groups were significantly different from control group (p=0,000*). When the receptive task group was compared to productive task group, the difference was extremely slight; in other words, these two groups were almost equal in the receptive part of the delayed post test (retention test) (p=0,99). It means that different tasks had different roles on the receptive part scores of the students.

5.3. Between-Group Differences in Productive Parts of the Tests

Productive vocabulary gains of the students in each group from pre-test to immediate post-test, immediate post-test to delayed post-test and pre test to delayed post-test were examined between groups and explained in this part Then, to investigate among which groups these differences stemmed from, a Tukey HSD test was conducted. Table 5.3.1 presents between-group comparisons in the productive parts of the tests.

Table 5.3.1 Between-Group Comparisons in the Productive Parts of the Tests

	Tukey HSD Test		
Groups	Receptive	Productive	Control
Receptive		-1.205 (p=0.523)	8.657* (p=0.000)
Productive			9.879* (p=0.00)

Control			

P*<0.05

What Table 5.3.1 provides is that there was no significant difference between the task groups. Even though productive task group preformed better than receptive task group, this difference was not significant (p=0,523).The group which received productive tasks(productive task group) were almost same in the productive test scores of the students((p=0,873).

6. Discussion

This study investigated whether receptive and/or productive tasks contribute to receptive and productive gains differently or not. In doing this, the groups receiving receptive, productive and no tasks were investigated among themselves. The results revealed a significant difference between the task groups and control group both in receptive and productive tests. The results indicated no significant difference among the tasks groups, which means receiving only receptive or only productive made no significant difference in the receptive and productive vocabulary gains of the students.

Similarly, Waring's (1997) study revealed no significant difference in receptive and productive tests between the groups which received receptive or productive tasks from immediate to delayed post tests.

On the contrary, the results of some studies support one or the other type of tasks. For example, in their study, Hulstjin and Laufer (2001) gave receptive task group a text and a set of ten multiple choice comprehension questions. Target words were glossed in L1 in the margins of the text. The second group receiving reading plus fill-in task received the same text and same questions, but the target words were deleted from the text. They were asked to fill in the blanks with 15 words 5 of which were distractors with their L1 translations. The third group, composition writing task group, was given target words with explanations and examples of usages and was asked to write a composition with the target words. The results showed that productive tasks were better for receptive vocabulary gains.

Mondria & Wiersma (2004) argued that receptive tasks were good for receptive vocabulary gains, and productive tasks were good for productive vocabulary gains. They found it by giving learners L2 to L1 translations as receptive, L1 to L2 translations as productive tasks. Then, students were tested again on translation tests.

Similarly, Choi (2007) revealed that receptive tasks were better both in receptive and productive gains than productive tasks. To do so, Choi gave reading in glossed sentences as receptive tasks, and sentence writing as productive tasks. At the end, students were tested on translation tests. Barcroft (2004; 2006) indicated receptive tasks were better for receptive gains. Barcroft gave words with pictures as receptive (2004; 2006), and sentence writing (2004), word writing (2006) as productive tasks, and tested students on a receptive test, recall from pictures.

What is common in these studies investigated is the fact that none of them included explicit teaching of the target words. They gave tasks to students and let them study the target words on their own, and then they tested the students. Apart from the differences in the teaching part, the difference between the current study and the others lies in the differences in the tasks. While most of the studies mentioned above used L2 and L1 equivalents of the words for receptive and L1 to L2 equivalents of the words as productive tasks, translation methods were not preferred in this study because these types of tasks requiring shallower processing were found to yield less retrieval (Sagarra & Alba, 2006). Instead, the target words were presented in sentences following the steps of vocabulary teaching (Harmer, 1991, 2003) due to the positive effects of explicit instruction on learners' vocabulary development (Morimoto & Loewen, 2007).

The scores the control group received in this study proved that tasks contribute to receptive and productive gains significantly. No matter which task type was preferred after explicit vocabulary instruction, it contributed to receptive and productive gains significantly. However, when the task groups were investigated within themselves for their productive gains, the receptive task group was

the only group which was able to retain its productive vocabulary knowledge in four weeks. While the gains of the other task groups receiving productive tasks faded significantly in time, receptive task group was able to yield significantly superior retention. The reason behind that could be the group might have been able to focus on the features related to the target word's form to a greater extent because their attention was not divided into conceptualizing, producing, and monitoring production (Choi, 2007) as it would have been for the productive task group. In other words, while only processing and evaluating input could be enough to complete the receptive tasks, greater amount of different types of processing, which included both semantic and structural elaboration as well as meta-cognitive strategies such as planning and monitoring could be necessary for the completion of the productive tasks (Choi, 2007). In this way, the receptive task group might have consumed less attentional resources than the group receiving productive tasks, and they may have invested more mental effort to the formal prosperities of the target words.

The negative role of forced output at the initial stage of learning can be a reason why the task group receiving productive tasks decreased their productive gains significantly in delayed post tests. As Barcroft (2004; 2006) suggests, forcing output during the initial stages of learning could exhaust learners' processing resources, resulting in decreased rates of learning.

According to Barcroft (2004), when new L2 words are presented to learners, they must allocate processing resources to complete dual tasks: encoding new L2 word forms as well as encoding form-meaning mapping. The mental effort required for the simultaneous completion of these two processing operations during forced output tasks can exhaust learners' processing resources, resulting in decreased rates of learning. In the current study, receptive task group was spending time and effort only for recognition while productive task group was trying to produce target words in mind to complete the tasks, which might cause the groups receiving productive tasks learn in decreased rates compared to the receptive task group.

References

Barcoft, J. (2004). Effects of sentence writing in second language lexical acquisition. Second Language Research. 20(4), 303-334.

Barcoft, J. (2006). Can writing a new word detract from learning it? More negative effects of forced output during vocabulary learning. Second Language Research, 22(4), 487-497.

Choi, J. (2007). The effect of receptive and productive tasks on lexical knowledge development. Unpublished MA dissertation, Michigan State University.

Griffin, G.F. & Harley, T.A. (1996). List learning of second language vocabulary. Applied Psycholinguistics 17 : 443-460.

Hashemzadeh, M. (2012). The Effect of Exercise Types on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Retention. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2(8), 1716-1727.

Hashemi, S. and Z. Kassaian, 2011. Effects of learner interaction, receptive and productive learning tasks on vocabulary acquisition: An Iranian case. Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 15: 2165–2171. DOI 10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.073

Henriksen, B. (1999). Three dimensions of vocabulary development. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 21, 303-317.

Hulstijn, J. & Laufer, B. (2001). Some empirical evidence for the involvement load hypothesis in vocabulary acquisition. Language learning, 51(3), 539-558.

Kamil, M.,& Hiebert, E. H. (2005). Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Perspectives and Persistent Issues. In P, Kamil, M. & Hiebert, E. H. (Eds.), Teaching and Learning Vocabulary Bringing Research to Practice (1-23). New Jersey, USA: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Laufer, B. & Nation, P., (1995). Vocabulary Size and Use: Lexical richness in L2 written production. Applied Linguistics, 16(3), 307-322.

Laufer, B. & Paribakht, T.S. (1998). The relationship between passive and active vocabularies: effects of language learning context. Language Learning , 48
(3), 365-39t.

Mondria, J. & Wiersma, B. (2004). Receptive, productive, and receptive + productive L2 vocabulary learning: What difference does it make?, In P. Bogaard & B. Laufer (Eds.) Vocabulary in a second language, (pp. 79 – 100). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Morimoto, S., Loewen, S. (2007). A Comparison of the effects of image-schemabased instruction and translation-based instruction on the acquisition of L2 polysemous words. Language Teaching Research, 11,3, 347-372.

Nation, I.S.P. (2001). Learning vocabulary in another language. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Nation, I.S.P. &Meara, P. (2010).Vocabulary. In N. Schmitt (ed.).An Introduction to Applied Linguistics. Edward Arnold. Second edition. pp. 34-52.

Pigada, M., & Schmitt, N. (2006). Vocabulary acquisition from extensive reading: A case study. Reading in a Foreign Language, 18(1), 1-28.

Pulido, D. & Hambrick, D.Z. (2008). The virtuous circle: Modeling individual differences   in L2 reading and vocabulary development. Reading in a Foreign Language, 20(2), 164-190.

Qian, D. D. & Schedl, M. (2004). Evaluation of an in-depth vocabulary knowledge measure for assessing reading performance. Language Testing, 21, 28-52.

Read, J. (2000). Assessing vocabulary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. UK.

Sagara, N., & Alba, M. (2006). The Key is in the Keyword: L2 VocabularyLearning Methods with Beginning Learners of Spanish. The Modern Language Journal, 90:2, 228–243.

Schmitt, N. (2000). Vocabulary in language teaching . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schneider, V. I., Healy, A. F. and Bourne, L. E., Jr. (2002). "What is learned under difficult conditions is hard to forget: Contextual interference

effects in foreign vocabulary acquisition, retention and transfer". Journal of Memory and Language, 46, 419–440.

Touti, E. (2013). Task-Type Based Vocabulary Instruction: An Impact on Incidental Word Retention. World Applied Sciences Journal, 22 (12), 1739-1744.

Uygun,A.(2009). The Effects of Receptive and Productive Tasks on Vocabulary Retention.. Master Thesis, Institute of Educational Sciences.

Vosoughi1, H. & Mehdipour, Z. (2013). Effects of Recognition Task and Production Task on Incidental Vocabulary Learning of Iranian EFL Learners. International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences, 4 (2), 356-363.

Waring, R. (1997). A comparison of the receptive and productive vocabulary sizes of some second language learners. Immaculata (Notre Dame Seishin University, Okayama), 1, 53-68.

Waring, R.(2002). Scales of vocabulary knowledge in second language vocabulary assessment. The occasional papers of Notre Dame Seishin, Kiyo.Retrieved May 29, 2011 from http://www1.harenet.ne.jp/~waring/papers/scales.

Webb, S. (2005). Receptive and productive vocabulary learning: The effects of reading and writing on word knowledge. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 27, 33-52.

Webb, S. (2008). The effects of context on incidental vocabulary learning. Reading in a Foreign Language, 20, 232–245.

Zareva, A., Schwanenflugel, P., Nikolova, Y. (2005). Relationshib Between lexical   competence and language proficiency. Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 27, 567-595.

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF OPINION-GAP TASKS ON ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

Leila Rajabi
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

Ali Gholami Mehrdad
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

Lotfollah Karimi
Hamedan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Hamedan, Iran

ABSTRACT

BEING ABLE TO COMMUNICATE SUCCESSFULLY IN A TARGET LANGUAGE DOES NOT NEED ONLY THE KNOWLEDGE OF GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY BUT IT ALSO NEEDS PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE. FOR THE TWO PAST AND A HALF DECADES PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ISSUES OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) STUDIES. EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING IS IMPOSSIBLE UNLESS LEARNERS ARE CHALLENGED TO USE THE LANGUAGE FOR COMMUNICATION. THIS VIEW HAS LED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH AND TASK-BASED APPROACH TO LANGUAGE TEACHING. THE PRESENT STUDY ATTEMPTED TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPACT OF OPINION-GAP TASKS ON ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE. THE PARTICIPANTS CONSISTED OF 30 MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS WHO WERE CONVENIENTLY SELECTED. THE INSTRUMENT UTILIZED IN THIS STUDY WAS A WRITTEN DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASK (WDCT) USED AS PRETEST AND AS POST-TEST. THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP RECEIVED OPINION GAP TASKS WHILE THE STUDENTS IN THE CONTROL GROUP DID NOT RECEIVE ANY OPINION-GAP TASKS TO SOLVE .THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE USE OF THE OPINION-GAP ACTIVITIES SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCED IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' SPEECH-ACT PRAGMATIC KNOWLEDGE.

KEY TERMS: PRAGMATICS ,PRAGMATICS COMPETENCE ,TASK BASED APPROACH, COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH ,OPINION GAP TASK ACTIVITY

1. Introduction

Being able to communicate successfully in a target language does not need only the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary but it also needs pragmatic competence. For the two past and a half decades pragmatic competence has been one of the most significant issues of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) studies across languages. Before this the emphasis was only on grammar accuracy in language teaching and communicative function of language was ignored for many years. One important issue, in a given situation is creating and understanding an appropriate utterance (Cheng, 2005). However, knowing a language does not just depend on proficiency in grammatical and semantic items also depends on appropriate interpretation of an utterance and paying attention beyond the sentence.

According to Hymes (1972), knowing a language does not just know the grammar but also the rules of communicative use.

Effective language learning is impossible unless learners are challenged to use the language for communication. This view has led to the development of communicative approaches and task-based approaches to language teaching (Littlewood,2007) .Task Based approach focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. According to Ellis (2000), tasks are the main units of planning and instruction in Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT). "TBLT is a logical development of Communicative Language Teaching" (Richards & Rodgers 2001, p. 223). Task-based approach emphasizes the ability to perform a task or an activity, without focusing on teaching grammar explicitly (Ellis, 2003). Educators are interested in using task based approach to make language truly communicative in the classroom .Foreign language learners' communicative proficiency is not high because of lack of enough exposure to target environment and interactions with native speakers (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

The purpose of present study was to help students increase their pragmatic proficiency. In the present study attempts were made to explore the impact between learners' pragmatic competence and opinion gap activities. The findings of this study are significant for foreign language learners and teachers .The effective role of opinion-gap activities in the development of pragmatic knowledge can add both to our theoretical knowledge and teaching /learning practices. From the theoretical perspective ,newer insights into pragmatics will be gained and our knowledge about how the L2 pragmatic competence can be expanded will be deepened and strengthened.In addition , the findings of the current investigation have practical significance .The probable results of this study can help L2 learners develop their knowledge regarding speech acts , their pragmalinguistic forms and socio pragmatics norms.

2. Literature review

Until the early 1970s, second-language researchers concerned themselves with linguistic form, reflected in generative approaches .For many years the focus was only on grammar accuracy in language teaching and communicative function of language was ignored .Researchers realized learners were not able to carry out natural exchanges in the second or foreign language. According to Chomsky (1965), Competence is the speaker's knowledge of the language, while the speaker's use of this knowledge is performance, or "the actual use of language in concrete situations" (p. 4) .

Hymes (1972) claimed communicative competence involves not only as grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in different communicative situations, thus bringing the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence.

Canal & Swain (1980) classified communicative competence accordingly as grammatical competence, social linguistic competence and strategic competence. Canale and Swain (1980) emphasized on how utterances are combined, sequenced and ordered and how functions are performed. Therefore, the term sociolinguistic competence was used to denote pragmatic competence. The notion of pragmatic competence was introduced by Chomsky (1980) as the "knowledge of conditions and manner of appropriate use (of the language), inconformity with various purposes" (p. 224). Widdowson (1989) generalized communicative competence as the two major aspects of grammatical competence and pragmatic competence . Bachman (1990) provided a slightly different distinction between the parts comprising language competence. Specifically, the concept of language competence is divided into organizational and pragmatic competence.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is based on developing "Communicative Competence" in learners and focuses on all of four skills (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). One of the most important methodologies which have been derived from CLT is Task-based Language Teaching . Nunan (1989) states that task is "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form"(p.10). Task-based approach emphasizes the ability to perform a task or activity, without focusing on teaching grammar explicitly (Prabhu, 1987). Prabhu (1987) defines three general types of tasks including

information-gap tasks , opinion gap tasks and reasoning gap tasks . An information-gap activity involves the exchange of information among participants in order to complete a task. Ur (1996) states

information gap as "A particularly interesting type of task which is based on the need to understand or transmit information finding out what is in a partner's picture, for example" (p.54).

Opinion gap tasks refer to "identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation" (Prabhu, 1987, p. 47). An opinion-gap activity requires students give their personal preferences, feelings, or attitudes in order to complete a task. Reasoning gap tasks require students to derive some new information by inferring it from information they have been given . Everyone has different opinions, feelings and thoughts about the world and think differently.

3 Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants of the present study were 30 intermediate English learners who were conveniently selected. The selected 30 participants included 20 females and 10 males. These learners were form different social strata. The majority of them were pre-university, BA/BS students whose majors varied..

3.2 Instrumentation

The main data collection instrument utilized in this study was a written discourse completion task (WDCT) used as pretest and as post-test. The written discourse completion task utilized in the present study included 15 items. Each item contained a scenario or pragmatic context in which the physical context of a conversation, the context, and the social and power relations between the speaker and the interlocutor were adequately depicted . Some information was given about the setting of the context, including the time and place of the conversation and the nature of the power relations between the people involved in the short conversation introduced after the scenario . Following the scenario, there was a conversation from 2 to 4 lines in which one line was missing. The learners were required to produce the most appropriate form of a speech act on the basis of the sociocultural norms of the English language. This written completion discourse task had three parts. The first part contained five items requiring the request speech act, the second five items needed the production of apologies, and the last five items demanded learners' use of refusal speech acts.

3.3 Procedure

The present research was conducted in two phases. The study participants were divided into two groups; an experimental group and a control group.

In the first phase of the study, all the participants of both groups were asked to fill out a written discourse completion task (WDCT) including pragmatic situations requiring the production of a request, apology, or refusal speech act by the learners. Then for 10 sessions of about 1.5 hours, the treatment was given to the participants in the experimental group. These learners received opinion-gap tasks. They were given specific situations and asked to talk about these situations and complete them based on their interests and opinions. The opinion-gap activity entails identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling or attitude in response to a given sociopragmatic situation. For example, EFL learners were given a social problem or a financial problem and were demanded to suggest numerous possible solutions which were logical and feasible. Participants in the control group did not receive any opinion-gap tasks to solve. They did not receive any opinion-gap tasks. They received the usual lessons of the institute namely, the conventional way of practicing English conversations using the framework of communicative language teaching which was somehow implemented in the class.

In the second phase of study, the written discourse completion task (WDCT) was administered to the learners in both groups in order to check their pragmatic production after the treatment. They were asked to write their pragmatic answers for the 15 items included in the written discourse completion task. After the needed data was gathered, the pretest and posttest scores for each participant were calculated and subjected to the relevant statistical analyses to test the null hypothesis and to answer the postulated research question.

3.4 Design

There were two groups in the current study and they were conveniently selected and assigned to two groups. Also this study used a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test at the end of the

study. There were an experimental and a control group in the current investigation. In fact, the present research used a quasi-experimental design

3.5 Data analysis

This investigation was launched to examine the effect of opinion-gap tasks on Iranian EFL learners' pragmatic performance across three frequent English speech acts. Because there were one continuous independent and one continuous dependent variable in this study (opinion gap task and pragmatic performance on a written WDCT) and because we had a two-group pretests/posttest design the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was applied.

The use of ANCOVA lets the researcher statistically compare the performances of experimental and control groups on the same written discourse completion tasks (DCT) as the pretest and posttest .

4 Results

4.1 Pretest Results

4.1.1 Checking the Normality of the Data

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests were applied to examine if the two groups' scores on the pretest were normally distributed or not. The results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Tests of Normality for the Study Groups' Performances on the Pretest

	Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	Experimental	.127	15	.200*	.977	15	.941
	Control	.127	15	.200*	.965	15	.775

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

As it is evident in Table 1, the experimental and control group's scores on pretest were distributed normally, that is, p > 0.05 in any case. Normality of the distribution was also checked for the experimental and control group's scores on the pretest were checked through the related graphs.

4.2 Posttest Results

4.2.1 Checking the Normality of the Data

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests were employed to see whether the two groups' scores on the posttest were normally distributed or not. The results are illustrated in Tables 2 below.

Table 2

Tests of Normality for the Study Groups' Performances on the Posttest

|	Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	Experimental	.131	15	.200*	.951	15	.533
	Control	.214	15	.063	.913	15	.151

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

As seen in Table 2, the experimental and control group's scores on posttest were normally distributed, namely, p > 0.05 for each group**.**

Figure 1. Homogeneity of Regression Lines
As seen in Figure 5 above, there appears to be a linear (straight-line) relationship for each group's
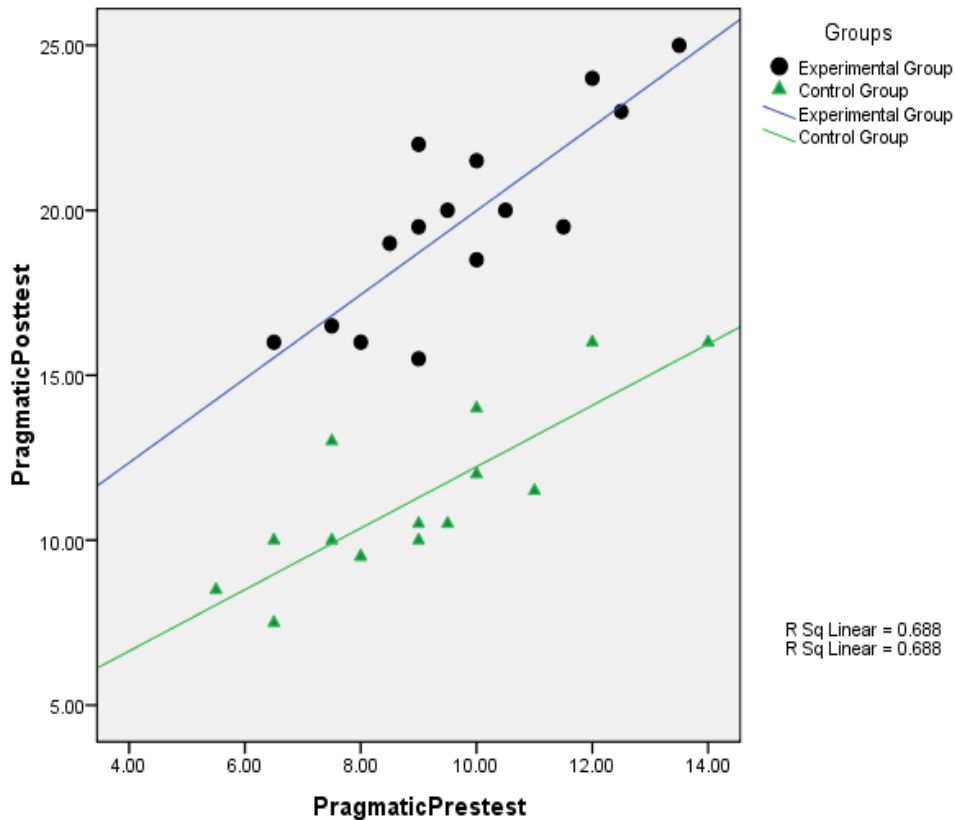
pretest and posttest scores. This figure does not show any indication of a curvilinear relationship.

4. 3 Testing Assumptions
Before running the ANCOVA, its assumptions were checked. These main underlying assumptions were considered using statistical values, tables, and graphs.

4. 3.1 Testing Normality
The first assumption was the measurement of covariate before the treatment. In the current study, the pretest was administered before providing the opinion-gap activities in the experimental group.

4. 3.2 Testing Linearity
The third underlying assumption demands that a linear relationship should exist between the dependent variable (posttest scores) and the covariate (pretest scores) for both experimental and control groups. In order to check this assumption, the scatter plot was drawn. The general distribution of the scores for each of the study groups is presented in figure 5 .

4. 3.3 Testing the Homogeneity of the Regression Slopes
The final assumption for the application of ANCOVA is the homogeneity of regression slopes. This concerns the relationship between the covariate and the dependent variable for each of the study groups. There should not be any interaction between the covariate and the treatment or experimental manipulation (use of opinion-gap activities in the experimental group). In order to assess this assumption the Test of Between-Subjects Effects was run. The results of this analytical procedure were summarized in the Table 3.

Table 3

Test of Between-Subjects Effects for Study Groups' Pretest and Posttest Scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	688.65[a]	3	229.55	89.63	.000
Intercept	33.59	1	33.59	13.11	.001
Groups	6.10	1	6.10	2.38	.135
Pragmatic Pretest	146.77	1	146.77	57.31	.000
Groups * Pragmatic Pretest	3.54	1	3.54	1.38	.250
Error	66.58	26	2.56		
Total	7947.25	30			
Corrected Total	755.24	29			

a. R Squared = .912 (Adjusted R Squared = .902)
Dependent Variable: Pragmatic Posttest

The Sig. value for the interaction of the study groups with pragmatic pretest scores was .250. Because this value is greater than .05, the interaction between the covariate (pragmatic pretest scores) and the independent variable (that is treatment on opinion-gap tasks) was not statistically significant, indicating that the homogeneity of regression slopes assumption was not violated.

Because the necessary assumptions for running ANCOVA were available, this statistical procedure was run to explore the differences between the control group and the experimental group in their pragmatic performance on the WDCT.

4. 4 Results of the One-Way ANCOVA

Univariate analysis of variance was conducted using one-way ANCOVA. The study groups and the important study factors which shaped this investigation are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4
Between-Subjects Factors

Study Groups	Value Label	Number of Learners
Experimental Group	Opinion-Gap Task	15
Control Group	No Treatment	15

The descriptive statistics needed for the application of ANCOVA for the performances of control group and experimental group on the pragmatic discourse completion tasks used as the post-test are summarized in Table 4. As it can be seen in the table, the mean score for the pragmatic performances of the experimental group learners on the posttest was greater than the mean score for the pragmatic performances of Iranian EFL learners in the control group (Mean $_{Experimental}$ = 19.73 > Mean $_{Control}$= 11.23).

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics for the Two Groups' Scores on the Posttest

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	N

Experimental Group	19.73	2.96	15
Control Group	11.23	2.53	15
Total	15.48	5.10	30

Dependent Variable: Pragmatic Posttest

When analysis of covariance is applied, variances of the scores should be equal to have reliable statistical conclusions. In fact, this statistics checks the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across the experimental and control groups. Therefore, the Levene's test of equality of error variances was applied (Table 5).

Table 6
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances [a]

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.201	1	28	.658

  a. Design: Intercept + Pragmatic Pretest + Groups
  Dependent Variable: Pragmatic Posttest

As seen in the Table 6 above, the Sig. value for the Levene's test of equality of error variances is .65 which is far greater than the .05 level. Accordingly, it was concluded that the assumption of the equality of variances is not violated. The main ANCOVA results are presented Table 7.

Table 7
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for the Two Groups' Scores on the Posttest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	685.11[a]	2	342.55	131.88	.000	.907
Intercept	39.44	1	39.44	15.18	.001	.360
Pragmatic Pretest	143.23	1	143.23	55.14	.000	.671
Groups	410.85	1	410.85	158.18	.000	.854
Error	70.12	27	2.59			
Total	7947.25	30				
Corrected Total	755.24	29				

a. R Squared = .907 (Adjusted R Squared = .900)

As the table shows, the obtained value for two groups, [$F_{(2, 27)}$ = 131, 18, P < .05, Partial Eta Squared= .85] was 0.85. The obtained Sig. value for the independent variable, i.e. study groups, was .000 which was far less than .05, indicating that there was a significant difference in the pragmatic scores for EFL learners in the experimental and control groups, after controlling for their scores on the same pragmatic test administered prior to the opinion-gap treatment.

The partial Eta squared value for the two groups' performances on the posttest is .854 which is a large effect size, demonstrating that 85.4 percent of the variance in the posttest scores (dependent variable)

can be explained on the basis of study groups (independent variable) and the treatment they have received during the time of the study.

The partial Eta for the influence of the pretest scores (covariate) was .671 which is a rather large one. This value is significant, indicating that there was a strong and significant relationship between the pretest scores and posttest scores on the used discourse completion (WDCT) tasks. In fact the covariate explained 67.1 percent of the variance in the posttest scores.

The last table (Table 7) in the analysis of covariance gives the adjusted means on the posttest pragmatic scores for the experimental and control groups. These adjusted means are the ones calculated when the impact of the pretest scores (covariate) has been statistically removed.

As shown in Table 4.9, the adjusted mean for the experimental and control groups were 19.26 and 11.69, respectively.

Table 8
Estimated Marginal Means for the Two Groups' Scores on the Posttest

Groups	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental Group	19.26[a]	.421	18.40	20.13
Control Group	11.69[a]	.421	10.83	12.56

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Pragmatic Pretest = 9.36.

Based on the analysis of Covariance applied to the data obtained on a pragmatic test, it was found that Iranian EFL learners in the experimental group who received the treatment were able to outperform the control group who did not receive the treatment. This finding implies that those learners who received instruction and practiced opinion-gap activities developed a stronger pragmatic competence compared with those learners who did not receive that practice. Therefore, it seems that engagement with opinion-gap activities can directly help L2 learners improve and develop their pragmatic knowledge.

4.5 Discussion

Based on the results of ANCOVA, it was revealed that Iranian EFL learners who practiced opinion-gap tasks in their conversation classes developed a more effective pragmatic knowledge in comparison with those learners who did not practice the use of these activities .Based on the results of ANCOVA, it was revealed that Iranian EFL learners who practiced opinion-gap tasks in their conversation classes developed a more effective pragmatic knowledge in comparison with those learners who did not practice the use of these activities. As Prabhu (1987) asserted opinion-gap activities involve the active engagement of the L2 learners to use their personal preferences, feelings, and attitudes in response to a given pragmatic situation. This active interaction provokes the learners' use of their pragmatic competence and informs the learner to notice his or her pragmatic knowledge gaps and they trigger new learning of pragmatic information and speech acts as the core of pragmatic competence. As Ellis (2008) and Nunan (2004) contended, opinion-gap activities demand the cognitive search for the best vocabulary and structures which can help to solve a real-world or classroom problem and this implies the use of pragmatic competence and search for pragmatic input. Also, when ESL/EFL learners are working cooperatively to exchange their opinions, feelings, and attitudes, they need to learn how to interact with each other. They need to initiate their discourse, to take turns, to use the speech acts for suggesting, offering, apologizing, requesting, refusing, thanking, accepting, rejecting, and giving complements or appraisals, and so forth .

5 Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of opinion-gap activities on the development of L2 learners' pragmatic competence. Accordingly, it examined the effect of the use of various opinion-gap activities on Iranian EFL learners performance on written discourse completion tasks (WDCT). The data analysis revealed that the use of the opinion-gap activities significantly influenced Iranian EFL learners' speech-act pragmatic knowledge.

The main conclusion of the present research was that by using various kinds of opinion-gap activities, teachers can help their second or foreign language learners internalize pragmatic knowledge more effectively. In fact, these opinion-gap activities directly involve L2 learners' cognition in expressing their views, feelings, attitudes, and preferences about a task at hand.

References

Bachman, L. M. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics, 1*, 1-47.

Cheng, S. W. (2005). *An exploratory cross-sectional study of interlanguage pragmatic development of expressions of gratitude by Chinese learners of English*. Unpublished PhD dissertation; The University of Iowa.

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge, Mass:MIT Press.

Chomsky, N. (1980). *Rules and representations*. New York: Columbia University

Ellis, R. (2000). Task-based research and language pedagogy. *Language Teaching Research,4*(3), 193-220.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (2008). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University press.

Hymes, D. (1971). *Competence and performance in linguistic theory*. In R. Huxley &. Ingram (Eds.), Language Acquisition :Models and Methods. London: Academic Press.

Hymes, D. (1972) *On communicative competence* .In J.B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds) Sociolinguistics.Selected Readings.Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Littlewood ,W.(2007) *Communicative and task-based language teaching in East Asian classrooms*. Language Teaching , 40, 243-249.

Nunan, D. (1989) *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (2004) *Task-based language teaching: A comprehensively revised edition of designing tasks for communicative classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Prabhu, N.S., (1987). *Second Language Pedagogy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, J.C. & Renandya, W.A. (eds.) (2002) *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C., & Rodgers, S. (2001) Approaches *and Methods in Language Teaching (2nd Ed.).* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ur, P. (1996) *A course in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Widowson, H.G., (1989) *Knowledge of language and ability for use*. Applied linguistics, 10(2), 128-137.

THE EFFECTS OF OPINION AND REASONING TASKS ON MALE AND FEMALE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

Ali Faghihi

Department of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahreza, Iran

Sajad Shafiee

Department of English, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord, Iran

ABSTRACT

THIS STUDY AIMED AT INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT COGNITIVE TASKS ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION. THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS STUDY WERE THE INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH LEARNERS AT SADR INSTITUTE IN ISFAHAN; OUT OF 102 LEARNERS ENROLLED TO CONTINUE THEIR EFL COURSE, 60 PARTICIPANTS WERE SELECTED BASED ON THEIR PERFORMANCES ON THE OXFORD PLACEMENT TEST. THE PARTICIPANTS WERE DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS; THE MALE AND FEMALE EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS WERE TAUGHT WITH COGNITIVE TASKS; THE MALE AND FEMALE CONTROL GROUPS WERE TAUGHT VIA THE TRADITIONAL METHOD. THE INSTRUMENTS UTILIZED IN THIS STUDY INCLUDED THE SAME TEST USED AS PRETEST AND POSTTEST CONSISTING OF QUESTIONS BASED ON THE STUDENTS' TEXTBOOK. INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T TESTS WERE USED TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT BETWEEN AND WITHIN-GROUP DIFFERENCES. THE RESULTS PROVIDED EVIDENCE THAT COGNITIVE TASKS SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCED EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION. BASED UPON THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, COGNITIVE TASKS ARE THUS RECOMMENDED TO BE INTEGRATED INTO THE ENGLISH INSTRUCTION AS PART OF A COURSE, WHICH IS CONSIDERED AS A VERY EFFECTIVE WAVE OF EDUCATION REFORM IN IRAN. THE FINDINGS COULD ALSO BE OF IMPORTANCE FOR MATERIAL DEVELOPERS AND TEACHERS IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AS THEY ARE CONCERNED WITH STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION.

KEY TERMS: COGNITIVE TASK, TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING, REASONING GAP ACTIVITY, OPINION GAP ACTIVITY, READING COMPREHENSION

Introduction

No doubt reading comprehension is a very important skill for L2 learners to acquire. The criteria involved in reading are highly important to attain. There is need to pay attention to more prominent activities such as different types of tasks that are designed to help achieve comprehension goals. So many factors, e.g. task-based language teaching, are involved in this issue. These factors can have negative or positive effects on the overall quality of students' reading comprehension performance. In this regard, to show the value of the performance of tasks in L2 classrooms, Hajpournezhad (2009) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of task types in L2 classes to improve the learners' reading comprehension. The results of such a consideration showed that students taught by the use of different tasks had much more better comprehension of reading than those who were taught by traditional way of teaching reading. The purpose of the present research is

also to focus on the improvement of reading comprehension of students by using two types of cognitive tasks (opinion gap and reasoning gap).

The present study aims to explore the possible impacts of the performance of cognitive tasks on EFL learners' reading comprehension. In the realm of learners' reading improvement, different cognitive tasks have been studied (e.g. HajiPourNezhad & ShokrPour, 2012; Salmani, 2006). It is believed that such different task types cause learners to focus on different characteristics of the text because the demands of tasks are not the same (Joe, 1998). Opinion-gap task types require participants to express their ideas on a subject. A reasoning-gap task is a task which requires the participants to engage in reasoning, such as synthesizing the provided information and deducing new facts in order to perform it successfully. The two task types activate different cognitive strategies. Therefore, the outcomes of the two task types may be different when performed by learners with different cognitive styles (Pica, Young, & Doughty, 1993). Apart from the specific cognitive style that learners carry with them into the learning environment, the type of reading questions they are asked also influences their reading performance. This has been comprehensively addressed by Bachman (2000) under the title of test method facets, suggesting the wide range of variations in test rubrics and procedures that leave impacts on the performance. In fact, the concept of "reading comprehension" has not lent itself well to a clear operational definition so that it has been mostly defined by many measures used in its assessment (Daly, Chafouleas, & Skinner, 2005; Frith & Snowling, 1983; Myles, Hilgenfeld, Barnhill, Griswold, Hagiwara, & Simpson, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

During the history of language teaching, different approaches and methods have been developed in order to help learners learn a second/foreign language better. Before the scientific era of language teaching, which began with the emergence of audiolingualism in the mid 20th century, the focus was on teaching grammar and on the ability to translate literary texts. However, this teacher-centered method could not resist the new findings of psychology, linguistics, and educational theory and the field of language teaching gradually proceeded towards more learner-centered approaches and methods. The shifts in the goals of language teaching and the new communicative needs changed the methods and hence the views about the four skills, for instance, reading comprehension, were treated differently in various methods and approaches. Reading was considered a passive skill in some methods and approaches. However, with the emergence of comprehension and communicative approaches, reading gained prominence and came to be known as an active and meaningful process rather than a passive product. Brown (2001) introduced different techniques for teaching reading comprehension. In spite of all of the techniques and procedures which have been used for teaching reading skill, Iranian learners have serious problems in reading and comprehending texts which have been written in English.

Given the problem stated above, the present study aimed to determine whether teaching reading to EFL learners through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), especially cognitive tasks could be influential and particularly useful in EFL reading improvement. Two types of cognitive tasks, i.e. reasoning gap activity and opinion gap activity, were the focal points of the study. Most of the past studies (e.g. Baddeley 1992; Dornyei 2003) calculated correlation coefficients between foreign language cognitive tasks as a whole and performance measures, but they did not examine the impact of cognitive tasks and performance measures. Since this is a multifaceted phenomenon, investigating the effect of cognitive tasks on reading improvement of intermediate EFL learners may be more important than investigating how cognitive tasks overall are related to performance measures. Against this backdrop, the present study focused on cognitive tasks as an affective trait of L2 learners and it investigated the impact of cognitive tasks on reading improvement of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Literature Review

Sookchotirat (2005) suggested that reading skill is the most important skill as it is the basis of all the success in one's life. Good readers can gain more knowledge of any kind from reading. Reading makes the reader more knowledgeable, have wider perspectives and vision. Reading helps the reader

get new ideas leading to cognitive development. When the readers transfer what they read to apply with their own idea a new perspective or idea is created. However, there have been problems in English teaching in all educational levels in Thailand, including elementary, secondary and university level. Graduates of each educational level do not have reading ability they should have. Generally, it can be claimed that the problem was caused by the inadequacy of teaching and learning time. Teaching reading is a continuing process; it should be given continuously from the first to the highest educational level. Teaching reading to learners at very young age is, therefore, the basis for the higher level (Noysangsri, 1988).

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

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

Given a plethora of research studies on the effect of different types of cognitive tasks, a research study focusing on the comparison on different task types and their effect of male and female Iranian EFL learners is yet to be done. Hence, the research questions raised in the present study are written below.

Research Questions

1. Does implementing cognitive tasks have any impact on reading comprehension of male intermediate Iranian EFL learners?

2. Does implementing cognitive tasks have any impact on reading comprehension of female intermediate Iranian EFL learners?

Methodology

Participants

Sixty participants in Sadr Institute in Isfahan took part in the study. In order to determine the level of proficiency of participants, an Oxford Quick Placement Test including 60 multiple choice items was first administered to the whole participants and this made the researchers sure of the participants homogeneity. Then they were divided into two groups: a control and two experimental groups. The number of learners in each group was 30 (15 male and 15 female). All of them aged from 15 to 21 with an intermediate level of proficiency. Regarding space, facilities, time, and other conditions, the classes were approximately the same. All of the participants were native speakers of Persian. They attended classes three times a week. The experimental group received cognitive task-based learning instruction in a month but the control group did not experience any treatment on cognitive tasks.

Materials and Instruments

Since the aim of the present study was to explore the impact of different types of cognitive tasks on reading comprehension of Iranian intermediate EFL learners, the key material for the researchers to pursue this purpose was tasks. The researchers focused on cognitive tasks. For performance of tasks the researchers used different texts, which were excerpts from the book *Active Reading Skills 1*. These included two different types of cognitive tasks with the same level of difficulty. In addition to these materials, the researchers made use of the Oxford Quick Placement Test to make sure the participants were homogeneous. The OQPT provides information about a person's language level; this test is composed of 60 items: 5 items are reading comprehension, 30 multiple-choice items are vocabularies and grammar, and 25 items are in a form of close test. The researchers also used a reading comprehension test as pretest and posttest. The test contained 40 multiple-choice items. The test was checked for its reliability and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient turned out to be .86.

Procedure

The homogeneity of the participants was assured by the OQPT test. Then the participants were divided into two homogeneous groups of experimental and control groups. At the first session of the experiment, the asked the participants to take a reading comprehension pretest. From the second session, the teacher (in the experimental group) taught reading comprehension through two types of cognitive tasks: opinion task and reasoning task. These types of tasks were not used in the control group classes. After the treatment sessions, which lasted about a month, the participants took the posttest, which resembled the pretest in terms of the content to be tested, but different in terms of the arrangement of items and choices. The posttest scores were computed in order to see whether there was significant difference between students' scores on the reading comprehension between the (male and female) learners in the experimental and control groups.

Here is a model of teaching reading with the use of opinion task: By using the table of framework for designing task-based lesson in (page 244) of the book *Task-Based Language Teaching and Learning* by Ellis (2002), the teacher had a pretask, during task, and posttask. In pretask, the teacher showed the learners two pictures: one the picture of a village and the other a picture of a big city. Then he asked them some T/F questions. In the part during-task, the teacher gave them 5 minutes time to read the text. In posttask, the teacher asked the learners to tell their opinions about the differences between the life styles in village and big cities.

Results

Results of Females' Pretest

In order to make sure the female participants in the experimental and control groups were homogenous regarding reading proficiency at the outset of the study, their pretest scores were compared. The following tables present the descriptive statistics and the results of the independent-samples *t* test related to the reading comprehension of the female participants in the pretest. Table 4.1 presents descriptive statistics related to participants' pretest scores.

Table 4.1
Descriptive Statistics for Females' Pretest Scores

	Group	*N*	Mean	*Std.* Deviation	*Std.* Error Mean
Female Pretest	Control	15	13.73	1.66	.43
	Experimental	15	14.06	2.18	.56

Although the means indicated that there was no substantial difference between the experimental and control group females' pretest scores, in order to make sure that the difference was not statistically significant, an independent-samples *t* test was conducted. Table 4.2 presents the results.

Table 4.2
Independent Samples t Test Results for Females' Pretest Scores

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | *t* test for Equality of Means | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
		F	*Sig.*	*T*	*df*	*Sig.* (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	*Std.* Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	1.45	.23	-.46	28	.64	-.33	.71	-1.78	1.12
	Equal variances not assumed			-.46	26.16	.64	-.33	.71	-1.79	1.12

As the results indicated, there was no significant difference, t (28) = -.46, p = .64, between the control group females (M = 13.73, SD = 1.66) and experimental group females (M = 14.06, SD = 2.18) in terms of the reading comprehension in their pretest scores.

Results of the Males' Pretest

In order to make sure the male participants in two groups were homogenous regarding the reading proficiency at the outset of the study, their pretest scores were compared. The following tables present the descriptive statistics and the results of the independent samples t test related to the reading comprehension of the male participants in the pretest. Table 4.3 presents descriptive statistics related to participants' pretest scores.

Table 4.3
Descriptive Statistics for Males' Pretest Scores

	Group	*N*	Mean	*Std.* Deviation	*Std.* Error Mean
Male Pretest	Control	15	13.66	1.83	.47
	Experimental	15	13.60	1.76	.45

Although the means indicated that there was no considerable difference between the experimental and control group males' pretest scores, in order to make sure that the difference was not statistically significant, an independent samples t test was conducted. Table 4.4 presents the results.

Table 4.4
Independent Samples t Test for Males' Pretest Scores

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | *t* test for Equality of Means | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
		F	*Sig.*	*t*	*df*	*Sig.* (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	*Std.* Error Difference	Lower	Upper

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.11	.73	.10	28	.92	.06	.65	-1.28	1.41
Equal variances not assumed			.10	27.95	.92	.06	.65	-1.28	1.41

As the results indicated, there was no significant difference, *t* (28) = .10, *p* = .92, between the control group males (*M* = 13.66, *SD* = 1.83) and experimental group males (*M*=13.60, *SD*=1.76) in terms of the reading comprehension in their pretest scores.

Results of the Females' Posttest

Table 4.5 presents descriptive statistics for the reading comprehension of the participants in the posttest.

Table 4.5
Descriptive Statistics for Females' Posttest Scores

	Group	*N*	Mean	*Std*. Deviation	*Std*. Error Mean
Posttest	Control	15	15.33	1.49	.38
	Experimental	15	17.00	1.77	.45

Although the means indicated that there was a substantial difference between the performance of the experimental group females and that of the control group females, in order to make sure that the difference was statistically significant, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Table 4.6 shows the results.

Table 4.6
Independent Samples t Test for Females' Posttest Scores

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t* test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.88	.35	-2.78	28	.01	-1.66	.59	-2.89	-.43
Equal variances not assumed			-2.78	27.23	.01	-1.66	.59	-2.89	-.43

As shown in Table 4.6 there was a highly significant difference, *t* (28) = -2.78, *p* <.05, between the scores of the female participants in the control group (*M* =15.33, *SD* = 1.49) and that of females in the experimental group (*M* =17, *SD*=1.77) in terms of the reading comprehension. The results help to answer the first research questions. As the results indicated, the answer to this question was positive. In fact, cognitive tasks, namely opinion tasks and reasoning tasks, the independent variable, did make a difference in reading comprehension among Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Results of Males' Posttest

The second research questions of this study aimed to explore whether cognitive tasks through which male students were taught had any significant impact on the reading comprehension of Iranian male EFL learners. To achieve this end, the posttest scores of male participants in the experimental and control groups were compared via an independent samples *t* test in order to make certain the two

groups has a significant difference in regard to reading comprehension. The results of the analyses are presented below.

Table 4.7
Descriptive Statistics for Males' Posttest Scores

	Group	N	Mean	*Std.* Deviation	*Std.* Error Mean
Posttest	Control	15	15.46	1.84	.47
	Experimental	15	16.73	1.16	.30

On the posttest, the mean score of male participants in the experimental group (*M* = 16.73) was greater than that of male participants in the control group (*M* = 15.46). Table 4.8 shows that this difference between the two mean scores was statistically significant.

Table 4.8
Independent Samples t Test for the Males' Posttest Scores

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t* test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	*Sig.*	t	df	*Sig.* (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	*Std.* Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.467	.23	-2.24	28	.03	-1.26	.56	-2.42	-.11
Equal variances not assumed			-2.24	23.59	.03	-1.26	.56	-2.43	-.10

The difference between the mean scores of the two groups on the posttest showed statistical significance since the *Sig.* (2-tailed) value was found to be less than the significance level (.03 < .05).

The result of statistical analysis showed both male and female participants in the experimental group who received cognitive tasks, namely opinion tasks and reasoning tasks, as the treatment outperformed the male and female participant in the control group.

Discussion

According to the data gained from this study and based on the treatment administered to the participants in experimental group to which opinion task and reasoning task were administered, it is obviously clear that implementing reasoning and opinion tasks have a significant positive effect on enhancing reading ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

One of the important factors that may affect learners' performance is the nature of the task that may be stimulating. Richards and Rogers (2001, p. 229) assert that task activity and task achievement, as characteristics for task-based instruction, are motivational. Brown (2000, p. 160) goes on to state "it is easy to assume that success in any task is due simply to the fact that someone is motivated." From a cognitive standpoint, motivation puts much more weight on the individual's judgment and might help a learner to achieve the given task more effectively.

As a facilitator, "teaching of explicit knowledge needs to be viewed as supplementary to task-based language teaching, not as a step in an instructional sequence" (Ellis, 2003, p. 150). Therefore,

task instruction constitutes the means by which learners are provided with opportunities to achieve the given task and also to communicate.

Socially, task is a meaningful communication and interpretation of an activity through social interaction. How we interpret the activity and consequently communicate with each other emerges partly through our perception of the world during our interaction. These perceptions are always passing through our beliefs and these beliefs are the foundation of a social community.

The above mentioned arguments support the effect of task-based teaching of reading from different dimensions. In short, as the goal of reading a text is to do something with the information; the results of the present study revealed that task-based teaching and using reasoning and opinion tasks have a significant and positive impact on promoting EFL learners reading comprehension ability.

The findings of the present study lend support to some of the previous studies in the literature which confirmed that using task-based instruction had positive effects on comprehension and/or recall of textual materials.

The results of the present study, as far as the relationship between task based and reading comprehension of EFL learners is concerned, are in line with Carless' (2001) study who explored the implementation of task-based teaching in three primary classrooms in Hong- Kong. He reviewed six issues (teachers' understanding of tasks, their attitudes, and the classroom time available for task-based teaching, teacher preparation of resources, the influence of textbook and topics, and the language proficiency of students) which were found to impact on how teachers approached the implementation of the communicative tasks in their classroom. The subjects of this case study were three female English teachers implementing task-based innovation over a seven month period in their own primary one or primary two classrooms with students aged six to seven. The findings in terms of the six issues which emerged from the data indicated that there was a certain amount of interplay between different issues. For example, the more positive the teacher attitude towards task-based teaching, the more likely he/she is to take time to prepare supplementary task-based materials or to create classroom time for carrying out activities.

In a similar manner, like the present research was Keyvanfar and Modarresi's (2009) study in which they attempted to find out whether using task-based reading activities had any impact on the development of text comprehension in Iranian young learners studying English as a foreign language at the beginner level. Two groups of 25 students, aged 11 to 13, were the participants of the study. Having instructed the experimental group with four task types and the control group with classical reading activities, the researchers compared the reading performance of the two groups through a *t* test which, not surprisingly, manifested the better performance of the experimental group. The scores gained from the four task types were compared and it was concluded that the students performed better in tasks which involved creativity and gave them the experience of playing.

The present study also supports the findings of Lochana and Deb's (2006) project in a school run by the Basaveshwara Education Society in India, which revealed evidence in support of a task-based approach to language teaching and learning. They developed an experiment in which non-task-based textbook activities were converted into task-based ones in order to test two hypotheses: (1) Task-based teaching enhances the language proficiency of the learners', and (2) Tasks encourage learners to participate more in the learning processes. Their findings suggest that TBL is beneficial to learners not only in terms of proficiency enhancement, but also in terms of motivation.

Similarly, Narita (2008) conducted a research in an elementary school in Japan where she taught English as a foreign language. The classes were given lessons and activities in which they experienced realistic communicative situations such as shopping tasks and an interview tasks. The results showed that many students had a feeling of contentment and strong willingness to continue to study English in the future after completing the tasks.

Conclusion

The study was in fact an attempt to shed more light on reading comprehension and test the point that whether using task-based instruction as a teaching techniques could bear any influence on the reading enhancement of Iranian EFL learners. In addition, the study also tried to determine

whether task based instruction could have any impact on improving reading skills by male and female learners. According to the results of the statistical analyses used in this experiment, it can be concluded that the idea of effectiveness of task based instruction on the reading ability was supported. All in all, since cognitive based activities proved their effectiveness in EFL class environments, more attention should be given to these activities that are built on a theoretical basis.

References

Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing* .Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Breen, M. (1989). The evaluation cycle for language learning tasks. In R. K. Johnson (Ed.): *The second language curriculum*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Breen, M.& C. Candling. (1980). The essentials of a communicative curriculum for language teaching. *Applied Linguistics,* 1, 89-112.

Brown, G. (1995). *Speakers, listeners and communications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice.* (3rd ed.). San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Daly, E. J., III, Chafouleas, S., & Skinner, C. H. (2005). *Interventions for reading problems: Designing and evaluating effective strategies.* New York: Guilford Press.

Dornyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (1991). *Second language acquisition and language pedagogy.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matter.

Ellis, R. (1993). Second Language Acquisition and structural syllabus. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27, 91-113.

Graesser, A. C., Singer, M., & Trabasso, T. (1994). Constructing inferences during narrative text comprehension. *Psychological Review*, *101*(3), 371–395. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.101.3.371

Loschky, L. (1994). Comprehensible input and second language acquisition: What is the relationship? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition,* 16, 303-23.

Myles, B. S., Hilgenfeld, T. D., Barnhill, G., Griswold, D., Hagiwara, T., & Simpson, R. L. (2002). Analysis of reading skills in individuals with Asperger's syndrome. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities,* 17, 44–47.

Nobuyoshi, J. & Ellis, R. (1993). Focused communication tasks in English Language. *Teaching Journals*, 47, 203-10.

Nunan, D. (1987). Communicative language teaching: Making it work. *ELT Journal,* 41, 136-45.

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (2005). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pica, T., R. Young, & C. Doughty. (1987). The impact of interaction on comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly,* 21, 737-58.

Prabhu, N. S. 1987. *Second language pedagogy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Willis, D., & Willis, J. (1996). *A Framework for task-based learning.* Harlow: Longman.

Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

THE ROLE OF COGNITIVE AND LEARNING STYLE IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Akram Kazemi (Corresponding Author)
Ph.D. Student
Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz Branch, Shiraz, Iran
aky.kazemi@gmail.com

Rezvan Shojaei
Ph.D. Student
Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz Branch, Shiraz, Iran
r_shojaei80@yahoo.com

Mohammad Zare
Ph.D Student
Department of Foreign Languages, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz Branch, Shiraz, Iran
mohammad_mz46@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT
AS THE LEARNERS HAVE THEIR OWN PREFERENCE IN LEARNING, TRAINERS SHOULD CUSTOMIZE THEIR TRAINING PROGRAMS AND TRAINING METHODS TO MAXIMIZE THE OUTCOME OF THE TRAINING. RESEARCH HAS ALSO CONFIRMED THAT THE STUDENTS COULD POSSIBLY HAVE MORE THAN ONE LEARNING STYLES. THUS, THE RESEARCH IN THEORY CONFIRMED THE EARLIER RESEARCH FINDINGS THAT LEARNING STYLES MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION FOR BETTER LEARNING OUTCOME. TEACHERS SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT A SINGLE L2 METHODOLOGY DOES NOT FIT AN ENTIRE CLASS FILLED WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE A RANGE OF STYLISTIC PREFERENCES. THEREFORE, A BROAD INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH WHICH MEETS ALL STUDENTS' NEEDS IS RECOMMENDED.

KEY WORDS: LEARNING STYLE, COGNITIVE STYLE

1. Introduction

Learning styles are not the same as abilities, but they are related to abilities in the sense that they explicate learners' preferences to use their abilities. Different theories of learning styles aim to account for individual differences in the speed and amount of absorbed knowledge that are not explained by abilities (Zhang and Sternberg 2000:469). Some researchers (e.g. Grigorenko and Sternberg 1995:205) prefer to see styles as interactions of intelligence and personality: "styles are not abilities, but rather how these abilities (and the knowledge acquired through them) are used in day-to-day interactions with the environment. Simply put, styles are not how much intelligence we have, but how we use these styles." When talking about learning styles, the term "cognitive style" has to be introduced. The idea of cognitive style was proposed by Allport (1937) when he referred to it as a means of identifying distinctive personality types or types of behavior. His view of styles was a result of Jung's (1923) theory of psychological types. Since its introduction, the term "style" has been modified, but its basic

meaning – a habitual pattern or preferred way of doing something, consistent over long periods of time and across tasks – has remained unchanged (Sternberg and Grigorenko 2001:2) .The cognitive style construct was developed by cognitive psychologists who conducted research into problem solving and sensory and perceptual abilities. It was a cover term to describe individual ways of perceiving, organizing and processing information.

More recently, however, attention has been devoted to styles in education, and the term "learning style" has been introduced, both as a synonym and a substitute name for "cognitive style". Some theorists (e.g. Entwistle, 1981) treats cognitive and learning styles as interchangeable terms; others (e.g. Das, 1988) considers them to be two different concepts. To Riding and Cheema (1991:194), the "main difference between them is the number of style elements considered: while cognitive style is a bipolar dimension, learning style entails many elements." Additionally, "learning style" is supposed to have emerged as a replacement for "cognitive style" in the 1970s; those applying the term "learning style" take cognitive style into consideration, but are more interested in practical applications of the research findings than in the theory underlying the distinction (Ibid.:194). Brown (1994:104-105) explains this phenomenon in the following way: "When cognitive styles are specifically related to an educational context, where affective and physiological factors are mixed together, they are usually more generally referred to as learning styles ." One of the characteristic features distinguishing cognitive styles from learning styles is that the former operate as bipolar concepts, and the lack of a certain feature indicates the presence of its counterpart. Learning styles are more complex, and their elements are rarely described as opposites; instead, a person may or may not possess any given element in his or her style. Moreover, in the words of Keefe, learning style is seen as a broader construct, including cognitive along with affective and physiological styles (1987:6). The term "cognitive" refers to an invisible, attributed structure of mind, which may be tapped by asking the subject to carry out tasks bearing little obvious relation to ordinary activities. "Learning style", on the other hand, is more visible and concrete, as well as observable during everyday activities. It is concerned with the "totality of psychological functioning as this affects learning.

2. The nature of style

Learning styles have been defined as "cognitive, affective and physiological characteristics that serve as relatively fixed indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment' and which 'reflect genetic coding, personality development, and environmental adaptation" (Keefe 1982:44). Ehrman and Oxford (1990:311) use the term "patterns" to refer to learning styles: they are "patterns of mental functioning and dealing with new information." They are "internally based characteristics, often not perceived or consciously used by learners, for the intake and comprehension of new information" (Reid 1998a: ix). They are retained in spite of the teaching methods and classroom atmospheres. New styles may also be acquired with time, while the old ones may be adapted to specific circumstances, especially when learners become aware of them. A degree of destiny intervention is also visible in the definition provided by Reinert (1976:161), who states that "an individual's learning style is the way in which that person is programmed to learn most effectively, i.e., to receive, understand, remember, and be able to use new information." Sternberg (1994:174) believes that styles are not permanently determined at birth. In his opinion, they seem to be function of the environment, tasks and situations, and can be developed. They may also differ across situations and stages of life, but environmental reinforcement does play a role in their shaping: Certain tasks are more optimally performed with certain styles. Rewarding students for using preferred styles on these tasks is likely to lead to greater display of the rewarded styles. More generally, a child's socialization into a value system will probably reward some styles more than others, leading to preferences for these styles. But the fact that some people retain less-rewarded styles despite environmental pressures shows that socialization does not account fully for the origins of styles, and that there may be pre-programmed dispositions that are difficult to change (Sternberg 1994:174).

The question of learning style being biologically or environmentally determined has not yet been fully reached to an agreement. Some research shows that certain elements of learning style are outcomes of "genetic makeup," while others are influenced by life experiences. For instance, a person's preference for bright or dim light or the need for intake of food while studying is almost

certainly biologically imposed. On the other hand, it can be guessed that a sociological preference for studying alone or in a group is influenced by previous experience. To make the issue more complicated, research has shown that children can be more different than similar to their parents in learning styles. Siblings also differ among themselves as far as learning styles are concerned (Dunn 1984:16-17). As stated by Kinsella and Sherak (1998:87-88), learning styles are neither entirely innate nor unalterable, but they are reinforced by years of conventional classroom roles and norms. Thus, when asked in a questionnaire to voice their learning preferences, students will indicate those options they have been most often exposed to and with which they have experienced success, rather than those that they have not yet tried. This is because "culturally absorbed ways of acquiring and displaying knowledge are not readily 'unlearned '" (Kinsella and Sherak 1998:88). From the above definitions, it may be concluded that learning styles are extremely complex because they encompass the learner's overall approach to learning: they involve the typical and persistent ways of perceiving, absorbing, processing, responding to, and keeping new information and skills present in learning tasks. Their characteristic features can be described with three adjectives: natural, habitual and preferred (Kinsella 1995:171, Mariani 1996). As stated by Kinsella and Sherak (1998:87-88). It is unfortunate that even though there exist so many referents of learning styles, no systematic attempts have been made by researchers to establish a hierarchy of learning style correlates from the most deeply rooted, inherent cognitive preferences to the most peripheral, superficial and unusual reactions. Styles are usually grouped according to some commonalities among their components (e.g. into cognitive, affective, physiological and psychological), but the distinguished types are treated as equally valuable. If they are put into any order, it is based on learners' perceptions and metacognitive assessment:

> A learning style...can run the range from a mild preference ("I'd rather learn by discovering patterns by myself.") through a strong need ("It interferes with my learning when I haven't mastered the grammar patterns first – I have trouble following the material that uses them.") to an out-and-out rigidity ("I have to see it before I can remember it; if I don't see it nothing sticks at all. ") (Ehrman 1996:54).

Learning styles are not dichotomous (black or white, present or absent). Learning styles generally operate on a continuum or on multiple, intersecting continua. For example, a person might be more extraverted than introverted, or more closure-oriented than open, or equally visual and auditory but with lesser kinesthetic and tactile involvement. Few if any people could be classified as having all or nothing in any of these categories (Ehrman, 1996).

3. The relationship between styles and strategies

Apart from the difficult distinction between cognitive and learning styles, there are other conceptual problems stemming from difficulties related to defining style as a theoretical construct. One of these problems is the differentiation between styles and strategies. L2 learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes that students use to enhance their own L2 learning. The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word strategia, which means steps or actions taken for aiming of winning a war. The warlike meaning of strategia has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal -directedness remains in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 1990). A given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered. As many researchers use the terms interchangeably, Sternberg and Grigorenko (2001:3) suggest making a distinction at a very basic level – by looking at the degree of consciousness involved in them. They believe styles operate within individuals without the learners being aware of the process, while strategies are characterized by a conscious activity, which is a choice of alternatives. As they put it, "strategy is used for task- or context-dependent situations, whereas style implies a higher degree of stability falling midway between ability and strategy". To Entwistle (1988:93), a learning style is the general tendency to adopt a particular strategy. Oxford claims that strategies are conscious steps or behaviors employed to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall and use of new information, thus they are much more specific than styles (1990:439). Strategies can be changed and taught, while styles, although considered flexible by some, cannot be described as teachable. Ehrman is of the

opinion that styles are realized by specific learning strategies (1996:49). Most students can discover their learning styles by reflecting upon their strategies. In the same vein, teachers can make hypotheses about their students' styles by observing the strategies they employ. A strategy is useful if the following conditions are present: (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand (b) the strategy fits the particular students' learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies. Strategies that fulfill these conditions make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990, P.8).

Learning strategies can also enable students to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners (Allwright, 1990; Little, 1991). Irrespective of what definitions of style and strategy are adopted, the relationship between them seems to be of the chicken-and-egg kind. It is not clear whether strategies stem from styles, or conversely, whether styles are labels given to specific types of strategic behaviors. In either case, however, styles and strategies appear to be inextricably intertwined. Yet students are not always aware of the power of consciously using L2 learning strategies for making learning quicker and more effective (Nyikos & Oxford, 1993). Skilled teachers help their students develop an awareness of learning strategies and enable them to use a wider range of appropriate strategies.

4. Researches on the Relationship between Learning Styles and Learning Strategies

Obviously, learning styles and learning strategies are different. Learning styles embody unconscious learner traits while learning strategies are specific behaviors chosen by the learners to make learner (learning) more efficient. However, these two terms are closely related to each other. Many empirical studies have suggested that learning styles may significantly influence learners ' learning strategies choices in spite of different research instruments and contexts concerned . Ehrman and Oxford (Oxford, 1990, pp. 311-327) had tried to explore the relationship between learning styles and learning strategies through semi-structured interviews. Before the qualitative study, the subjects, 20 Foreign Service Institute students, had already completed two self-reported instruments as part of the quantitative study: the MBTI-G (Myers and McCaulley 1985) for learning styles and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) for preferred language learning strategies. Findings of this research revealed, "for each contrasting pair of the bipolar MBTI scales, the preferred learning strategy categories were in an appropriately matched distribution". The research results showed that "learners' learning styles may significantly influence their choices of language learning strategies".

Another research investigating the relationship between language learning styles and strategies of the diarist/researcher in a naturalist setting was carried out by Carson and Longhini (2002, pp. 401-438). The study employed Oxford's SILL and the Style Analysis Survey (SAS) to compare categories that emerge in the diary entries. The findings indicated that "the diarist's learning strategies were often affected by her learning styles". For example, the diarist, with a global learning style, always suspended bits of partly understood language till they formed a large pattern.

Also, another research concerned with the relationship between language learning styles and strategies was conducted by Li and Xiaoqing (2006, pp. 67-90). However, the focus of their research is put on the tertiary-level learners in China. The study presents two kinds of data: quantitative and qualitative. In the quantitative study, the subjects consist of 187 second-year undergraduates. Two self-reported inventories, the Chinese version of MBTI-G (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a personality test designed to assist a person in identifying some significant personal preferences and a questionnaire on the use of learning strategies adapted from O'Malley and Chamot's classification system, were used to examine the students' learning styles and learning strategies respectively. Structured interviews have been performed among six high and low achievers in the qualitative aspect of the study. Their findings show that "learning styles have a significant influence on learners' strategy choices". Judging scale correlates positively with seven sets of learning strategies. It also investigated the influence of the choice of learning strategies upon learning outcomes. Compared with low achievers, "high achievers are more capable of exercising strategies that are linked with their non-preferred styles". Based on the results, it was proposed that "learning styles may influence language learning outcomes through their relationship with learning strategies".

Littlemore (2001, pp.241-265) related different communication strategy preferences to the holistic/analytic cognitive style dimension. Their research findings showed that holistic students used more communication strategies.

It is clear that these researches have very fruitful results, and it has been sufficiently proved that studies concerned both learning styles and learning strategies have great significance.

5. Literature Review on Learning Styles

Learning style was developed by researchers to classify learners based on their approach to perceiving and processing information (Buch & Bartley, 2002). Learning style is defined as "specific behavioral pattern an individual displays in learning" (Campbell, et al, 1996). Dunn et al. defines it as a new way of how new information is acquired by individual to develop new skills (1975 & 1989). Kolb (1984) defined it as a process where an individual retains new information and skills. Kolb's theory of learning styles states that knowledge is created through transformation of experiences. Technology-aided instruction has helped to develop customized learning tools to maximize the benefit. O'Conner (1998) states that it is necessary to examine learning styles and various delivery modes. There are various researchers who studied the learning styles and developed models of learning styles. The most used and researched models were developed by Kolb (1984), Honey and Mumford (1986), Gregorc (1985) and Fleming (1995). Kolb (1984) developed his model of Learning Style Inventory based on the Experiential Learning Theory where he outlined two related approaches toward grasping experience. They are Concrete Experience and Abstract Conceptualizations. Buch and Bartely (2002) used Kolb model in his research where they conducted a survey in a large financial services institution in the Southeast USA. 337 employees were identified and questionnaire was distributed. 165 participated. The research questionnaire included 5 delivery modes: computer based, TV based, print based, audio based and classroom based. The result revealed that 25% were accommodators 29% were assimilators, 22% were convergers and 24% were divergers. This proved that there are various styles of learning represented in an adult population. The divergers preferred traditional mode of delivery and accommodators preferred computer based learning. The finding is one of the many research findings that support Kolb's theory of Learning Style Inventory. Lum et al (2011) used Kolb in analyzing bridging professional education programs in three institutions among the three difference professionals in Ontario, Canada. All three professionals found to be divergent. Thus they prefer to observe than participate or act. The authors suggest that the relevant authority should consider offering more courses by considering their learning style.

Another most commonly and widely used learning style is Fleming's VARK (1995). He categorized learning styles into four types. His questionnaire focuses on gaining more students attention because of better match between teaching and learning styles. He pointed out it is not necessary to restrict the learners and teachers to select one of the four styles. However, usually they show strong preference for one and make a strength and weakness on the others. The differences in students' learning could be in relation to their skill, the way the information is processed and possible application of the information. He classified the learners according to their learning preferences. The four types of learners are visual, auditory, reading or writing and kinesthetic. Visual learners are those have preference for visual aids like diagrams and handouts and they prefer to think in pictures. Never get lost in finding direction. They love to draw and scribble and have good sense of color matching. Auditory learners tend to learn through lectures and discussions. They love sounds and music (Flemimg, 1995). This type of learners uses aural content in association and visualization. Reading/writing preference learners prefer the collection of information from printed words. Lastly, kinesthetic learners or tactile learners learn through experience. They like to experiment and projects to explore. They like physical exercise and produce ideas while doing exercises. They cannot sit for long and would like to move around and love to try it out. Flashcards will work better with them as they can touch and move them around (Campbell, et al, 1996).

Gregorc (1985) organized another model of learning styles that explains how the mind works. This model looked at perception. The perceptions are considered as the foundation of one's learning strengths or learning styles. There are two perception qualities and two ordering abilities. They are concrete and abstract and random and sequential respectively. In concrete perception, five senses

play an important role. Information is collected from them while in abstract perception understanding of ideas, qualities and concepts. Sequential ability involves organization of information in a linear and logical way whereas in random organization of information is processed in chunks and there is no specific order. The perceptual qualities and ordering abilities are present in every one even if some might have dominant in certain ability or qualities (Gregorc, 1985& Campbell, et al, 1996).

6. Implications for L2 Teaching

Four implications for classroom practice: assessing styles and strategies in the L2 classroom, adapting L2 instruction and strategy instruction to learners' style preferences, remembering that there is no single L2 instructional methodology fit all students, and preparing for and conducting strategy instruction.

6.1. Assessing Styles and Strategies in the L2 Classroom

L2 teachers could benefit by assessing the learning styles and the strategy use of their students, because such assessment leads to greater understanding of styles and strategies. Teachers also need to evaluate their styles and strategies, so that they will be aware of their preferences and of possible biases. Useful means exist to make these assessments, as mentioned earlier. Teachers can learn about assessment options by reading books or journals, participating professional conferences, or taking relevant courses or workshops.

6.2. Attuning L2 instruction and strategy instruction to learners' style needs

The more that teachers know about their students' style preferences, the more effectively they can orient their L2 instruction, as well as the strategy teaching that can be interwoven into language instruction, matched to those style preferences. Some learners might need visual instruction, while others might require more auditory, kinesthetic, or tactile types of instruction. Without enough knowledge about their individual students' style preferences, teachers cannot systematically provide the needed instructional variety.

6.3. Remembering that No Single L2 Instructional Methodology Fits All Students

Styles and strategies help determine a particular learners' ability and willingness to work within the framework of various instructional methodologies. It is not wise to think that a single L2 methodology could possibly fit an entire class filled with students who have a range of stylistic and strategic preferences. Instead of choosing a specific instructional methodology, L2 teachers would do better to employ a broad instructional approach, notably the best version of the communicative approach that contains a combined focus on form and fluency. Such an approach allows for deliberate, creative variety to meet the needs of all students in the class.

6.4. Preparing for and Conducting L2 Strategy Instruction

L2 teachers should consider different ways to prepare to conduct strategy instruction in their classes. Helpful preparatory steps include taking teacher development courses, finding relevant information in print or on the Internet, and making contacts with specialists. Although we do not yet know all we wish to know about optimal strategy instruction, there is growing evidence that L2 teachers can and should conduct strategy instruction in their classrooms. For some teachers it might be better to start with small strategy interventions, such as helping L2 readers learn to analyze words and guess meanings from the context, rather than with full-scale strategies -based instruction involving a vast array of learning strategies and the four language skills, i.e., reading, writing, speaking and listening. Other teachers might want to move rapidly into strategies-based instruction. Strategies - based instruction is not so much a separate instructional method as it is sound strategy instruction interwoven with the general communicative language teaching approach .Chamot and O'Malley (1996) describe the CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) model a form of strategies –based instruction for ESL learners that includes explicit strategy instruction, content area instruction, and academic language development. Cohen (1998) presents a different but somewhat related version of strategies -based instruction for native English speakers learning foreign languages. In assessing the success of any strategy, instruction teachers should look for individual's progress toward L2 proficiency and for signs of increased self-efficacy or motivation.

7. Conclusion

The learning styles have developed since 19th century and were well received and adopted by many countries into their educational and business sectors. This is due to the fact that understanding learning styles helps the educators and the trainers to deliver relevant materials in a tailor made fashion. This created an enthusiasm and motivation among the learners to learn and practice what they have learned. Some researchers have developed teaching styles that could match various learners' styles. The researches so far conducted supported various styles of learning and urged the trainers and educational institution to plan the delivery of teaching or training as per the trainees' need than the trainers' convenience. The survey carried out by the researcher also repeats the fact that the learners are having different types of learning styles and there is a need to look into their different learning styles before preparing the training materials.

REFERENCES

Allport, G.W. (1937). *Personality, a psychological interpretation*. New York: Holt.

Allwright, D. (1990). *Autonomy in language pedagogy*. CRILE Working Paper 6. Centre for Research in Education, University of Lancaster, UK.

Brown, H.D. (1994). *Principle of Language Learning and Teaching*. Pearson Education Limited. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research.

Buch, K. & Bartley, S. (2002). Learning Style and Training Delivery Mode Preference. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 14* (1), 5 – 10.

Campbell, L., Campbell, B. & Dickinson, D. (1996). *Teaching & Learning through Multiple Intelligences*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Carson, J. G. & Longhini, A. (2002*)*. Focusing on learning styles and strategies: A diary study in an immersion setting. *Language Learning, 52*, 401-438.

Chamot, A.U. & O' Malley, J.M. (1996). Implementing the cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA*)*. In R. Oxford (Ed.), *Language Learning Strategies around the world* (pp. 167-173). Manoa: University of Hawaii Press.

Cohen, A.D. (1998). *Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language*. Essex, U.K.: Longman.

Dunn, R. K., Dunn, K. & Price, G. E. (1975, 1989). *Learning Styles Inventory.* Lawrence, KS: Price Systems.

Dunn, R. (1984). How should students do their homework? Research vs. opinion*. Early Years, 14*(4) 43-45.

Ehrman, M., & Oxford,R. (1990). Adult language learning styles and strategies in an inventive training setting*. Modern Language Journal, 74*, 311-327.

Ehrman, M. (1996). *Second Language Learning Difficulties: Looking Beneath the Surface.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Entwistle, N. (1981). *Styles of teaching and learning*: *An integrated outline of educational psychology for students, teachers, and lecturers*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Entwistle, N. (1988). *Styles of learning and teaching*. London: David Fulton.

Fleming, N. D. (1995). I'm Different; Not dumb. Modes of Presentation (VARK) in the Tertiary Classroom. In Zelmer, A., (ed.) *Research and Development in Higher Education*, Proceedings of the1995 Annual Conference of the Higher Education and Research Development Society of Australasia(HERDSA),HERDSA, 18, 308 – 313.

Gregorc, A. F. (1985). *An adult's guide to style* (2nd. ed.). Columbia, CT: Gregorc Associates Inc.

Gregorc, A.F. (1985). *Style Delineator: a self-assessment instrument for adults*. Columbia, CT: Gregorc Associates Inc.

Grigorenko, E. L., & Sternberg, R. J. (1995). Thinking styles. In D. Saklofske & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *International handbook of personality and intelligence* (pp.205–229). New York: Plenum.

Honey, P. & Mumford, A. (1986*). The Manual of Learning Styles*. Peter Honey: Berkshire.

Jie, L &Xiaoqing, Q. (2006). Language learning styles and learning strategies of tertiary-level English learners in China*. Regional Language Center Journal, 37*, 367-390.

Jung, C. G. (1923). *Psychological types*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace.

Keefe, J. W. (1982). Assessing student learning styles. In J. W. Keefe (Ed.), *Student learning styles and brain behavior* (pp. 1-18). Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Keefe, J. W. (1987). *Learning style theory and practice*. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Kinsella, K. (1995). Understanding and empowering diverse learners in the ESL classroom. In J. Reid (Ed.), *Learning styles in the ESL/EFL classroom* (pp. 170-194). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Kinsella, K. & Sherak, K. (1998). Designing ESL classroom collaboration to accommodate diverse work styles. In J. M. Reid (Ed.), *Understanding learning styles in the second language classroom* (pp.85-99). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

Little, D. (1991). *Learner Autonomy I: Definitions, Issues and Problems*. Dublin: Authentik.

Littlemore, Jeannette. (2001). An empirical study of the relationship between cognitive style and the use of communication strategy. *Applied Linguistic, 22* (2), 241-265.

Mariani, L. (1996). *Brain-Dominance Questionnaire*. (Rev.ed.). Retrieved January 20, 2016, from http://www.scs.sk.ca/cyber/present/brain.htm

Myers, I.B., McCaulley, M.H., Quenk, N.L,. & Hammer, A.L. (1985). *A Guide to the Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. Palo alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Nyikos, M., & Oxford, R.L. (1993). A factor -analytic study of language learning strategy use: Interpretations from information processing theory and social psychology. *Modern Language Journal, 77* (1), 11 -23.

O'Conner, T. (1998). *Using Learning Style to Adapt Technology for Higher Education*. Retrieved January, 25, 2016 from http://web, indstate.edu/ct/styles/ learning. htm/.

Oxford, R.L. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Reid, J. M. (1998).*Understanding learning styles in the second language classroom*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

Reinert, H. (1976). One picture is worth a thousand words? Not necessarily. *Modern Language Journal, 60*,160-168.

Riding, R. &Cheema, I. (1991). Cognitive styles: An overview and integration. *Educational Psychology, 11* (3&4), 193 -215.

Sternberg, R. J. (1994). Thinking styles: Theory and assessment at the interface between intelligence and personality. In R. J. Sternberg & P. Ruzgis (Eds.), *Personality and intelligence* (pp. 105–127). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sternberg, R.J., & Grigorenko, E.L. (2001). A capsule history of theory and research on styles. In R.J. Sternberg, & L.F. Zhang (Eds.), *Perspectives on thinking, learning and cognitive styles* (pp. 1–21). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Zhang, L. F., & Sternberg, R. J. (2000). Are learning approaches and thinking styles related? A study in two Chinese populations. *The Journal of Psychology, 134* (5), 469–489.

THE RHETORICAL STRUCTURE OF M.A ABSTRACTS WRITTEN BY STUDENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN IRAN

Seyyed Parsa Tabatabaei
Tabatabaei.2013@yahoo.com

Zahra Najafi
Najafiz55@yahoo.com

Hamidreza Gobadirad
Epic14_h@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT STUDY WAS INVESTIGATED THE RHETORICAL STRUCTURE OF THE GENRE OF ABSTRACT AMONG THE ABSTRACTS WRITTEN BY IRANIAN M.A.FOR THIS PURPOSE, A TOTAL NUMBER OF 30 MA THESES ABSTRACTS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH BY THE STUDENTS OF ENGLISH TEACHING WAS SUBMITTED DURING THE PERIOD 2012-2015 WAS USED IN THE PRESENT STUDY. THE ABSTRACTS WERE SELECTED FROM AMONG THE EXISTING CORPUS IN SHAHREZA UNIVERSITY. THE THREE MOVE THEORY DEVELOPED BY SWALES' (1990) AND COMPRISED OF 11 STEPS WAS USED TO INVESTIGATE THE ABSTRACTS. THE FINDINGS SHOWED THAT THE MOVE NAMED OUTLINING PURPOSE , ANNOUNCING PRESENT RESEARCH, AND ANNOUNCING MAIN FINDINGS SHAPED THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF THE USED RHETORICAL STRUCTURES. THIS STUDY CAN BE A STARTING POINT TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF ABSTRACTS AND ARTICLE AND FINALLY THESIS WRITING IN IRAN.

Introduction

Writing is generally regarded as a difficult skill and a complex task (Graham, Harris & Mason, 2005). This is often due to its complex characteristics which according to Wall (1981, P. 53) "range from mechanical control to creativity, with good grammar, knowledge of subject matter, awareness of stylistic conventions and various mysterious factors in between." Writing is a process through which writers explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible and concrete. It is a difficult skill both for native and nonnative speakers, for writers should balance multiple issues such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics; this is true of writing a thesis in specific. Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST, hereafter), developed by Mann and Thompson (1989), is a framework which explores the text structure above the clause level, by focusing on the relations between parts of text. Mann and Thompson (1989) believe that this theory takes clauses as its atoms, and relates them hierarchically, using some rhetorical relations. In their model, these relations are defined functionally, in terms of what their effect on the reader is. Examples of such relations are justify, elaboration, purpose, antithesis, and condition. Nicholas (1994) believed that rhetorical relations may be subdivided into two types. Subject Matter or Informational (Semantic) relations try to make the reader recognize that there is an ideational (real-world–describing) meaning relation between the two text spans. Presentational (Pragmatic) relations are intended "to increase some inclination in the reader" (Mann and Thompson 1989, P.18).

The abstract that accompanies research articles and theses is a notable practice in academic research as it constitutes a gateway to the reading or publication of a research article or a thesis (Lores 2004, P. 281). Salager-Mayer (1992) states that this genre is a distinctive category of discourse intended to communicate factual new knowledge for members of different academic communities. Abstract writing is a skill that all students from different fields have to master when they write a thesis while doing their postgraduate course or research. The abstract, as a genre, has some communicative functions for the post graduate students and professors. Irrespective of the subject they serve, abstracts function as being "advance indicators of the content and structure of the following text."(Swales 1990, P. 179). (Pierson, 2004) declared that The Abstract typically aims to provide an overview of the study which answers the following questions:

What was the general purpose of the study?
What was the particular aim of the study?
Why was the study carried out?
How was the study carried out?
What did the study reveal?

The typical structure of an Abstract, then, is: overview of the study, aim of the study, reason for the study methodology used in the study, and findings of the study. The first step in writing an abstract is to read the instructions.

Among various skills, writing is truly proved to be one of the toughest tasks especially for non-native students (Swales, 2004). Writing thesis or dissertation in addition to writing and publishing articles in all fields including TEFL is a necessity for post graduate students.

.As stated by Van Dijk (1980), the abstract can be viewed as an integral piece of discourse; it can appear in abstracting journals and in on-line retrieval systems which publish paper abstracts. Its appearance in abstracting journals is designed to lead the readers back to the original text (Swales 1990).

students who works on the rhetoric of the abstracts is a technique which can be of great positive effect for Iranian post-graduate learners. In general, there are few studies worked on the rhetoric structure of abstract written by post graduate in Iran. Thus, this study probed to fill the gap and investigated the rhetoric structure of the abstracts of the theses written by Iranian post graduate students of TEFL student in Shahreza azad university.

Research Questions

What is the rhetorical structure of abstracts written by M.A post graduate students in TEFL?

Literature Review

" Genre" as a term has its roots in French language and its first uses have been recorded in literature and art. According to Online Etymology Dictionary (www.etymonline.com) the word's history dates back to 1770, a French word in English meaning "kind, sort, style" which is used especially in French for "independent style" of painting, "depicting scenes of ordinary life", according to another dictionary, Thesaurus Online Dictionary (www.thefreedictionary.com), it is "a category of painting in which domestic scenes or incidents from everyday life are depicted". These two dictionaries alongside many others all agree on the point that the term is originally literature based and artistic. Despite all these, nowadays, due to its excessive use in different nonliterary fields such as linguistics, discourse, and genre analysis sometimes such a crystal clear fact is concealed in misleading assumptions. With regards to the definition of the term, range of definitions for the term is also very interesting, and it is again due to the fact that it is used in many different fields.

Genre analysts have reasons to argue that a genre-analytic approach to the understanding of text structure, and to the teaching of writing, will result in FL written success. This approach will help readers to understand and to achieve text objectives comprehensively. By the same token, the current researcher believes that, through genre analytic approaches to FL language teaching, students will become able to differentiate between different types of text, and that they will obtain useful information about the nature of different types of texts which eventually help them write better even

when they engage in writing such academically complex genres as masters theses or PhD dissertations .

The problem, however, is that there is a dearth of research that describes the nature of written text from a genre-analytic perspective. This shortage is even more dramatic in Iran.

The abstract that accompanies research articles, theses and dissertations is a notable practice in academic research as it is a door to the reading or publication of a research article or a thesis (Lores 2004, p. 281). Salager-Mayer (1992) perceives this genre as a distinctive category of discourse intended to communicate factual new knowledge for members of different academic communities. The abstracts play an essential role in professional reading as they help readers decide on the relevance of an article to their interests (Busa 2005) and give researchers a view of whether a particular longer text is worth reading. Similarly, Martin-Martin (2005) notes that abstracts function as a time saving device by informing the readers about the content of the article, indicating whether the full text merits further attention.

M.A. thesis abstract writing is an academic practice that all students from different fields have to implement when they write a full M.A thesis while doing their postgraduate course or research. In most cases writing an MA thesis is only attempted once in a graduate student's career. The great majority of theses are prefaced by an informative abstract, which contains a - summary of the much longer report, and is meant to give the reader an exact and concise knowledge of the full (theses) (Bhatia 1993, P. 78).

Previous studies have mainly focused on investigating the rhetorical and linguistic features of research article abstracts attempting to identify and describe the relation between the different moves that constitute this genre and the linguistic features that indicate each of its component moves. Some of these studies focused on research article abstract in specific disciplines, other studies shed light on variations across disciplines and cultures, and others examined the possible impact of language choice in abstracts. For instance, Lin et al. (2006) focused on the rhetorical structure of medical English abstracts; Hyland (2000) investigated the textual and rhetorical moves along with some of the linguistic features that express abstracts in linguistics, and Pho (2008) considered the rhetorical moves and the authorial stance in the fields of applied linguistics and educational technology.

Variation of abstracts across disciplines has been studied by different researchers (e.g. Hyland 2000, Huckin 2001). For example, Melander et al. (1997) examined the possible impact of language choice in abstracts from three different disciplines and find that linguistics and biology abstracts produced in ―the American context are different in their overall organization‖. Huckin (2001) found that biomedical research article abstracts often do not include the purpose move. Along the same lines, Samraj (2002) showed that the centrality claim moves are more crucial in the abstracts of Conservation Biology than those in Wildlife Behavior. Stotesbury (2003) demonstrated that evaluation attributes were twice as common in the humanities and social science abstracts as in those from the natural sciences. Bondi (2005) found that scientific procedures are foregrounded in economics abstracts. This tendency was also confirmed by Busa (2005), who confirmed a preference for the thematization of discourse products and procedures in economics abstracts. In contrast, psychology abstracts, as reported by Busa, reflected a preference for the foregrounding of the discourse objects over discourse products and procedures.

There are only a few studies that have evaluated masters' theses from a genre-analytic perspective. None, however, has focused on the abstract section of English teaching. The current study sought to investigate the structure of masters' theses' abstracts written by students of English teaching, This study also aimed at finding and describing the moves in the abstract genre of a set of masters' theses written by Iranian learners. This study compared the move structure of masters' thesis abstracts.

Methodology

To seek out response to the research question, 30 MA theses abstracts written by post graduate students in TEFL were used in the present study. So the purpose of this study was to investigate the rhetorical structure of abstracts written by M.A students in TEFL. The abstracts have been chosen from among the existing corpus in Shahreza University. the theses which were submitted during the period of 2012-2015.

Research Instrument

Swales' (1990) "Creating a Research Space model (the CARS model)" have been used in this study. The model captures the ways in which academic writers justify and highlight their own contribution to the ongoing research profile of the field by first establishing a topic for the research and summarizing the key features of the previous research, then establishing a gap or possible extension of that work that will form the basis of the writers' claims. The model proposes three main Moves for the introduction and a number of Steps used to express each move: Move 1: Establishing a Territory

 Step 1: Claiming Centrality and/or

Step 2: Making Topic Generalizations and/or

 Step 3: Reviewing Items of Previous Research

 Move 2: Establishing a Niche

 Step 1A: Counter-claiming or

Step 1B: Indicating a Gap or

Step 1C: Question Raising or

Step 1D: Continuing a Tradition

Move 3: Occupying the Niche

Step 1A: Outlining Purposes or

Step 1B: Announcing Present Research

Step 2: Announcing Principal Findings

Step 3: Indicating Research Article Structure

Procedure

The present study was conducted within the framework of genre analysis. According to Miller (1984), genres are developed by communities around sets of communicative events. The essence of the notion of genre analysis is to consider a genre text as a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of a communicative purpose(s) reflected in the cognitive structuring of the genre (Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993). The data analysis of this study drew mainly on Swales' CARS (Creating a Research Space) model for research article introductions. The rhetorical structure of abstracts of the present thesis was analyzed in terms of the component moves that formed each text. According to Swales (1981, 1990), he term "move'' varies in length but at least contains one proposition that may be conveyed by one sentence or more and sometimes by a clause or a phrase, as noted by Bhatia (1993), and Al-Ali (2004). Therefore, it is difficult to identify move boundaries on formal linguistic criteria only. Consequently, assigning a function for a particular move is mainly guided by both implicit knowledge (Sandig 1986, quoted in Szurawitzki 2008) of generic conventions and explicit lexical items and phrases signaling information contained in each text portion (i.e. move) (Al-Ali 2009). So This study aimed at finding and describing the moves in the abstract genre of a set of masters' theses written by Iranian learners. This study compared the move structure of masters' thesis abstracts.

Results

As it was stated earlier, the research question seek to investigate the rhetorical structure of abstracts written by M.A students in TEFL. To gain a corpus of authentic materials, the researcher selected a corpus which was made up of 30 English abstracts written by the students of TEFL. Swales' (1990) "Creating a Research Space model (the CARS model)" was used to analyze the gathered corpus. Swales focused on the research article, and in particular the introduction section of the research article genre (Swales, 1990). As it was stated earlier, the model proposes three main moves for the introduction and a number of

steps used to express each move. Examples of moves include :establishing a Territory and establishing a Niche, and instances of steps are items like: Claiming Centrality and/or making Topic Generalizations and/or Reviewing Items of Previous Research and so on. The rhetorical structure of abstracts of the present thesis was analyzed in terms of the component moves that formed each text. Due to the fact that move analysis involves a degree of subjectivity, a PhD candidate was asked to

identify the component moves of the abstracts. Then the researcher analyzed the abstracts in terms of the type, frequency, number and language used to express the component moves employed by the writers of the TEFL abstracts. The results of the generic structure of abstracts revealed the component strategic moves that tend to occur in the corpus texts analyzed. The results are presented in the following section in detail. In Table 4.1, each component will be defined, illustrated and exemplified by instances from the corpus. For purposes of illustration, examples of linguistic exponents and signals are often italicized or underlined.

Table 4.1
Component Moves of abstracts of TEFL

Component moves of Abstracts in TEFL	Frequency of moves (%)	Percent
Move1- Establishing a territory		
Step1- Claiming Centrality	12	9.6
Step2- Making Topic Generalization	7	5.6
Step3- Reviewing Item of Previous Research	3	2.4
Move2- Establishing A Niche		
Step1- Counter-Claiming	1	.8
Step2- Indicating A Gap	3	2.4
Step3- Raising A Question	3	2.4
Step4- Continuing A Tradition	2	1.6
Move3- Occupying the Niche		
Step1- Outlining Purposes	30	24
Step2- Announcing Present Research	30	24
Step3- Announcing Main findings	30	24
Step4- Indicating Structure of the Paper	4	3.2
Total	125	100%

4.2.1.1 Claiming centrality

Claiming centrality is the first step of move one. Authors, in this move, appeal to the peer members of the academic discourse community that - the research is part of a significant or well-established research area (Swales 1990, p. 144). The frequency of occurrence of this move in TEFL abstracts (9.6%) is relatively higher than most of the other moves. Examples of this step are:

1. The use of task-based instruction and planning within a communicative framework for language teaching has received great significance.
2. During the last decades there has always been a debate as to whether to use translation or the mother tongue in English language classes.
3. The influence of computer and new technology on different aspects of human life cannot be overlooked.

The analysis of this step of move one indicated that the authors use more than one strategy to claim the centrality of their work; they utilize "claiming importance of the research to be reported" as in examples 1 and 3, and "indicating continuing interest" as in example 2.

4.2.1.2 Making a topic generalization

The second option of introduction openers is making ―statements about knowledge or practice (Swales 1990, p.146). This component occurred in 5.6% of TEFL corpus. Typically, the following examples express in general terms the current state of knowledge or techniques (i.e. tools) as in the case of example 4, or refer to phenomena as in instance 5.

4. Blended on-line learning taken directly from computer technology is known as integration of new and technology based learning into traditional techniques and strategies of learning.

5. Listening comprehension is a complex process and crucial in the development of second language competence.

4.2.1.3 Referring to previous research

The aim of this step of move one is to indicate that the thesis derives from a lively tradition of established works in the field (Nwogu 1997, p. 126). This component move was found in 2.4% of abstracts of TEFL. The analysis revealed that the authors of abstracts in TEFL either specify the names of other researchers, as in example 6, or refer to previous studies in general (e.g. recent debates, previous studies…). The verb tense accompanying these subjects is the present simple.

6. Lexical inferencing refers to making informed guesses as to the meaning of the word in light of available linguistic cues in combinations with the learner's general knowledge of the world, her awareness of the context and her relevant linguistic knowledge."(Haastrup, 1991, p. 40).

The three steps discussed so far are included in move one. In fact, this move establish the introduction for the abstract. The next move is comprised of four steps. The frequency and percentage of them are discussed in the following section.

4.2.1.4 Counter-Claiming

The first step of move two, is titled "counter-claiming" which is rarely used in the abstracts of TEFL (.8%). In fact, this step of move two is the least used step.

4.2.1.5 Indicating a gap

This move points out that the previous research has some limitations that need investigation. The data revealed that this component occurred in 2.4% of the TEFL abstracts. Representative abbreviated examples with the lexical signals italicized and the tense underlined are given in examples 7 and 8.

7. Existing research has focused on abstract mental representation of grammar, and little is known about…

8. We do not find a comprehensive descriptive and statistical study of the different aspects of sentence structure…

4.2.1.6 Raising a Question

From among the corpus relating to TEFL, only 3 abstracts have used this step, that is only 2.4%. The reason for this may turn back to the fact that this step to some extent is similar to the moves outlining purposes.

4.2.1.7 Continuing a Tradition

This step, is also rarely used in abstracts of TEFL (1.6%). This rare use of this kind of move may be due to the fact that it is somehow in common with reviewing the previous research. As the statistics show, the four steps of the second move occupy not much of the TEFL abstracts. However, the next move (occupying the niche) which is comprised of four steps constitute the main portion of the TEFL abstracts.

4.2.1.8 Outlining Purposes, Announcing Present Research and Announcing Main findings

These two steps of the last move were found in all 30 TEFL abstracts. According to Swales' CARS model, after indicating a gap in the related literature, research writers are expected to fill this gap (i.e. occupying the niche). This move was found to be obligatory (100) in the TEFL abstracts. Utilizing this option, the TEFL students describe what they consider to be the main features of their research using

English verbs such as *investigate*, *describe*, *present and*, *examine*, *address*, *provide*, *explore*, *survey*, *show*, *deal with*, *argue*, *discuss* and *analyze*, in addition to nouns like *aim* or *purpose*.

Examples 9 and 10 present statement of the purpose for some TEFL abstracts.

9. The present study was designed to examine the relationship between the traditional and task based dictations in terms of their effect on listening comprehension.

10. The present study aimed at investigating the effects of explicit vocabulary instruction on improving L2 learners writing skill as well as their short and long-term retention.

In these two example the purpose for which the study was conducted are given, as shown, verbs like *aim or investigate* are used for this purpose. The onset of this move is typically marked by the use of deictic references to the present text, which is either the *genre* or the type of *inquiry*. The common deictic elements used are: *this* and *the/present*. According to Santos (1996, p.489), the clear preference for *this* should be explained in part by the author's effort to incorporate that abstract into the body of the paper, while the use of *the* suggests that the main article is viewed as standing apart from the abstract.

Announcing present research is another step which is used in all of the TEFL abstracts. An example of this step is given in 11.

11. The Oxford Placement test was administered to 40 students in one of the high schools in Semirom to determine their English language proficiency level. They were then divided into two groups. At the beginning of the course, the participants took a pre-test which was selected from Spectrum 1 A. The mean score and the standard deviation were calculated. After the treatment a post test was administered.

In example 11, the way the research has been conducted is shown. This is called announcing present research.

Having explained the way the research was conducted, 100% of the abstracts of TEFL explained the main results and findings. This part also seemed to be an obligatory part of the abstracts in TEFL. An example of this move is given in 12. This component highlights the achievement of some significant results. It mentions the most salient and striking findings (Salager-Meyer 1992, p.105).

12. The results of the t-test revealed that the groups exposed to syntactically and lexically simplified versions outperformed the other groups.

As the example 12 shows using words such as *results* and *findings* are features of this move.

4.2.1.9 Indicating thesis structure and content

In this move, the writers indicate the thesis structure in terms of the chapters and they often provide a summary of each chapter. This component was found only in 4 abstracts which constituted 3.2% of the TEFL abstracts. The reason for this may be the fact that in TEFL theses, mostly the summary of the whole thesis comes at the end of chapter one, and to some extent it is considered unacceptable to put the summary of the thesis in the abstracts. Figure 4.1 presents the percentage of the moves used in the TEFL abstracts.
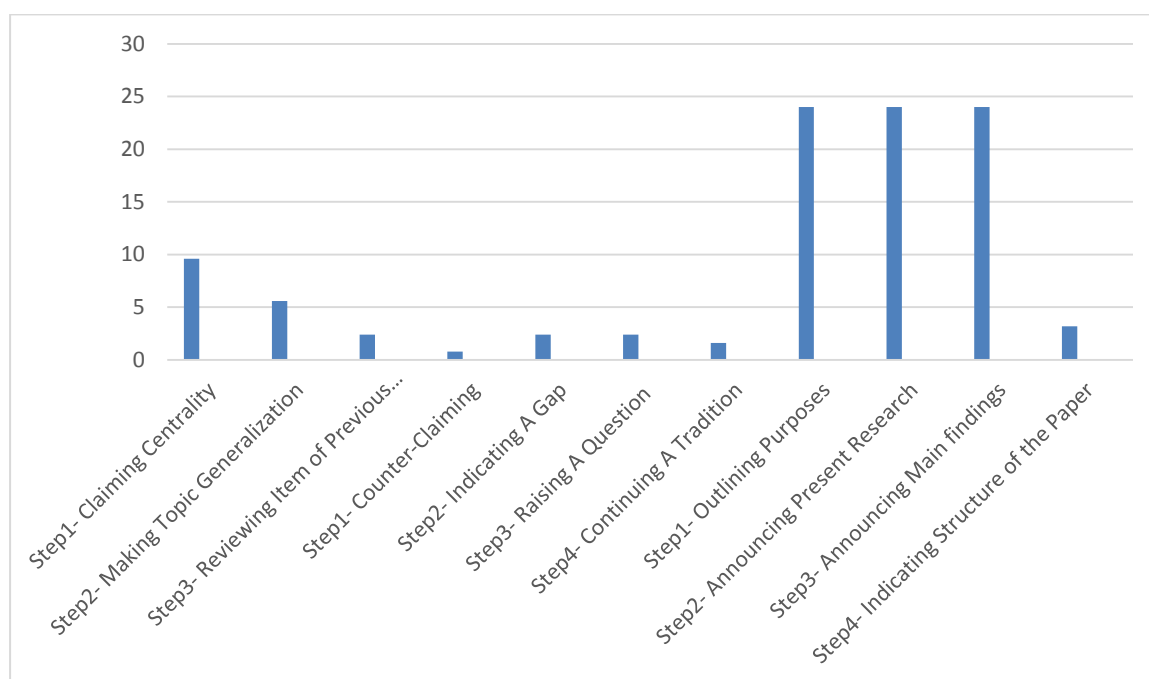
Figure 4.1. The Percentage of Moves and Steps used in TEFL Abstracts

As shown in figure 4.1, the steps of the last move, which deal with the purpose, methodology and findings of the thesis, constitute the main portion of the TEFL abstracts, and the item of counter-claiming is the least move used in TEFL abstracts.

Discussions and Conclusions

Writing is considered as a complicated task. Good writing involves thinking that may lead the writer to express himself/herself in a more effective way. Many components are involved in writing; therefore, to complete a composition task, writers should go through different stages of writing. Jenks (2003) indicated that "the writing process is categorized in a five-stage sequential pattern: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing (p.1). For EFL learners, writing ability is a significant skill and an essential learning element in second language instruction. Unfortunately, writing is also a difficult skill to improve in a short period of time. Various writing approaches have been suggested to help solve this problem .

In line with some previous studies and in order to fill the gap in this research subject area, this study was conducted to broaden the understanding of the researchers in this arena. In fact, the starting point for this study was to find some way to improve Iranian students' writing performance in thesis writing. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to study the rhetorical structure of abstracts written by M.A students in TEFL. To this end, a total of 30 abstracts used in the present study. The abstracts were selected from among the existing corpus in Shahreza University.

According to the data gained from this study and the statistics presented in result the third move of Swale's (1990) model, namely occupying the niche, which has 4 steps had the highest number of rhetoric structures. It should be noted that this move has 4 essential steps which seem to be necessary for every abstract. To put it differently, the steps of this move to some extent are inseparable parts of each abstract. This steps included items such as outlining purposes, announcing present research, announcing main findings, and indicating structure of the paper.

The Three move theory developed by Swale (1980) and comprised of 11 steps was used to investigate the abstracts. The general conclusions based on the findings of the study are as follow. The move named outlining purpose, announcing present, and announcing main findings research shaped the highest percentage of the used rhetorical structures. This study can be a starting point to improve the quality of abstracts and article and finally thesis writing in Iran.

Reference

Bhatia, V. K. (2004). Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view. London: Continuum.

Busa, Maria (2005). The use of metadiscourse in abstracts: A comparison between Economics and Psychology abstracts. In Julia Bamford & Marina Bondi (Eds.). Dialogue within Discourse Communities, pp. 3–47. Niemeyer, Tübingen.

Huckin, Thomas (2001) Abstracting from abstracts. In Martin Hewings (Ed.) Academic Writing in Context, pp. 93–103. Birmingham: University of Birmingham Press.

Hyland, Ken (2000) Disciplinary Discourses: Social Interactions in Academic Writing. Harlow: Pearson Education

Lores, Rosa (2004) On RA abstracts: from rhetorical structure to thematic organization .English for Academic Purposes, 23, 280–302

Mann, W. C., & Thompson, S. A. (1986). Relational Propositions in Discourse. Discourse Processes 9, 57–90.

Melander, B., Swales, J., & Fredrickson, K., (1997) Journal abstracts from three academic fields in the United States and Sweden: National or disciplinary proclivities? In Anna Duszak (Ed.) Cultures and Styles of Academic Discourse, pp. 251–272. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Pierson DJ. (2004). Research and publication in respiratory care (editorial). Respir Care 49(10), 1145–1148.

Salager-Meyer, Francoise (1992) A text-type and move Analysis study of verb tense and modality distribution in medical English abstracts. English for Specific Purposes 11, 93–113.

Swales, J. M. (1990). Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEPTH AND BREADTH OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE AND WRITING PERFORMANCE OF IRANIAN MA STUDENTS OF TEFL

Mojtaba Varnaseri
Department of ELT, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

Mohamad Taghi Farvardin (Corresponding Author)
Department of ELT, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran
Email: farvardin@iauahvaz.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

THIS STUDY IS AN ATTEMPT TO FIND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEPTH AND BREADTH OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE AND WRITING PERFORMANCE OF IRANIAN MA STUDENTS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL). TO THIS END, TWO TESTS OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE (I.E., VOCABULARY LEVELS TEST AND WORD ASSOCIATES TEST) AND A WRITING PERFORMANCE TASK WERE ADMINISTERED TO 110 PARTICIPANTS. THE DATA WERE COLLECTED IN THREE SESSIONS. THE ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS REVEALED THAT BOTH BREADTH AND DEPTH OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE WERE MODERATELY CORRELATED WITH TEFL STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE (*R* = .45 AND .49, RESPECTIVELY). MOREOVER, MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS SHOWED THAT DEPTH OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE WAS A BETTER PREDICTOR FOR THE WRITING PERFORMANCE OF MA STUDENTS OF TEFL. FINALLY, THE IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH ARE DISCUSSED.

KEYWORDS: VOCABULARY BREADTH, VOCABULARY DEPTH, WRITING PERFORMANCE, MA STUDENTS OF TEFL

1. Introduction

There is consensus among language learners, teachers, and researchers that vocabulary is a fundamental element in the process of learning a language, because words are the primary transformers of meaning and thus carry the main information load in communication (Schmitt, 2008). As Wilkins (1972) stated, "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p. 111).

Previous research shows that learners for sufficient comprehension must know 98-99% of words in a written text which means that knowing 8,000-9,000 word families is required to be able to read a variety of texts in English (Nation, 2006). Accordingly, vocabulary knowledge has been investigated in relation to different language skills. For example, it has been found that vocabulary knowledge highly correlates with reading comprehension (Akbarian, 2010; Moinzadeh & Moslehpour, 2012; Nassaji, 2004), speaking ability (Koizumi, 2013), and listening comprehension (Feng, 2014; Milton, 2013; Mohammadi, 2015; Stæhr, 2008). Moreover, vocabulary has been recognized as one of the essential and fundamental components of communication (Nergis, 2013).

Broadly speaking, vocabulary knowledge encompasses breadth and depth of vocabulary (Nation, 2001; Wesche & Paribakht, 1996). Breadth of vocabulary knowledge is referred to the size or number of words learners know at a certain level of language proficiency while depth of vocabulary

knowledge is defined as a learner's knowledge of various aspects of a given word. Besides, it is about word associations and interactions with other words. This would include, word collocations, idioms and several possible meanings.

Likewise, one of the areas of researchers' interest is the number of words a foreign language learner needs to communicate and interact successfully. Accordingly, most of the researchers and language teaching specialists focus their attention on the vocabulary breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge in relation to language skills (Akbarian, 2010; Esmaeli, 2013; Farvardin & Koosha, 2011; Feng, 2014; Hashemi, 2013; Mehrpour, Razmjo & Kian, 2011; Qian, 1998; Stæhr, 2008). These studies show that different aspects of vocabulary are important in gaining control over receptive and productive skills. Therefore, this emphasis on the multidimensionality of vocabulary knowledge suggests that vocabulary breadth development is not enough to establish rich vocabulary knowledge repertoire (Nation, 2001). Instead, because words are complex, rich and intensive instruction that provides various exposures to the words within instructionally rich contexts is necessary in order for learners to acquire in-depth knowledge of vocabulary and improve their proficiency in language learning.

The review of literature show that reading comprehension is the most popular construct being studied in relation with the learners' lexical breadth and depth. Although reading is one of the fundamental language skills, the contribution of other skills should be considered in relation to vocabulary knowledge. This is in parallel with one of Nation's (2001) ideas in designing a well-balanced language course to ensure that the learners obtain sufficient and necessary input through listening and reading activities while at the same time they are trained to produce meaningful output through speaking and writing exercises.

Furthermore, interest in the relationship between vocabulary and writing performance has not a long history in the research of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). However, writing is also an area that should not be neglected and should be paid more attention by language teachers and researchers. It is one of the most important language productive abilities in educational fields that reflect social, cultural, and complex cognitive phenomena. Writing is a very complex process that requires the coordination of many high level metacognitive skills. Specifically, in order to produce a high quality written essay, writers must produce and organize ideas, develop and take steps on a plan, as well as review and revise their written product (Roth, 2000). In addition, a rich vocabulary knowledge repertoire is required to produce such a kind of high quality essay.

Despite the previous correlative investigations on vocabulary and other skills (Mehrpour et al., 2011; Stæhr, 2008; Wang, 2015), the present study is more curious about the other possible link which is not yet explored fully, that is, the vocabulary-writing relationship. Therefore the goal of this research is to investigate the contribution of vocabulary knowledge and writing performance of EFL learners.

Observing the performance of EFL learners confronted with lack of vocabulary knowledge repertoire to comprehend and produce language make us to have a profound thought on this problem. In fact, second or foreign language learners often consider lack of sufficient vocabulary knowledge as one of the barriers in writing performance. However, in practice, it is frequently assumed that writing performance can be developed mostly by promoting the learners' vocabulary (Nation, 2001). Research on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing performance in EFL context is just beginning to gain attention. Within this area of interest, however, the angles of the scale are still rather unbalanced: the greater part of the literature has been on how EFL learners acquire their vocabulary through reading comprehension (Akbarian, 2010; Farvardin & Koosha, 2011; Mehrpour et al., 2011; Rashidi & Khosravi, 2010; Qian, 1998), few studies have attempted to determine what role vocabulary knowledge plays in L2 writing performance in academic contexts (Milton, 2013; Stæhr, 2008). However, yet, there are still questions that have not been answered and remain intact in the EFL teaching and learning contexts, or only few studies have attempted to focus on them explicitly (Schoonen, 2010; Stæhr, 2008). One of such questions concerns the relationship between the EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge and their writing performance. Research conducted on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing has not largely been explored, which provides the motivation for the current study. To put it in a nutshell, as the review of the related literature reveals, the attention has been fundamentally on the depth of vocabulary knowledge and

other language skills; hence, regardless of writing and this dimension of vocabulary knowledge has not received researchers' attention. From now on, particular attention should be paid to the important role of vocabulary depth as a major contributor to EFL learners' writing performance.

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge (breadth and depth) and their writing performance. It intends to determine whether breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge are associated with EFL learners' writing performance, and to examine which one of these variables, namely depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge, makes a more important contribution to foreign language learners' writing performance. It also attempts to investigate whether there is a relationship between these variables, breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge. Finally, the study attempts to determine which one (breadth or depth) is a good predictor of EFL learners' development of the writing ability. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to highlight important issues of vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners and focus on the correlation between vocabulary knowledge and writing performance with a shift on the quality (depth) of the vocabulary needed to achieve writing ability in a foreign language. To achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. To what extent do breadth of vocabulary knowledge and writing performance of MA students of TEFL correlate?
2. To what extent do depth of vocabulary knowledge and writing performance of MA students of TEFL correlate?
3. Which aspect of vocabulary knowledge, depth or breadth, can be a better predictor of writing performance of MA students of TEFL?

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

The participants in the present study were 110 postgraduate (M.A.) university students majoring in TEFL studied at Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz, Iran. The sample consisted of both male and female students. The participants were selected through convenience non-random sampling. All the participants were native speakers of Farsi. They were given three types of test including two vocabulary knowledge tests namely: Vocabulary Levels Test (Schmitt, Schmitt & Clapham, 2001) and Word Associates Test (Read, 1998), and an essay writing topic as their Writing Performance Test. They were given detailed instructions on how to take the tests and were assured of the confidentiality of results.

2.2 Instruments

2.2.1 Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT)

This test was originally developed by Nation (1983). It was later modified and revised by Schmitt et al. (2001) for two reasons: to present validity evidence and to provide a better reliability of the test items. Their revision of the VLT proved that 30 items per level was more reliable than 18 items in Nation's (1983) original Levels test. The test reached a reliability of 0.92 (Qian, 1999). In this study, we used version 2 of VLT developed by Schmitt et al. (2001). This version is composed of four parts that represent four levels of vocabulary breadth, that is, the 2,000-word-family level, the 3,000-word-family level, the 5,000-word-family level, and the 10,000-word- family level. Below is an example taken from the 2000 word level:

1. Copy
2. Event   __6___ end or highest point
3. Motor   __3___ this moves a car
4. Pity   __1___ thing made to be like another
5. Profit
6. Tip

Unlike a standard multiple choice test, the VLT reduces the chances of guessing to one response in six distracters. It includes all the words in each group that represents the same type of word, so as not to provide any syntactic clues for the accurate matches. In addition, it needs the test-takers not to differentiate between words that are related in meaning as it measures knowledge of word. As for scoring the VLT, a correct match of each word was given a score of 1 and therefore the highest score was 120 points.

2.2.2 Word-Associates Test (WAT)
This is a test developed by Read (1998) for measuring participants' depth of vocabulary knowledge in English. Read (1998) obtained a reliability of 0.93 for the test. The WAT enables researchers to test not only word meanings, like the VLT, but also their uses. The test contains 40 items intended to assess two components of vocabulary depth: paradigmatic (meaning) and syntagmatic (collocation) associates. Testees are required to identify the 4 words that are associated with the target word or the stimulus adjective as shown in the extract below:
Beautiful

enjoyable	expensive	free	loud	education	face	music	weather

The first box is comprised of one synonym (or part of the meaning) of the stimulus adjective (enjoyable), while the second box consists of three collocations (face, music, weather). Testees can choose the 4 correct associates by applying one of the following three situations: they can choose two associates from the left box and two associates from the right box (2-2); they can choose three associates from the left box and one associate from the right box (3-1); or they can choose one associate from the left box and three associates from the right box (1-3) as shown in the above extract. This was done to make guessing more difficult. In scoring the WAT, one point was awarded for each correct answer. The highest score for the test was 160.

2.2.3 Essay Writing Task
The students were given a type of IELTS argumentative writing topic. The topic was chosen among several argumentative IELTS writing topics by student themselves. The reason to choose argumentative genre of writing was that argumentative writing helps writers develop their critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is one of the most important skills that people acquire through formal education (Ten Dam & Volman, 2004). Being able to write persuasive arguments often helps students break down the components of logical thinking, find fault in others' and their own arguments, and present stronger arguments overall. All these advantages make students to produce texts which are rich in vocabulary. Participants were given detailed instructions on how to take the test and were assured of the confidentiality of the results. The participants were asked to complete the task in a given time (40 minutes). The length of the essay was asked to be around 250 words. Then, the ESL Composition Profile (Jacob, Zinkgraf, Wormouth, Hartfiel & Hughey, 1981) used to measure participants' writing performance.

2.3 Procedure
Data collection was done in three sessions. During session 1, the VLT was administered to all participants. All the participants answered the paper-based test in their class time. Before taking the test, the general purpose of the study was explained to the students. They were given detailed instructions on how to take the tests and were assured of the confidentiality of results. In the next session, the test of vocabulary depth, WAT, was administered. This version of WAT consists of 40 items. The two vocabulary tests were administered for 40 minutes and 30 minutes, respectively. In the third session, the participants were required to write an essay of about 250 words within 40 minutes. The topic of the essay was chosen from one of the IELTS exams. The topic was of general interest, so most of the students were supposed to have some information on it. The participants were required to compare and contrast or evaluate the topic and offer reason(s) for their answers. Then, the ESL Composition Profile (Jacob et al., 1981) used to measure students' writing performance (see

Appendix). The Composition Profile divides writing into five components with various percentages: content (30%), organization (20%), vocabulary (20%), language use (25%), and mechanics (5%). According to this scale, each aspect has a set of standards which range from excellent to very poor with a particular range of scores (Jacobs et al., 1981). Content refers to linguistic features dealing with effectiveness and relatedness of the text to the given topic. Organization refers to how writers state and support their position in detail. High scores on organization mean, writers state and support their position thoroughly and tend to develop their argument by rating their position (Silva, 1993). Vocabulary refers to word choice, collocations and word form mastery. Language use determines sentence construction and to what extent word order, article, and tense are correctly applied (Zare-ee & Farvardin, 2009). The last part, the mechanics of the finished form deal with the spelling, punctuation, margin, capitalization, and other face features of the sample. Likewise, according to this scale, the highest possible score for overall proficiency in English composition is 100. The compositions were scored by two raters. The total score of each sample was the mean of the two raters' scores. Then the consistency of the two raters' judgment tested using correlation analysis to find the inter-rater reliability.

2.4 Data Analysis
To answer the first two research questions, the collected data run on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22, for computing the Pearson Product Moment Correlations. With respect to the third question, Multiple Regression analyses were computed. The independent variables were the breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge and the dependent variable was the participants' writing performance.

3. Results
3.1 Descriptive Statistics
Table 1 presents the mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, range and reliability of the three test scores (VLT and WAT, Writing Task).

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics*

	Mean	SD	N	Range	Min	Max	Reliability
VLT	75.60	14.20	110	67	43	110	.76
WAT	89.78	18.80	110	76	61	137	.83
Writing	67.40	10.92	110	44.5	43.5	88	.78

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of VLT are 75.60 and 14.20 and the maximum score is 110. The mean, standard deviation and maximum score of WAT are 89.78, 18.80, and 137, respectively. The mean score of the writing task is 67.40, the standard deviation is 10.92, and the maximum score is 88. The reliability coefficients of the VLT and WAT measured through Cronbach's alpha formula were .76 and .83, respectively. The interrater reliability for the writing task was measured as .78.

3.2 Correlations among VLT, WAT, and Writing Task
Two-tailed Pearson correlations were computed between the scores of VLT, WAT, and Writing Task to determine the relationship between the two dimensions of vocabulary knowledge, breadth and depth, and L2 writing performance. The Cohen's (1988) criterion for interpreting the strength of correlation was followed. Cohen (1988) stated that correlation coefficient of more than .05 is strong. Table 2 displays the results of this analysis.

Table 2. *Correlation Coefficients between the Scores of Vocabulary breadth, Vocabulary Depth and Writing Performance*

	1	2	3
1. Vocabulary Size	-		

2. Vocabulary Depth	.42	-	
3. Writing Performance	.45[*]	.59	-

p < .01

As demonstrated in Table 2, the results of two-tailed Pearson correlation analysis illustrated significant relationship between students' scores on the writing task, VLT and WAT. It was detected that statistically significant correlations were found among the scores of the three tests. Both vocabulary breadth and vocabulary depth have statistically significant correlations with writing performance. Vocabulary breadth was significantly correlated with writing performance(*r* =.45, *p* < .01). Depth of vocabulary knowledge demonstrated a stronger correlation of .59 with writing performance. The correlation between VLT and WAT was .42. Therefore, according to this analysis, from the two dimensions of vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary depth had a stronger relationship with the participants' writing performance.

3.3 Multiple Regression Analysis
To answer the third question, multiple regression analysis was conducted. Table 3 is the model summary and shows R, R square, Adjusted R square, and Standard Error of the Estimate.

Table 3. *Model Summary*

Model	R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.628	.394	.383	8.58

As Table 3 depicts, the adjusted R² was .383 which implies that vocabulary breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge together accounted for 38% of the variance in the writing scores. This result represents a significant contribution and indicates a moderate relationship between learners' vocabulary knowledge and the quality of their writing performance. To determine the more powerful predictor of writing performance, scores on VLT and WAT were taken as the predictor (or independent) variables and scores on the writing task as the dependent variable. In order to compare the unique contribution of each independent variable (depth and breadth), the Beta values were computed (see Table 4).

Table 4. *Coefficients*

	Beta	*t*	*Sig.*	*F*	*Sig.*
Constant		5.557	.000	34.802	.000
Vocabulary Size	.25	3.001	.003		
Vocabulary Depth	.48	5.767	.000		

As Table 4 shows, the Beta value of the predictor variable, vocabulary depth, showed a high rate (Beta = .48, *p* < .01) in comparison to the Beta value of the predictor variable, vocabulary breadth (Beta = .25, *p* < .01). This means that vocabulary depth as the independent variable made a stronger contribution to the dependent variable, listening comprehension. Vocabulary depth alone accounted for 48% of the variance in the dependent variable, writing performance. Thus, vocabulary depth, as a predictor, explained a more significant amount of the writing task variance. This suggests that vocabulary depth can be the basic component of vocabulary knowledge in writing performance

4. Discussion
The results showed that there was a moderate relationship between breadth of vocabulary knowledge and learners' writing performance (*r* = .45). The findings of the present study are in line with Stæhr's (2008) results in which he found a moderate relationship between vocabulary breadth

and writing ability (.52). Stæhr's (2008) findings further showed the importance of knowing the most frequent 2,000 word families in English in particular and he suggested that knowledge of this vocabulary represents an important threshold for the learners of his study. The results of this study are in contrast with Milton's (2013) study in which he found a stronger correlation (.76) between vocabulary size and writing performance. Milton's (2013) results, like Stæhr's (2008), showed statistically significant correlations between vocabulary size and writing performance, although the strength of the relationships is stronger. The significance of these results is to confirm the importance of the vocabulary breadth dimension in writing performance. Milton (2013) argued that the optimal performance of the participants was attributed to the context in which learners were exposed to target language native speakers. As Widdowson (2007) argued the context has the power to help learners extract the meaning of lexical items and eliminate the probable ambiguity within a specific situation and as a result facilitate their performance. Regarding the findings of this study, the surrounding context, inaccessibility to authentic texts, poor background knowledge, lack of sufficient attention to the crucial role of vocabulary knowledge in language learning and lack of incorporation of this component of language proficiency within course books might have affected our findings.

Although there are many factors that may affect learning of a foreign language, the weak performance of TEFL students in this study on VLT might be due to wrong instructional programs administered in EFL settings. In general, vocabulary breadth has mostly moderate contributions for writing performance. This may imply that EFL learners must expand their vocabulary breadth. In this way teachers are accountable for teaching ways and strategies to students in order to improve their vocabulary knowledge.

With regard to the second research question, the results showed that there was a high and significant correlation (.59) between depth of vocabulary knowledge and writing performance of TEFL students. These findings revealed that, for the given sample, vocabulary depth had an important role in EFL learners' writing performance. Due to the dearth of research on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing performance, we had to compare and contrast the finding of the current study with other studies done on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and other language skills and components. For example, Mehrpour et al. (2011) conducted a research on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension and found a positive correlation between breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Their results, related to vocabulary depth, are in consistency with the findings of the current study. They also suggested that placing more emphasis on these two dimensions of vocabulary knowledge, more desirable results can be achieved. Arguing on the same line, Atai and Nikuinezhad (2012) explored the link between vocabulary knowledge and syntactic knowledge and found a positive and significant relationship between two variables. Their findings are in agreement with this study that depth of vocabulary knowledge has significant relationship with language skills.

With regard to the third research question, the analysis of findings showed that vocabulary depth, as the independent variable, made a stronger contribution to the dependent variable, writing performance. Vocabulary depth alone accounted for 48% of the variance in the dependent variable, writing performance. It can be concluded that properly designed and developed tests of vocabulary depth can provide unique prediction of writing performance scores. The findings from the present study have provided empirical evidence that depth of vocabulary knowledge has an integral and fundamental place in the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing performance. The findings are in contrast with previous studies that found a stronger correlation for vocabulary breadth in relation to other variables irrespective of writing performance (Farvardin & Koosha, 2011; Hatami & Tavakoli, 2012; Rouhi & Mousapour, 2013). These researchers, however, argued persuasively that breadth and depth of vocabulary are closely interrelated to the extent that lacking one can remarkably affect the existence of another. The results of this study are in line with Mehrpour et al.'s (2011) findings that depth of vocabulary knowledge is a stronger predictor of language proficiency. The current research finding are in agreement with other studies carried out on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading and listening which found a stronger relationship for vocabulary depth instead of breadth of vocabulary knowledge (Feng, 2014). This lays

a theoretical foundation for using depth of vocabulary knowledge measures for placement purposes in educational settings.

4.1 Pedagogical Implications

Despite the fact that the results of the present study cannot be generalized to other situations, the study has some instructional implications for L2 teaching and learning. Not only breadth of vocabulary knowledge but also vocabulary depth should receive much more consideration from practitioners, testers, and teachers than it has been thought before. Teachers should concentrate on designing a sufficient amount of both vocabulary depth and breadth tasks in order to help learners increase their vocabulary knowledge and produce reasonable writing essays. Moreover, teachers should consider teaching vocabulary in two ways: deepening and widening learners' vocabulary knowledge and teach learners to use words in their appropriate context by promoting vocabulary knowledge. The present study can offer more insight into language testing for diagnostic purposes. English language teachers can learn how to utilize language tests to observe learners' strengths and weaknesses in vocabulary knowledge construct. From this point, it will give teachers better directions in designing the students' curriculum or lesson plan. It will also help them to avoid giving unnecessary materials or exercises on the parts that the learners have already mastered. The present study will give a better understanding of the role of vocabulary in language learning, especially in writing. It also provides additional empirical evidence for the related studies.

4.2 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research

Similar to any other research, the outcomes of the current study are influenced by a number of limitations. There are three main limitations identified in the present study: the number of participants, topics for essay writing and time constraints. Among these limitations, the shortage of time was the most important one for this study. If there was enough time to conduct the study, it was anticipated that more essay writing topics could have been written in different genres and more comprehensive results could have been accessed.

The present study may become the source of inspiration for further replication, expansion, or evaluation in order to search more definite perspectives of the investigated area. First of all, there is a pressing need to make sure that the instruments are reliable enough in order to justify the data analysis. The reliability of VLT and WAT can be increased by increasing the sample size. If possible, it is recommended that participants being selected randomly, so that the results can be generalized for larger population.

Several experimental studies are still needed to determine whether different amount of drilling on writing skill can affect the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and writing performance. It is also needed to investigate whether the change of vocabulary breadth and depth mastery can influence its contribution to writing or vice versa. Some experiments are required to investigate the contribution of productive vocabulary breadth to writing performance. Finally, it is recommended to investigate the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and other genres of writing style (narration, exposition, description) to examine the possible relationship.

REFERENCES

Akbarian, I. (2010). The comparative development of vocabulary breadth and depth, and academic vocabulary for ESP/EAP Learners. *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *13*(1), 1-22.

Atai, M. R., & Nikuinezhad, F. (2012). Vocabulary breadth, depth, and syntactic knowledge: which one is a stronger predictor of foreign language reading performance? *Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *15*(1), 1-18.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd Ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Esmaeli, S. (2013). The relation of breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge and topic familiarity to EFL learners' lexical inferencing success. *Elexir Literature*, *55*, 85-91.

Farvardin, M. T., & Koosha, M. (2011). The role of vocabulary knowledge in Iranian EFL students' reading comprehension performance. Breadth or Depth? *Theory and practice in Language studies*, *1*(11),

1575-1580.

Feng, T. (2014). Assessing the depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge with listening comprehension, *The PASAA Journal, 48*, 30-56.

Hashemi, S. Z. (2013). The influence of breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge as an internal factor on EFL reading comprehension test performance. *International journal of language learning and applied linguistics world, 4*(4), 125-136.

Hatami, S., & Tavakoli, M. (2012). The role of depth and versus breadth of vocabulary knowledge in success and ease in L2 lexical inferencing. *TESL Canada Journal, 30*, 1-21.

Jacobs, H. L., Zinkgraf, S. A., Wormouth, D. R., Hartfiel, V. F., & Hughey, J. B. (1981). *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*. Rowely, MA: Newbury House.

Koizumi, R. (2013). Vocabulary knowledge and speaking performance among second learners from novice to intermediate levels. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *4*(5), 900-913.

Mehrpour, S., Razmjo, A., & Kian, P. (2011). The relationship between depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension among Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning, 53*(222), 98-127.

Milton, J. (2013). Measuring the contribution of vocabulary knowledge to proficiency in the four skills. In C. Bardel, C. Lindqvist, B. Laufer (Eds.), *L2 Vocabulary acquisition, knowledge and use: new perspectives on assessment and corpus analysis* (pp. 57-78). Eurosla Monographs 2.

Mohammadi, F. E. (2015). Lexical inferencing in listening: depth of vocabulary knowledge and listening proficiency. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 3(2), 105-117.

Moinzadeh, A., & Moslehpour, R. (2012). Depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge: which really matters in reading? *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *3*(5), 1015-1026.

Nassaji, H. (2004). The relationship between depth of vocabulary knowledge and L2 learner's lexical inferencing strategy use and success. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 61*(1), 107-134.

Nation, I. S. P. (1983). Testing and teaching vocabulary. Guidelines, 5 (RELC Supplement), 12–24.

Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *63*, 59-82.

Nergis, A. (2013). Exploring the factors that affect reading comprehension of EAP learners. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 12*(1), 1-9.

Qian, D. D. (1998). *Depth of vocabulary knowledge: Assessing its role in adults' reading comprehension in English as a second language*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). Toronto: University of Toronto.

Rashidi, N., & Khosravi, N. (2010). Assessing the role of depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics*, *14*(1), 81-108.

Read, J. (1998). *Assessing vocabulary knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roth, F. P. (2000). Narrative writing: Development and teaching with children with writing difficulties. *Topics in Language Disorders*, *20*(4), 15-28.

Rouhi, M., & Mousapour, N. G. (2013). EFL learner's vocabulary knowledge and its role in their reading comprehension performance. *Journal of Second and Multiple Language Acquisition – JSMULA, 1*, 39-48.

Schmitt, N. Schmitt, D., & Clapham, C. (2001). Developing and exploring the behavior of two new versions of the Vocabulary Levels Test, *Language Testing*, *18*(1), 55-88.

Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, *12*, 329-363.

Schoonen, R. (2010). The development of lexical proficiency knowledge and skill. Paper presented at the Copenhagen Symposium on Approaches to the Lexicon, Copenhagen Business School.

Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, *27*(4), 657-677.

Stæhr, L. S. (2008). Vocabulary breadth and the skills of listening, reading and writing. *Language Learning Journal*, *36*(2), 139-152.

Ten Dam, G., & Volman, M. (2004). Critical thinking as a citizenship competence: Teaching strategies. *Learning & Instruction, 14*(4), 359-379.

Wang, S. (2015). An empirical study on the role of vocabulary knowledge in EFL listening comprehension. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *5*(5), 989-995.

Wesche, M. B., & Paribakht, T. S. (1996). Enhancing vocabulary acquisition through reading: A hierarchy of text-related exercise types. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, *52*(2), 155-178.

Widdowson, H. G. (2007). *Discourse analysis*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics in Language Teaching*. London: Arnold

Zare-ee, A., & Farvardin, M. T. (2009). Comparison of university EFL learners' linguistic and rhetorical patterns as reflected in their L1 and L2 writing. *Novitas-ROYAL, 3*(2), 143-155.

Appendix: ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE (Jacobs et al., 1981)

SCORE	RANGE	CONTENT CRITERIA
	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic
	16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate
		ORGANIZATION CRITERIA
	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/ supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and development
	9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate • no organization • OR not enough to evaluate
		VOCABULARY CRITERIA
	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range • effective word/idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • meaning confused or obscured
	9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation • little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate
		LANGUAGE USE CRITERIA
	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured
	17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • meaning confused or obscured
	10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate

		MECHANICS CRITERIA
	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing
	4	GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured
	3	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • meaning confused or obscured
	2	VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate

THE EFFECT OF PREFABRICATED PATTERNS ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' ORAL TRANSLATION ABILITY

Hamid Zarrabi
E-mail: Hamid.Zarrabi1@gmail.com
Department of English Language
Guilan Science & Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran

Ramin Rahimy
E-mail: Rahimy49@yahoo.com
Department of English Language
Guilan Science & Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran.

ABSTRACT

THE PRESENT STUDY AIMED TO INVESTIGATE THE EFFECT OF USING PREFABRICATED PATTERNS AS CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS' ORAL TRANSLATION ABILITY. THE QUESTION THIS STUDY TRIED TO ANSWER WAS WHETHER USING PREFABRICATED PATTERNS MIGHT ENHANCE A MORE ACCEPTABLE ORAL TRANSLATION PERFORMANCE IN IRANIAN LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL. TO ANSWER THE QUESTION, 30 IRANIAN JUNIOR UNDERGRADUATE TRANSLATOR TRAINEES PARTICIPATED IN THE EXPERIMENT OF THE STUDY. THEY WERE RANDOMLY SELECTED FROM AMONG A POPULATION OF TRANSLATOR TRAINEES VIA AN OPT TEST SCORE OF AT LEAST ONE STANDARD DEVIATION BELOW THE MEAN. THEY WERE THEN DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS OF 15 AND WERE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED TO AN EXPERIMENTAL AND A CONTROL GROUP. A PRETEST OF ENGLISH-TO-PERSIAN ORAL TRANSLATION WAS ADMINISTERED TO BOTH GROUPS, THEN, THEY WERE TAUGHT ORAL TRANSLATION FOR 10 SESSIONS BUT WITH DIFFERENT METHODOLOGIES: THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP RECEIVED A TREATMENT OF PREFABRICATED PATTERNS WHILE THE CONTROL GROUP RECEIVED A PLACEBO. A POSTTEST OF ORAL TRANSLATION WAS THEN ADMINISTERED TO BOTH GROUPS. THE DATA OF THE STUDY WERE ANALYZED USING THE T-TEST TO INDICATE THE GROUPS MEAN DIFFERENCE, AND THE DEGREE OF PROGRESS FROM THE PRETEST TO THE POSTTEST OF THE STUDY IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP WAS INDICATED BY CALCULATING THE ANCOVA COEFFICIENT. THE RESULTS INDICATED THAT THE IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP RECEIVED HIGHER ORAL TRANSLATION SCORES AFTER BEING TREATED WITH 10 SESSIONS OF PREFABRICATED PATTERNS.

KEY TERMS: PREFABRICATED PATTERNS, ORAL TRANSLATION ABILITY, IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS, OPT, METHODOLOGY.

Statement of the Problem

For each particular translation project, there will be some unique problems of lexical equivalence. However, there are also some matters which are likely to present special problems in any translation. Every translator is faced with finding adequate equivalences for the key words in the source text. There will be some words which at first seem to be adequate equivalents which will turn out to be

„false friends". There will be the problem of loss of some meaning components and the gain of others-the .problem of keeping a balance between which components become implicit and which are made explicit (Larson, 1984, P.177).

In addition to the problem of finding adequate equivalence for key words, selecting good and correct ones for prefabricated patterns such as idioms is a challenging task. According to Mildred L. Larson an idiom is a „dead" metaphor. That is, the person using it no longer thinks of the comparison on which it was based. A „live" metaphor, on the other hand, is one which is understood only after paying special attention to the comparison which is being used… all languages have idioms; that is, „dead" metaphors which are constantly used without anyone thinking about the comparison (Larson, 1984, P.249).

One of the greatest problem in oral translation is memory. Interpreting is defined as "oral translation of a written text" (Shuttleworth & Cowie: 1997:83). Mahmoodzadeh gives a more detailed definition of interpreting: Interpreting consists of presenting in the target language, the exact meaning of what is uttered in the source language either simultaneously or consecutively, preserving the tone of the speaker (1992. 231). Whether novice or experienced, all interpreters find this profession demanding and challenging. Phelan says that "when an interpreter is working, he or she cannot afford to have a bad day. One bad interpreter can ruin a conference" (2001:4-5). Mahmoodzadeh also emphasis that a skillful interpreter is expected to "have a powerful memory."(1992:233). Gile (1992,1995), emphasizes the difficulties and efforts involved in interpreting tasks and strategies needed to overcome them, observing that many failures occur in the absence of any visible difficulty. He then proposes his Effect Models for interpreting. He says that "the Effort Models are designed to help them (interpreters) understand these difficulties (of interpreting) and select appropriate strategies and tactics. They are based on the concept of processing capacity and on the fact that some mental operating in interpreting require much processing capacity."(1992:191).

This study will try to show a contextualized instruction of prefabricated patterns (based on American Street Talk by David Burke) will help students to improve their oral translation ability and also is an innovative way to show translator trainers that teaching the meanings of such prefabs in context helps and foster students" oral translation skill.

Pedagogically, the results of this research help students, teachers, authors of textbooks and syllabus designers.

Review of Literature
Translation Studies: An Overview
According to Munday (2008), the term **translation** itself has several meanings: it can refer to the general subject field, the product (the text that has been translated) or the process (the act of producing the translation, otherwise known as **translating**). The **process of translation** between two different written languages involves the translator changing an original written text (the **source text** or **ST**) in the original verbal language (the **source language** or **SL**) into a written text (the **target text** or **TT**) in a different verbal language (the **target language** or **TL**). This type corresponds to 'interlingual translation' and is one of the three categories of translation described by the Russo-American structuralist Roman Jakobson in his seminal paper 'On linguistic aspects of translation' (Jakobson 1959/2004: 139). Jakobson's categories are as follows:

(1) **Intralingual** translation, or 'rewording': 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language';

(2) **Interlingual** translation, or 'translation proper': 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language';

(3) **Intersemiotic** translation, or 'transmutation': 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems'.

Intralingual translation would occur, for example, when we rephrase an expression or when we summarize or otherwise rewrite a text in the same language. Intersemiotic translation would occur if a written text were translated, for example, into music, film or painting. It is interlingual translation, between two different verbal languages, which is the traditional, although by no means exclusive, focus of translation studies. The very notion of 'translation proper' and of the stability of source and target has now been challenged and the question of what we mean by 'translation', and how it

Granger (1998), in his research, "Prefabricated patterns in advanced EFL writing: collocations and formulae" has tried to show that learners would make much greater use of what Sinclair (1987, p.319) calls the **open choice principle** than native speakers, who have been found to operate primarily according to the **idiom principle**.

Over the last decade, the use of prefabs has become a major focus of interest in EFL, arguably for three main reasons. Firstly, the emergence of the concept of lexico-grammar, inspired by Halliday and Sinclair, has promoted the syntagmatic investigation of lexis. The traditional association between syntagmatics and grammar, on the one hand, and paradigmatics and lexis, on the other, is a thing of the past.

Secondly, corpus linguistics has played an important role, giving linguists the computational means to uncover and analyze lexical patterns. Rich information about word combinations can now be obtained with ease using text retrieval software.

Finally, pragmatics has become a major field of study in its own right, in linguistics and now in EFL. Pragmatic competence has come to be viewed as an essential part of learners' competence. The formulaic nature of many pragmalinguistic rules has necessarily contributed to bringing the study of prefabs to the fore.

The findings show that Prefab-oriented approaches to teaching are currently in vogue, with EFL specialists suggesting that teaching procedures be based solidly on them. Yet when we consider how little we know about them, how they are acquired, what production difficulties they cause and how L1 and L2 prefabs interact, this is quite alarming. We possess insufficient knowledge to decide what role they should play in L2 teaching: we do not know what to teach, how much to teach and least of all how to teach, hence the urgent need for empirical work. This should be greatly facilitated by the wide variety of large computer corpora currently being assembled. The value of introspective tests in this field should also not be underestimated.

differenc from 'adaptation', 'version', etc., is a real one. Thus, whereas Sandra Halverson (1999) claims that translation can be considered as a **prototype** classification (i.e. that there are basic core features that we associate with a prototypical translation, and other translational forms which lie on the periphery), Anthony Pym (2004a: 52) sees clear 'discontinuities' in certain new modes, such as translation-localization. Much of the 'theory' is also from a western perspective; in contrast, Maria Tymoczko (2005, 2006) discusses the very different words and metaphors for 'translation' in other cultures, indicative of a **conceptual orientation** and where the goal of close lexical fidelity to an original may not therefore be shared, certainly in the practice of translation of sacred and literary texts. For instance, in India there is 'rupantar' (= 'change of form') and 'anuvad' (= 'speaking after', 'following'), in the Arab world 'tarjama' (= 'biography') and in China 'fan yi' (= 'turning over').

Some Researches on Prefabricated Patterns and Oral Translation
Granger (1998), in his research, "Prefabricated patterns in advanced EFL writing: collocations and formulae" has tried to show that learners would make much greater use of what Sinclair (1987, p.319) calls the **open choice principle** than native speakers, who have been found to operate primarily according to the **idiom principle**.

little we know about them, how they are acquired, what production difficulties they cause and how L1 and L2 prefabs interact, this is quite alarming. We possess insufficient knowledge to decide what role they should play in L2 teaching: we do not know what to teach, how much to teach and least of all how to teach, hence the urgent need for empirical work. This should be greatly facilitated by the wide variety of large computer corpora currently being assembled. The value of introspective tests in this field should also not be underestimated.

Asgarian (2012), in his study 'The Iranian EFL teacher's perceptions on translation strategy use' has been attempted to show how teacher's understanding has any effect on using translation strategy. According to Asgarian (2012), the use of translation in learning a foreign language can be ignored by language teachers, but translation is widely used throughout learners' learning process. The present study, therefore, attempted to explore Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions on translation strategy use. The content analysis of the participants' qualitative reports indicated that the Iranian EFL teachers held different perceptions on the role of translation in their learning and teaching experiences, as well as their academic studies and translation / interpretation practice. Moreover, the interviews provided interesting insights in relation to effective translation / interpretation. In this study, the interviews data were interpreted in order to explore the Iranian English language teachers' views about use of translation as a learning strategy. The participants' beliefs related to the emerging themes of 'teacher / teaching', 'learner / learning', and 'translation' suggested several issues which will be discussed below.

In relation to the first theme, the data seem to indicate that less proficient learners and/or teachers with traditional training may use L1 in mainstream and government institutions. Similarly, for students of lower levels and for grammar instruction teachers may resort to students' first language. Lack of equivalence in the source language and existence of a cultural gap among languages are cases where the use of L1 seems inevitable. Other factors such as time constraint, lack of equipment, learners' background also play a significant role in the use of mother tongue in language teaching. The participants in the study believed that both learning and using L2 require developing students' meta-cognitive strategies and study skills, and the teacher's effective implementation of translation related work. Additionally, using L2 could be more appropriate for higher levels and teachers ought to encourage learners to read around the topic in L2 before embarking on Persian – English translation; and the use of L1 by teachers has to be restricted to lower levels of proficiency instead. In the case of dictionary use teachers generally believed that learners should abandon using bilingual dictionaries as they develop their L2 knowledge, and replace bilingual with monolingual dictionaries. The main reason for this perception was that language learners cannot familiar with register, pragmatics, and usage issues through bilingual dictionaries.

In relation to the second theme, the teachers believed that learners should use L1 at lower levels; however, they should gradually stop using their first language as they get more proficient and confident users of L2. The participants' professional experiences seem to indicate that as learners develop, they become users of monolingual resources, they better understand the definitions/illustration in L2, and develop the habit of thinking in English. As regards the last theme, the participants reported that accuracy, feasibility and appropriateness in translation could be ensured by professionals multiple revisions. The issue of equivalence depends on factors such as the context of use in L1/L2, the register/stylistic clues and the degree of familiarity with L1/L2 culture. This means that various criteria should be taken into account by learners/translators to reach an equivalent effect.

Overall, the data entries showed that the Iranian teachers generally did not prefer translation as a strategy for language learning, which is suggested by their insights in that they prohibited the use of L1 in classroom, the use of bilingual dictionaries, as well as limited L1 use to lower proficiency levels for both teaching and learning.

In conclusion, the discussion whether to incorporate L1 and its culture in L2 instruction is by no means over. Any decision in favor of translation for both teaching and learning must take into consideration a number of factors, such as the learners' attitudes, motivation, age and purpose of learning a language. Translation as a strategy for learning and teaching can be potentially beneficial, yet it is constrained by physical and human factors in the language learning environment.

Alinejad and Azizmohammadi (2013), In their study, 'The correlation between English sentences and their voices in the process of translation' tried to show the difference between the two structures of active and passive voices in English and Persian and its effect on the process of translation. They more explain languages provide their speakers with a variety of constructions that help them communicate effectively and efficiently. Two out of these constructions are active and passive forms. Some languages as Persian believe that an active sentence is usually preferable to a passive sentence because an active one is shorter, stronger and more direct. While some other languages as English believe that passive voice is used more frequently because it is a regular feature in formal especially scientific written texts. Based on what was mentioned above we can arrive at this conclusion that in order to have a fluent text, changing the voices in the process of translation is a must. Although active sentences and passive ones share a common sense, and sometimes each of the active and passive have the same meaning and each one can be used instead of the other but not all passive sentences have the same meaning as that of the active. The present research helps the translators how to translate a text as natural as possible because if they know under what conditions it is obligatory to change the voice of sentences in the process of translation from English into Persian or vice versa, consequently they will produce the appearance that seems original.

Methodology
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 pretest of the study consisted of a test of oral translation in the form of oral interview and media translation. This was a teacher-made test of oral translation including 10 items for oral translation based on certain general concepts of media such as news and education careers, family relationships, jobs, and future life targets and orientations. The final version of the pretest was made after it was judged by three professors (inter-rater reliability, r=7.2). The scoring procedures for the pretest of the study will be explained in section 3.5.

The material for the treatment of the study contained 5 lessons of prefabricated patterns for practice in the experimental group of the study (see Appendix 3). Prefabricated patterns were decided on since they were common patterns in daily life and were compatible with the purposes of this study.

The material for the posttest of the study consisted of the oral translation questions used in the pretest of the study. Since the study here aimed at indicating the degree of progress from the pretest to the posttest in the experimental group of the study in which prefabricated patterns were being applied, the same test was administered as the oral translation ability test in both the experimental and the control group, and any other parallel tests of oral translation ability was 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 a paper-and-pencil test. Hence, the participants' had to answer the questions in specified answer sheets. The time allowed was 70 minutes as had been determined in the OPT. The pretest of the study was an oral translation test with the characteristics explained. The time allocation for the oral translation pretest was about 15 minutes for each participant: the items were played back or asked and their answers were heard, recorded and scored. The treatment of the study included 10 sessions of teaching oral translation to both groups but 15 minutes of treating the experimental group with the prefabricated patterns. Finally, the posttest of oral translation 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 that was used in this study was scored on the basis of the standard criteria introduced by the test itself. The criterion for scoring the pretest and the posttest of the study was the maximum of

20. The participants' performance was scored 4 marks for the correct answer to each oral translation item.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from testing the hypothesis of the study will be analyzed via calculating a t-test between the posttest speaking scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study Also, to ensure the acceptability of the obtained calculations, a Pearson Product Moment Correlation was also be calculated between the pretest and the posttest of each group of the study.

Results

The 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 software. Table (4.1) shows the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of speaking in the experimental group of the study:

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of the data of the Experimental Group of the study

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Missing Value
PRoral translation	15	2.1333	2.24695	5.048	0.00
POoral translation	15	10.4431	1.00266	1.005	0.00

As is indicated in table (4.1), the number of participants has been 15 in each experiment (N_{PRE} = 15; N_{POE} = 15), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value = 0.00) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiments of the study. The mean for the PROralTranslation (pretest of oral translation) scores was shown to be 2.24695 ($\bar{X}_{PRE}$= 2.24695) as compared to the mean for the POOralTranslation (posttest of oral translation) scores which was 10.4431 ($\bar{X}_{POE}$= 10.4431). As for the standard deviations obtained for the experimental group, there seems to be more variability among the PROralTranslation scores than the scores in the POOralTranslation. This may give an image of the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (treating with prefabricated patterns).

Similarly, the descriptive analysis for the pretest and the posttest of speaking in the control group of the study has been indicated in table (4.2) below:

Table 2. Descriptive analysis of the data of the Control Group of the study

Tests	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Missing Value
PROralTranslation	15	7.2786	3.26141	10.668	0.00
POOralTranslation	15	9.7067	2.45633	2.873	0.00

As is indicated in table (4.2), the number of participants has been 15 in each experiment (N_{PRC} = 15; N_{POC} = 15), and there has been no missing value (Missing Value = 0.00) which means that all selected participants participated in the experiments of the study. The mean for the PROralTranslation (pretest of oral translation) scores was shown to be 7.2786 ($\bar{X}_{PRC}$= 7.2786) as compared to the mean for the POOralTranslation (posttest of oral translation) scores which was 9.7067 ($\bar{X}_{POC}$= 9.7067). As for the standard deviations obtained for the control group, there seems to be more variability among the PROralTranslation scores than the scores in the POOralTranslation. This may give an image of the participants' posttest scores being more homogenous after conducting the treatment of the study (the existing method of teaching oral translation).

This section focuses of the inferential analysis of the obtained data of this study. Such analysis was done using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) from which the 'Compare Means', 'Independent Samples Test' for calculating the t value, also, 'Correlate' and 'Bivariate' windows for calculating the Covariance and Correlations were selected and used.

Table (4.3): The T-test results of the study

T-Test Results	Observed t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Between the Posttest Scores of the Experimental and the Control Groups of the Study (Equal variances not assumed)	12.721	28	0.000

As is indicated in table (4.3), the t-value of the study was calculated between the posttests of oral translation among the participants in the experimental and the control groups. The observed t value was calculated as to be 12.721 (t_{obs}= 12.721) and the degree of freedom was 28 (df = 28). Finally, the level of significance was calculated as to be 0.00 (p = 0.00) which has been used in interpreting the data for the rejection or support of the first hypothesis of the study in the next section.

The next inferential analysis of the data of this study was related to the degree of relationship between the pretest and the posttest of oral translation in each participant group. This was indicated by calculating the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the pretest and the posttest scores in each group of the study. The results have been illustrated in the correlation table (4.4) below:

Table 4.4. The Correlation Table for the pretest and the posttest scores
Of the experimental and the control groups

Matrix	Between the Pretest and the Posttest of the Experimental Group	Between the Pretest and the Posttest of the Control Group
Correlation (Pearson)	0.081	0.341
Significance	2-tailed = 0.042	2-tailed = 0.072

Table (4.4) indicates that the correlation coefficient between the pretest and the posttest scores of the experimental group is 0.081 ($R_{PRE\ POE}$ = 0.081) as compared with the correlation coefficient between the pretest and the posttest of the control group to be 0.341 ($R_{PRC\ POC}$ = 0.341). The $R_{PRE\ POE}$ is much more different in value than the $R_{PRC\ POC}$, and thus, is representative of the low relationship as well as significant distance between the scores of the pretest and posttest of oral translation in the experimental group. On the other hand, the higher value of $R_{PRC\ POC}$ indicates that the scores in the pretest and posttest of oral translation in the control group of the study are closer to each other than the scores in the experimental group. It can be inferred from such closeness that there has been no significant progress in the pretest scores of oral translation in the control group after being compared with the scores in the posttest.

The significance level was calculated between the pretest and the posttest of the experimental group as to be 0.042 (Sig $_{2\text{-tailed}}$ = 0.042) since no degree of progress in the experimental group had been predicted i.e. the hypothesis postulated was null. Because the significance value of the test, 0.042, is lower than 0.05 (0.042 < 0.05), there is no reason to believe that the results have been by chance.

Respectively, the significance level was calculated between the pretest and the posttest of the control group as to be 0.072 (Sig $_{2\text{-tailed}}$ = 0.072) since no degree of progress in the control group had been predicted i.e. the hypothesis postulated was null in nature. Because the significance value of the test, 0.072, is higher than 0.05 (0.072 > 0.05), there is no reason to believe that the results have not been by chance.

Results of Hypotheses Testing

In this section, the results of testing the hypotheses 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 (see section 4.1 here) as 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 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 below:

Hypothesis (H0): Using prefabricated patterns does not affect Iranian EFL leaners' oral translation ability.

The hypothesis of the study which targeted the effect of using prefabricated patterns on Iranian EFL learners' oral translation ability was rejected. Evidence from various sources of data could help to verify the rejection. The results of the T-Test of the study (see table 4.3) could be employed to confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by the SPSS was 12.721 (t_{obs} = 12.721) while the critical value of t determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 (P = 0.05) was 2.048 (t_{crit} = 2.048). Thus, the observed t was higher than the critical t and high enough to reject the null hypothesis of this study.

The second evidence to verify the rejection of the hypothesis was the value of the level of significance calculated by the SPSS to be 0.000 ($\text{Significance}_{2\text{-tailed}}$ = 0.000). Since this value was lower than 0.05 (based on the SPSS regulations), the difference between the means of the posttests of the study could not be by chance, and thus, the rejection of the hypothesis of the study indicated that using prefabricated patterns would enhance the oral translation ability of the participants of the experimental group of the study.

The rejection of the hypothesis of the study could also be supported by showing the experimental group participants' progress from the pretest to the posttest. Table (4.4) provided the evidence for this support. According to the correlation table illustrated in table (4.4), the correlation value between the pretest and the posttest scores in the experimental group was significantly lower than that of the control group. This meant that the posttest scores of oral translation ability were significantly distant from the pretest scores in the experimental group and indicated that using prefabricated patterns affected the participants' oral translation ability and caused the posttest scores to stand higher.

A further evidence for the rejection of the hypothesis of the study was the control group participants' lack of progress of from the pretest to the posttest. Tables (4.4) provided the evidence for this support. According to the correlation table illustrated in table (4.4), the correlation value between the pretest and the posttest scores in the control group was significantly higher than that of the experimental group. This meant that the posttest scores of oral translation were significantly close to the pretest scores in the control group and indicated that not using prefabricated patterns did not affect the participants' oral translation ability and caused the posttest scores to stand as close as possible.

The nature of the hypotheses of the study required that the obtained data be analyzed using the descriptive and the inferential statistical methods. On the one hand, the descriptive statistics were used here for sorting, displaying and describing the data. This included the calculation of simple statistical attributes such as the measures of central tendency including 'mean'. On the other hand, the data were interpreted via applying the inferential statistics which consisted of calculating a t-test for showing the possible difference between the means of the posttests of the study, also, analyzing separately the correlation coefficients between the pretest and the posttest scores of the experimental and the control groups of the study.

It was concluded that the participants performed better when they took part in a oral translation test after they were treated with prefabricated patterns for about 10 sessions. This was further confirmed by the sub-results from testing the hypothesis, that is, the participants in the experimental group showed a rise in their posttest scores while no significant rise in the posttest scores was shown in the control group of the study. Such results will be more discussed in the next chapter.

General Discussion
The findings of the current study indicated that using prefabricated patterns in oral translation classes could result in a better performance of language learners in a test of oral translation. These findings seem to be compatible with the findings of the research study made by Wray (2002a, chaps. 4 and 5) who proposed that normal speakers employ a great many formulaic sequences to facilitate their processing and signal their identity, and she models the lexical store into five sub-lexicons, one of which is dedicated to deliberately memorized material including rhymes, phone numbers, acronyms, play scripts, and so on.

The results of the current study are also in line with the results of the research done by Wray. A., Fitzpatrick. T. (2009) in which the artificial use of prefabricated material in conversation have been

studied. According to them adult second language learners often come across as proficient but not native-like, with a command of the words and grammar of the language, but not of its idiomaticity. Idiomaticity resides in selecting the most native-like turn of phrase from a larger set of ways in which a particular message might be grammatically expressed. This article investigates what happens when learners are pushed to use native-like phrases in conversation. In an experiment inspired by TALK (a computer-assisted speech aid for the disabled), L2 learners of English were provided with native-like ways of expressing specific messages for targeted conversations. Both TALK and the L2 study represent artificial approaches to conversational interaction, retaining characteristics of 'normal' conversation along with a range of additional features arising from the limitations of being forced to rely on prefabricated material. Comparative evaluations of the two types of interaction indicate that even entirely fixed formulaic language can be highly effective in conversation. However, the extreme conditions of language use explored here also expose persistent weaknesses inherent in relying too heavily on formulaic material. The study exemplifies the value of research at the interface of lexical and grammatical processing and identifies related implications for the language learner.

Suggesting the PP Model in Teaching Oral Translation

Based on the results of the study which confirmed the effect of using prefabricated patterns on Iranian EFL learners' oral translation ability, and adopting from Wray's (2002a) model, it is now possible to introduce and present a model to teach oral translation to Iranian foreign language learners. The rationale behind the attempt to suggest a model here lies in the fact that the suggestion can be taken into account as the researcher main contribution in addition to the experimentation conducted in the current study. However, before discussing the PP model, Wray's (2002a) Model should be focused briefly:

Wray (2002a, chaps. 4 and 5) proposed that normal speakers employ a great many formulaic sequences to facilitate their processing and signal their identity, and she models the lexical store into five sub-lexicons, one of which is dedicated to deliberately memorized material including rhymes, phone numbers, acronyms, play scripts, and so on:
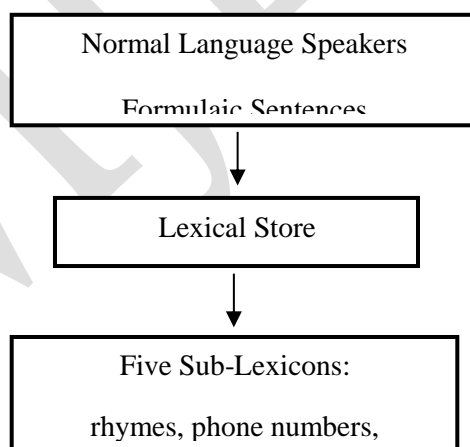

Figure 5.1: Wray's (2002a) Model

Now adopting from Wray's model, a modifying new model is presented which can contribute to linguistic approaches of teaching oral translation. The model has been named the PP (Prefabricated Pattern) model. The schematic representation of the model has been illustrated in figure (5.2) below:
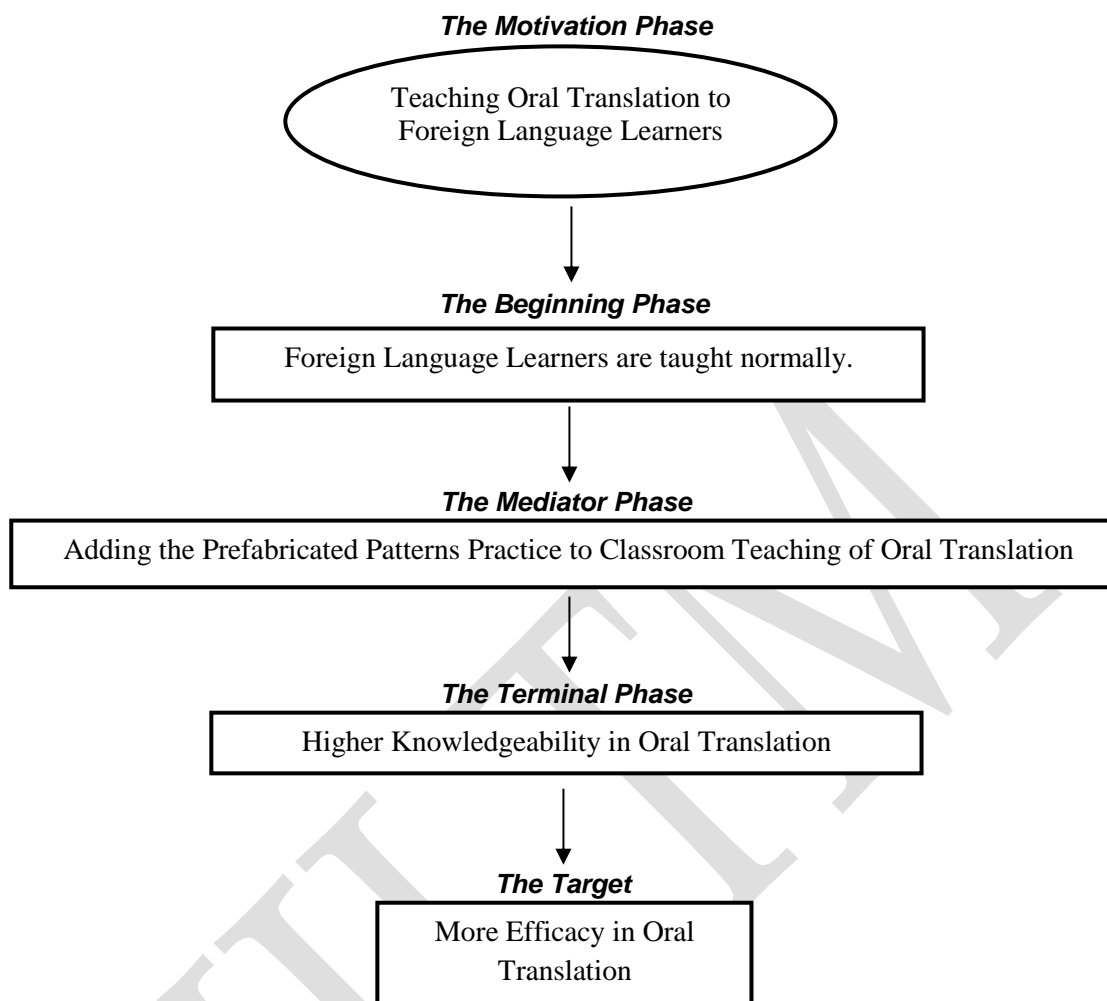
Figure 5.2: The Mother Tongue Deactivator (MTD) Model

This model contains four phases as well as a goal. Accordingly, the first phase is the Motivation phase whereby the motivation for establishing verbal communication should be determined. Figure (5.2) indicates that the base motivation for this model is teaching oral translation (here, to target Iranian EFL learners), thus, any other decisions or processes involved must be in line with the principles and fundamentals of that decision or process.

The second phase of the PP model is called the beginning phase whereby it is believed that the foreign language learners are being taught oral translation in a normal and non-experimental way. Additionally, selecting class activities to teach oral translation should be done while taking this principle into account.

The third phase of the model has been called the mediator phase in which the prefabricated patterns practice is added to classroom teaching of oral translation to meddle in the process of translation production and assist its progression. During this phase, foreign language learners are exposed to a corpus of real situation prefabricated patterns, and as a result, they pave the way to get access to a command of translating orally more proficiently in real situations of language. In fact, through the 'injection' of a linguistic element such as prefabricated patterns, the real situations of language use can be said to be mediated that prepare foreign language learners for the next phase.

The fourth phase of the PP model is the terminal phase. The significance of this phase is that it is a process in which the objectives of the previous phase i.e. the mediator phase are subject to

implementation. In other words, the degree of the foreign language learners' command over their oral translation depends upon the degree of their knowledgeability in prefabricated patterns.

Finally, the model is completed by the predefined target regarding teaching oral translation, which is more efficacy in foreign language learners' oral translation ability. If the previous phases included in the model are satisfactorily implemented in the classroom via the appropriate approaches, methods and techniques used during teaching oral translation, it can be expected that determined goal be achieved and the problem of foreign language learners' (here Iranian EFL learners) oral translation be lessened if not removed totally.

Implications of the Study

Theoretically, the results of the current study can be considered a contribution in the latest theories and models of teaching oral translation to the speaker of other languages. Such a contribution includes the enhancement of a sort of input named 'prefabricated patterns' in the classroom which is supposed to lead to a communicative and interactive way of teaching oral translation.

Pedagogically, the results of the study seem to be more practical and compatible to an Iranian situation of foreign language learning particularly for those who encounter problems regarding their oral translation. First, the results of the current study are applicable to Iranian EFL learners have made their minds to promote their communicative competence through strengthening their oral translation ability. These learners can range from freshmen university students at the B.A. level to senior M.A. candidates who feel a need for the ability.

Second, the results of this study may be beneficial to teachers of English as a foreign language (particularly Iranian teachers of translation) in that they can devise innovative methods of teaching oral translation by using prefabricated patterns as a practice within classroom activities and, in this way, add to the exposure of Iranian EFL learners to a more realistic situation of English language which can result in more interaction of the learners and language communication.

Third, material designers can take advantage of the results of the current study in that they may develop new curricula for teaching oral translation at the university level or design materials to convey more information in teaching oral translation. They can publish new books, pamphlets or other teacher-made materials based on their specific classroom conditions. They can, further, take more advantage of using prefabricated patterns including to teach oral translation.

Finally, the results of this study can be usable for testers of English as a foreign language. Since oral translation is a productive ability and learners seem to be evaluated more with their language production than recognition in their future career related to language, language testers can check their learners' oral translation ability to find out if they are more competent if they are exposed to prefabricated patterns in oral translation classes. Furthermore, testers can use the results of this study to devise newer measuring instruments of oral translation.

Suggestions for Further Research

Some ideas may be helpful for the improvement of the issue as future attempts in using prefabricated patterns in teaching oral translation. The fact is that research in general and research in oral translation in particular are not limited fields. There are numerous topics to be worked on at least in terms of the variables discussed in this thesis.

The first point to consider is the issue of population of the study. It seems possible to go beyond the sample-population limitations of the study and to elicit information from a larger population. This was not practical in this research since there was the problem of distance: it was not practical to have samples from all parts within the short period of the time allocated to writing this work; however, this is possible and the future researchers are advised to take the time and replicate the study from this point of view.

As the second point, the future researchers are advised to expand the replications of this study to other language teaching situations in Iran such as high schools. Despite all attempts made in this study to see the possible effect of using prefabricated patterns on the participants' oral translation ability, the results seemed to be applicable to university levels. The sole information elicited in this study contained the data taken from the OPT as well as the oral translation tests used here, however, future researchers are advised to conduct qualitative research studies as well as quantitative ones to

elicit information about the teachers/learners positive or negative views about the treatment and the results of the study.

References

Alinejad.F. & Azizmohammadi.F. (2013).The Correlation between English Sentences and their Voices in the Process of Translation. Arak Islamic Azad University. Iran European online journal of Natural and Social Sciences. 2013, Vol.2, No.2 Special Issue on Teaching and Learning.

Asgarin, A. (2012). The Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception on Translation Strategy Use. Akendiz Language Studies Conference 2012. Eastern Mediterranean University. North Cyprus.

Gille, D. (1995b). Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training. Amsterdam & Philadelfia: John Benjamins.

Granger, S. (1998). Prefabricated Patterns in Advanced EFL Writing: Collocations and Lexical Phrases. Clarendon Press: Oxford, 145-160.

Halverson, S. (1999). 'Conceptual work and the "translation" concept', Target 11.1:   1–31.

Larson, M. (1984). Meaning-based Translation. First edition. University Press of America, Inc. 537p.

Mahmoodzadeh, K. (1992). Consecutive Interpreting: Its Principles and Techniques. In Dollerup,C and Loddegaard, A (eds). 231-236.

Munday, J. (2008). Introducing Translation Studies (Theories and Applications). Routledge (Taylor & Francis Group). 2th. Edition.

Pym, A. (1996). 'Venuti's visibility' (Review of The Translator's Invisibility), Target 8.1: 165–77.

Shuttleworth, M. & Cowie, M. (1997). Dictionary of Translation Studies. 1st Edition by St. Jerome Publishing. Manchester, Great Britain.

Sinclair, J. (1987). Collocation: a progress report, in: R. STEELE & T. THREADGOLD (eds.) Language Topics. Essays in honor of Michael Halliday. Volume II. John Benjamins. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: 319-331.

Tymoczko, M. (1999a) Translation in a Post-Colonial Context: Early Irish Literature in English Translation, Manchester: St Jerome.

Wray, A. (2002a). Formulaic language and the lexicon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

THE EFFECT OF TEST FORMS ON IRANIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY

Sara Zafari[1], Reza Biria[2]

[1.]Ph.D. Candidate of TEFL, Department of English Language, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan-IRAN, Email:sarazafari76@yahoo.com

[2.]Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan-IRAN, Email:Biriareza@yahoo.com

Abstract

The present study aimed to investigate the possible effect of different test forms on the reading comprehension ability among Iranian intermediate EFL learners at institute level. The question this study tried to answer was whether two different test forms: multiple choice and true-false could enhance a better reading comprehension achievement at intermediate level. To answer the question, 50 intermediate EFL learners were selected from among a population of 100 learners studying in the Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan branch via an OPT test score of at least one standard deviation below the mean, and participated in the experiment of the study. They were randomly assigned to two groups. Then, a reading comprehension text was administered to both groups but with different test forms: a multiple –choice to the experimental group and a true-false to the control group. The data of the study were analyzed using the Independent Samples T-test and the results indicated that there was a difference between the two test forms, verifying the higher mean score in the experimental (multiple-choice) group of the study.

Keywords

OPT Test, Multiple-Choice Test, True-False Test, Reading Comprehension Ability

Introduction

People read to get something from text whether it is facts, ideas, enjoyment, or feeling (Nuttall, 2005). For whatever purpose they read, they search for meaning in what they read (Graesser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994; Nuttall, 2005), and meaning is constructed through readers' active cognitive interaction with the text (Nuttall, 2005; Tenma, Araki, Fukaya, Horiba, Isahara, Konishi, Miyaura, Narita, Ozaki,& Tajika,2002).

Meaning is constructed in the active interaction of readers with the text, the readers' contribution to the construction of meaning is a key aspect of reading comprehension. Therefore, reading comprehension is, in a sense, a process in which readers project their life onto what they read (Tenma, 1992). However, because experiences vary from person to person, the understanding of the same text can differ from reader to reader.

Reading questions have several functions. One of the functions is to encourage students to encourage students to engage in reading for meaning (Heilman, Blair, & Rupley, 1986; Nutaall, 2005), which is essentially what people naturally do during reading (Graesser, Singer, &Trabasso, 1994; Nuttall, 2005). Reading questions can also motivate students to read because they will read purposefully in order to find answers (Grant, 1987; Heilman, et al., 1986; Nuttall, 2005).

According to Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996), language test performance is affected by different factors and of these different factors which can affect test taker's performance, test method is one of the most important factors that have attracted language measurement specialists and teachers' attention, and directed their focus to its importance and its effects on both the test taker's performance and the quality of the obtained information.

According to Bachman (1990) language tests are important because of their potential to be used as

means for controlling the context in which language performance takes place. The characteristics of test methods can be seen as restricted and controlled version of theses contextual features that determine the nature of performance that is expected for a given test or test task.

Another reason is the quality of test. According to Shohamy (1984), a good test is a test in which the method has little effect on the ability being tested. That is, if test takers' performance on a test is the result of the ability being measured rather than the testing method, that is considered to be a good testing tool. The next reason, based on Bachman (1990), is based on the characteristics or facets of test methods which constitute the how of language testing, and are of particular importance for designing, developing, and using language tests.

The most significant reason, as appreciated by Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996), is related to the role of test methods in learners' performance on a given test. They influence different test takers' performance differently and systematically. Because of the importance of the effects of test method facets on test method facets on test performance, Bachman (1990) has developed a framework for delineating the specific features, or facets of test method. The five major categories of test method facet are:

1. The testing environment
2. The test rubric
3. The nature of the input
4. The nature of the expected response
5. The relationship between the input and the response

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the different effects of two selected response types, multiple choice item and True-False item, on the in intermediate test taker's performance in their reading comprehension ability

Research Question and Hypothesis of the Study

Based on the literature reviewed in this article, the research question of the study is as follows:

RQ: Does the form of reading comprehension test have any effect on the performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

Additionally, the hypothesis of the study is stated as follows:

H0: The form of reading comprehension test has no effect on the performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

Methodology

Participants

This study was conducted in Isfahan Azad University of Khorasgan, Iran. The number of learners who participated in the study was 40. The students were both male and female, who were selected randomly from among the students in the Isfahan Azad University of Khorasgan based on the results of OPT administered to them. There were the students with the scores that were at least one standard deviation below the mean since the researcher aimed to witness the weak participants' possible progress after being exposed to different test forms of the reading comprehension ability. The 40 participants were randomly divided into two groups: one experimental and the other, control.

Materials

The Oxford Placement Test

The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants proficiency was a paper-and pencil test. The OPT used in this study consisted of several sections including vocabulary (7 items), grammar (7 items) and sentence recognition (6 items). 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 researcher. The time allowed was 30 minutes as had been determined in the OPT.

The Reading Comprehension Tests

Since the purpose of the study was to compare the intermediate test takers' performance on different response format in terms of their reading comprehension ability, the reading test included a text the topic 'phobia'. The text included 75 to 100 words and was based on their proficiency level because it was selected from the participants' university textbook. For each of group, a different form of test type was administered. The experimental group was given the four-option multiple-choice test

which was based on the comprehension of the text. The other test form included a true-false item test.

Procedures

The OPT of the study administered for measuring the degree of the participants' proficiency was a paper-and-pencil test. Hence, the participants' had to answer the question in specified answer sheet. The time allowed was 70 minutes as had been determined in the OPT. The second part was a reading comprehension text which was given to the students randomly. Half of the students received the text with multiple choice items and half of them received the text with T-F questions. All scores of all participants, for multiple-choice and T- F items were summed. Consequently, for both groups there were a set of scores which were based on the similar texts.

Result

Findings

The findings of the study have been illustrated in tables (1) and (2) below:

Table 1. Descriptive analysis of the study

	Test Forms	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
As	Reading	Multiple Choice	20	17.5000	2.58538	0.57811
		False-True	20	17.7000	1.86660	0.41739

indicated in table 1, the number of participants has been 20 in each experiment (N_{MC} = 20; N_{FT} = 20). The mean for the MCR (multiple-choice test of reading comprehension) scores was shown to be 17.5000 ($\overline{X}_{PRC}$=17.5000) as compared to the mean for the FTR (false-true test of reading comprehension) scores which was 17.7000 ($\overline{X}_{POC}$=17.7000). As for the standard deviations obtained for the control group, there seems to be more variability among the MCR scores than the scores in the FTR.

Table 2. Independent Samples T-test of the posttest score of the study

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reading	Equal variances assumed	0.280	38	0.0481
	Equal variances not assumed	0.280	34.576	0.0481

As is indicated in table 2, the t-value of the study was calculated between the posttests of reading comprehension of the participant in the experimental and the control group. The observed t value was calculated as to be 0.280 (tobs= 0.280) and the degree of freedom was 34.576 (df = 34.576). The reason why the degree of freedom here was not calculated based on the common formula of df = N-1 was that the SPSS calculated the degree of freedom while considering the variances of the participant posttest groups as unequal instead of equal (VE= 6.684 Vs. VC= 3.484). Finally, the level of significance was calculated as to be 0.00 (p = 0.0481) which indicates that the results are not by chance.

Discussion

In order to give a detailed analysis, attempts were made to take advantage of the results of the study as 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 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 below:

H0: The form of reading comprehension test has no effect on the performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

The hypothesis of the study, which targeted the effect of test form on Iranian EFL learners'

reading comprehension ability, was supported. Evidence from various sources of data could help to verify the support. The results of the T-Test of the study (see table 2) could be employed to confirm this analysis, accordingly, the observed t value calculated by the SPSS was 0.280 (tobs = 0.280) while the critical value of t determined on the basis of considering the 2-tailed significance level of 0.05 (P = 0.05) was 2.021 (tcrit = 2.021). Thus, the observed t was lower than the critical t and high enough to support the null hypothesis of this study. Accordingly, it was shown that there was no difference between the scores of the multiple-choice test of reading comprehension and false-true test of the skill.

Considering factors that influence test performance, the findings of this study contradict Bachman's (1990) assertion that a test taker's language performance is influenced by the characteristic of the method used to elicit the test takers' language performance. Also, the findings of the current study are against Bachman and Palmer's (1996) argumentation that characteristics of test methods always affect test scores to some extent, and they, further, suggested that since it is impossible to eliminate the effects of test methods, it is necessary to control them as much as possible so that the tests will be appropriate for what they are used for. Further, the findings of this study are in line with Moon, Brighton, & Callahan (2003) claim that standardized testing had little effect on teaching practices until the late 1970s despite the widespread use of testing.

References

Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. London: OUP.

Bachman, L. F. & Palmer, A. S. (1996).*Language testing in practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Graesser, A.C., Singer, M., & Trabasso, T. (1994). Constructing inferences during narrative Text comprehension. *Psychological Review*, 101(3), 371-395.

Grant, N. (1987). *Making the most of your textbook*. London: Longman.

Heilman, A., Blair, T., & Rupley, W. (1986). *Principles and Practices of teaching reading* (6th ed.). Columbus: Merrill.

Moon, T. R., Brighton, C. M., & Callahan, C. M. (2003). State standardized testing programs: Friend or foe of gifted students? Roeper Review, 25(2), 49-60. doi: 10.1080/ 027 831 903 09554199

Nuttall, C. (2005). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. Oxford: Macmillan.

Shohamy, E. (1984). Does the testing method make a difference? The case of reading comprehension. *Language Testing*, 1(2), 147-170.

Tenma, M. (1992). Dokhaishido no houhouron: dokkai no strategy (theories for reading instruction : reading comprehension strategies). *The English Teachers' Magazine*, 41(10), 11-13.

Tenma, M., Araki, K., Fukaya, K., Horiba, Y., Isahara, H., Konishi, K., Miyaura, K., Murasugi, K., Narita, M., Ozaki, K., & Tajika, H.(2002). *Eibundokkai no process to shido (processes and instruction of reading English as a foreign language.* Tokyo: Taishukan.

تفکر انتقادی: اهمیت، فواید و محدودیت های آن در محیط های آموزشی

اشکان پشنگ زاده (نویسنده مسئول)، کارشناس ارشد آموزش زبان انگلیسی، گروه زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی، دانشگاه اراک

پست الکترونیکی: a.pashangzadeh@aol.com

Ashkan Pashangzadeh (Corresponding Author)
MA in TEFL, Dept. of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Arak University
Arak 38156-8-8349, PO. Box: 879, Iran
E-mail: a.pashangzadeh@aol.com

مسعود کشاورز، استادیار، گروه زبان و ادبیات انگلیسی، دانشگاه اراک

پست الکترونیکی: m-Keshavarz@araku.ac.ir

Masood Keshavarz
Assistant Professor, Dept. of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Arak
University
Arak 38156-8-8349, PO. Box: 879, Iran
E-mail: m-Keshavarz@araku.ac.ir

چکیده

تفکر انتقادی قابلیت بکارگیری نیروی اندیشه به شکلی معقول و خردورزانه است و فرصتی را در اختیار صاحبان این توانایی قرار میدهد که آزادانه بتوانند در مورد عقاید و دیدگاههای خود به تبادل نظر بپردازند و به شکلی هدایت شده و نظام مند از راه استدلال های منطقی، به شیوه ای منصفانه، به بالاترین سطح از کیفیت در فرایند تفکر و همچنین همدلی بیشتر و نتایج بهتر دست یابند. در سالیان اخیر، مفهوم تفکر انتقادی، و اهمیت آن در تمامی مراحل زندگی، در محافل آموزشی به بحث روز تبدیل شده است. بدلایل بسیاری مدرسان دانشگاهی و آموزگاران سطوح ابتدایی و متوسطه در کشورهای پیشرفته ی جهان بجای آموزش صرف مطالب درسی، به آموزش مهارتهای گوناگون فکری علاقمند شده اند که آموزش تفکر انتقادی یکی از آن مهارتها محسوب میشود. در این راستا، مقاله پیش رو در نگاه اول تصویری کلی را از فرایند تفکر انتقادی ترسیم میکند و در ادامه به شرح فواید و ضرورت فراگیری و بکارگیری تفکر انتقادی در دنیای امروز و محیطهای آموزشی نظیر مدارس، دبیرستانها و دانشگاهها میپردازد. سپس موانع و مشکلات موجود در مسیر آموزش تفکر انتقادی را در محیط های آموزشی یادشده مورد بررسی قرار میدهد و در پایان راهکارهایی تأثیرگذار را در شیوه های بکارگیری تفکرانتقادی ارائه مینماید.

کلیدواژگان: تفکر انتقادی، آموزش تعلیمی، متفکر انتقادی، نقد، محیط های آموزشی

1. مقدمه

افرادیکه مطالعه کتاب برایشان لذت بخش است همواره در ارتباط با مسایل مطروحه در کتابهای جدید از خود کنجکاوی نشان میدهند. آنها با خود این پرسش را مطرح میکنند که آیا باید بعنوان مثال به مطالعه فلان کتاب خاص که به تازگی وارد بازار شده است مبادرت ورزند یا رویهمرفته از مطالعه آن پرهیز کنند. در چنین مواردی، جهت اخذ تصمیم بهتر، میتوان با افراد صاحب نظر به مشورت و گفتگو نشست و از آنان طلب راهنمایی کرد. اما نکته حائز اهمیت این است که نظر کدام یک از این افراد صاحب اندیشه را باید پذیرفت. اظهار نظر امری سهل است، لذا هر شخصی میتواند نظر خاص خود را بیان کند. اما آنچه که درخور تأمل است نوع دانشی است که یک صاحب نظر از آن برخوردار است، دانشی که در ما آن میزان از اعتماد را بر می انگیزد که بتوانیم برای مطالعه یا عدم مطالعه یک کتاب مشخص بر آن تکیه کنیم. از اینرو ما ناچاریم، جهت مطالعه، دست به گزینش یکی از کتابهایی بزنیم که در دسترس هستند. ما در خود علاقه وافری به مطالعه کتاب احساس میکنیم اما در ارتباط با بسیاری از کتابهای موجود از خود تمایلی برای مطالعه نشان نمیدهیم. پس از آنکه کتاب خاصی را در حیطه علاقه خود جهت مطالعه انتخاب کردیم، نقدهای مرتبط با آن کتاب را از نظر میگذرانیم. این نکته را همواره باید در ذهن خود داشته باشیم که نظرات و قضاوتهای ارائه شده با یکدیگر یکسان نخواهند بود. منتقدان بسیاری ممکن است از زوایای گوناگون نسبت به اثر مورد نظر نظراتی بسیار منفی را مطرح کرده باشند در حالی که تنی چند از دیگر منتقدان به نکات و مواردی مثبت اشاره نموده اند که از چشم نقاد منتقدین گروه اول مخفی مانده باشد. برای درک بیشتر مطلب میتوانیم به تعدادی از شاهکارهای ادبی جهان مراجعه کنیم و به نظرات مطروحه در مورد این آثار نگاهی بیاندازیم. بی شک، هستند صاحب نظرانی که این آثار را فاقد ارزش میدانند.

مثالی که مطرح شد قابل تعمیم به کل مسایلی است که ما روزانه و در کل مسیر زندگانی خویش با آن دست به گریبانیم. پزشکان، آموزگاران، طراحان، قانونگذاران و سیاستمداران همگی در رابطه با انجام عملی خاص در محیط و شرایطی خاص با یکدیگر از در مخالفت بر میخیزند و هر کدام بنا به دلایلی، نظرها و راه و روشهای خویش را درست و نیز کامل میپندارند. اما در این میان پاسخ به این پرسش اهمیت دارد که تکلیف کسانیکه استفاده کنندگان از این نظرات محسوب میشوند چیست؟ در این راستا، مقاله پیش رو ممکن است حاوی راهکاری برای پاسخ به سؤال مذکور باشد. ما در خود نیازمند به ایجاد مهارتها و نگرشهایی هستیم که ما را قادر خواهند ساخت تا از میان نظرات، عقاید و باورهای گوناگون موجود در دنیای پیرامونمان دست به انتخاب بزنیم. ما باید به عنوان موجودی صاحب قدرت تفکر و تعقل، در ارتباط با چگونگی پاسخ به آنچه می بینیم، میخوانیم و میشنویم، تصمیم گیری کنیم. یکی از گزینه هایی که همواره فراروی ما قرار دارد اعلام موافقت با هر آنچیزی است که میبینیم و میشنویم؛ پرواضح است که چنین روشی خود بخود ما را به آیینه ای که به جلوه گاه تمام نمای نظرات دیگران است مبدل میسازد.گزینه دیگری که فراسوی ما قرار میگیرد و از تأثیرگذاری بهتری برخوردار است زیر سؤال بردن اموری است، از زوایای گوناگون، که در ارتباط با آنها نیازمند به تصمیم گیری هستیم.

2. پیشینه تاریخی تفکر انتقادی

پیشینه تفکر انتقادی از منظر ریشه شناسی[6] به زمانی بسیار دور در دل تاریخ بشری و به دوره ای باز میگردد که سقراط[7] فیلسوف شهر یونانی 2500 سال پیش از دوران حاضر، عملاً اهمیت جستجو برای شواهد و دلایل مستند، بررسی دقیق استدلالها و فرضیات، تجزیه و تحلیل مفاهیم اساسی، و نیز پیگیری مفاهیم چه در عرصه گفتار و چه در حیطه ی عمل را آموزش داد(Paul, Elder, & Bartell , 1997) . افلاطون[8] ، یکی از شاگردان سقراط، نمونه ها و مثالهای مهمی را از قدرت و ارزش تفکر انتقادی در اختیار ما قرار داده است. گفتگوهایی که افلاطون در قالب نمایش در آورده است تبادل آرا و نظرات تخیلی و فیلسوفانه ای را بین سقراط و افراد گوناگونی از اهالی آتن[9] و دیگر شهرهای یونان به تصویر میکشد. شخصیتی که افلاطون از سقراط در نمایشنامه های خود ترسیم نموده است از شخصیت واقعی و حقیقی سقراط مایه میگیرد، شخصیتی که مبتنی بر اصول مدنیت است. حرفه او معلمی نبوده است و آثار اندکی را به رشته تحریر در آورده است. به عبارت دیگر سقراط ترجیح داده است که در قالب بحث و گفتمان به بیان آراء و ایده های خود بپردازد. وی شخصیتی آشنا در محافل عمومی شهر آتن بود که در مکانهایی چون محل گردهمایی افراد[10] ، ورزشگاه شهر و نیز گذرگاه ها به سادگی قدم میزد و با دوستان و پیروانش غرق در مباحثه میشد. در این بحث ها سقراط برای مخاطبان خود صرفاً در باب اعتقادات و آرای خویشتن ایراد خطابه نمیکرد بلکه با سخنان خویش عقاید و آرای دیگران را نیز به چالش میکشید و بدینوسیله آنان را به بررسی دوباره باورها، فرضیات، و نیز تعصبات خویش فرا میخواند. او با این روش مخاطبان خود را وادار میکرد تا درباره دلایل وجودی اعتقادات و باورهایشان اندیشه کنند و قوت و ضعف آن دلایل را با دقت مورد ارزیابی قرار دهند. از نظر سقراط، اولین گام در مسیر حرکت بسوی مرزهای دانش و حکمت رسیدن به این آگاهی است که بفهمیم بسیار کمتر از آنچه که خود درباره دانسته هایمان می اندیشیم میدانیم. با اینحال، تصویر ارجمندی که افلاطون جوان از سقراط حکیم ترسیم کرد مورد اقبال عمومی قرار نگرفت. سقراط بواسطه به چالش کشاندن باورها و نظرات متداول زمان خویش و به پرسش گرفتن آنچه که به زندگانی آدمیان ارزش میبخشد، توسط صاحبان قدرت سیاسی شهر آتن بعنوان یک تهدید جدی در نظر گرفته شد. او و به سبب پرسشهایی که در باب باورهای مرسوم و معمول درباره ی مضوعاتی همچون شجاعت، عدالت و زندگی نیکو مطرح میکرد عاملی جهت تضعیف اقتدار دولت در نظر گرفتند. در نهایت به واسطه اتهامات واهی و کذب، افکار و اعمال وی را علت فساد و تباهی جوانان تشخیص دادند و او را به مرگ محکوم نمودند (Bowell & Kemp, 2002).

3. تفکر انتقادی چیست و متفکر انتقادی کیست؟

هالپرن (Halpern, 2003 p.6) در کتاب پرمخاطبش تحت عنوان اندیشه و دانش: مقدمه ای بر تفکر انتقادی، تعریف خود از تفکر انتقادی را اینچنین بیان میکند: «استفاده از مهارتهای شناختی و ترفندهایی که احتمال نیل به یک نتیجه مطلوب را افزایش میدهند ... تفکر انتقادی تفکری هدفمند، مبتنی بر استدلال و همچنین تفکری هدایت شده است». فَسیون (Facione 2013 p.26) بر اساس اتفاق نظر چهل و شش نفر از کارشناسان این امر طی بیانیه ای[11] یک تعریف جامع از مفهوم تفکر انتقادی ارائه میکند که ویژگی های اصلی آن را در جملات زیر ترسیم مینماید:

قضاوتی هدفمند و ناظر بر خود که پیامد آن تفسیر، تحلیل، ارزیابی و نیز استنتاج است. همچنین قضاوتی که بر توضیح شواهد، ملاحظات عقلانی، روش شناختی، معیارشناختی یا ملاحظات بافتاری مبتنی است. تفکر انتقادی ابزاری ضروری برای تحقیق محسوب میشود. به این ترتیب، تفکر انتقادی یک نیروی نجات بخش در آموزش و پرورش و یک منبع قدرتمند در زندگی مدنی و شخصی افراد است.

در همین رابطه، بیانیه (Facione, 2013 p.26) که در بالا به آن اشاره شد در ادامه ویژگیهای یک متفکر انتقادی ایده آل را بشکل زیر شرح میدهد:

متفکر انتقادی ایده آل بر حسب عادت کنجکاو، مطلع، خوشبین به قدرت استدلال، روشنفکر، انعطاف پذیر، و در ارزیابی هایی که انجام میدهد

---

[6] Etymology

[7] Socrates

[8] Plato

[9] Athens

[10] Agora

[11] Expert Consensus Statement

منصف است. همچنین یک متفکر انتقادی ایده آل در رویارویی با تعصبات شخصی صادق، در قضاوتها محتاط، مایل به تجدید نظر، درباره مسائل قاطع، در رابطه با موضوعات پیچیده با انضباط، در جستجوی اطلاعات مربوطه دارای پشتکار، دارای معیارهای معقول در انتخاب، برخوردار از تمرکز در زمان تحقیق، و تا جایی که موضوع مورد تحقیق و شرایط موجود امکان جستجو برای دستیابی به نتایجی دقیق را فراهم میکند جستجوگری ثابت قدم است.

تفکر انتقادی تفکری هدایتگر و نیز منضبط است که میکوشد از راه استدلال، به شیوه ای منصفانه، به بالاترین سطح از کیفیت در فرایند تفکر دست یابد. افرادی که منتقدانه می اندیشند در تلاشند تا زندگانی خود را بر پایه های عقلانیت، منطق و همدلی استوار سازند. این افراد میکوشند تا تأثیرات گرایشهای خودخواهانه را در خویشتن کاهش دهند. آنها صرفنظر از میزان مهارت خود بعنوان یک شخص متفکر دریافته اند که همواره قادرند به تواناییهای تعقلی خویش بیافزایند و از طرف دیگر این امکان وجود دارد که در دام استدلالهای نادرست ونامعقول، پیش داوریها، تعصبات، تحریفات، پذیرش کورکورانه قوانین اجتماعی، بی خردی و ایضاً منافع شخصی گرفتار آیند. از آنجائیکه در تفکر انتقادی شک ورزی بر زودباوری و خشک اندیشی، منطق بر احساسات، و نیز عقلانیت بر خیالباف ارجحیت دارد لذا ابزار مورد استفاده در این نوع خاص از تفکر، منطق، راست اندیشی و علم را شامل میشود. یقیناً بکارگیری تفکر انتقادی ضامنی برای رساندن ما به حقیقت نیست، اما راه رسیدن به آن را بیش از به کارگیری هر روش دیگری هموار میسازد. تفکر انتقادی تنها تضمین ما در مواجهه با کژاندازگاری، فریبکاری، خرافه پرستی، و عدم درک راستین ما از خویشتن خویش و شرایط دنیوی پیرامونمان است. تفکر انتقادی ترکیبی از ویژگیها همچون عقلانیت، خودآگاهی، صداقت، روشنفکری و ... را شامل میشود. ما زمانی به یک متفکر انتقادی تبدیل میشویم که بجای احساسات، به هنگام اتخاذ تصمیمات، بر تعقل و تدبیر تکیه زنیم. حق زمانی هم که برای پذیرش امری دلایل واضح منطقی و مستدل در دست داریم ممکن است در پذیرش آن امر دلایلی عاطفی و نیز روانی دخالت کنند که احتمالاً ما از وجود آنها بطورکامل آگاه نیستیم. بهرحال یکی از عوامل بسیار مهم در بکارگیری تفکر انتقادی جداسازی این دو عامل، تعقل و احساسات، از یکدیگر است زیرا عامل احساسات به آسانی در کار تعقل و تدبیر تداخل ایجاد میکند.

ویژگی بارز دیگری که یک متفکر انتقادی از آن بهره میگیرد خود آگاهی است. خود آگاهی، یک متفکر انتقادی را قادر میسازد تا میزان تأثیر انگیزه ها و نیز تعصبات شخصی خود را در برخورد با مسایل گوناگون بسنجد و دیدگاه ها، بی میلی ها، پیش داوری ها و نیز تصورات خود را در رویارویی با دنیای بیرون و نیز دنیای درونش شناسایی کند. برای رسیدن به تفکر انتقادی، ما باید با خویشتن صادق باشیم و این نکته حائز اهمیت را در نظر داشته باشیم که همواره خطر تأثیرگذاری عواملی همچون تمایلات عاطفی، انگیزه های خودخواهانه، مقاصد غیراخلاقی، یا دیگر شیوه های خود فریبی خود فریب وجود دارد.

زمانی را در نظر بگیرید که برای اولین بار در ارتباط با یک موضوع مشخص به یک نتیجه گیری خاص میرسیم، بی شک در پس این نتیجه گیری پیشینه ای وجود دارد. مثلاً ما یاد گرفته ایم برای موضوعات بخصوصی اهمیت قائل شویم، از گرایشهای خاصی حمایت نماییم، و در برابر انواع خاصی از ادعاها دچار تردید شویم. به این ترتیب ما همواره در مواجهه با عقاید موجود در دنیای اطرافمان، بر اساس معیارها و باورهایی که نسبت به آنها تعهد عاطفی داریم، منتقدانه می اندیشیم. ما به شیوه ای که کاملاً قابل درک است از باورها و اعتقادات خود دفاع میکنیم و همین نکته است که اساساً نیاز به بررسی و تأکید ویژه ای دارد. هرگاه که دست به اتخاذ تصمیمی میزنیم بسیاری از عقاید و روشهای غیر ضروری را در این امر دخیل میکنیم که ریشه در تجربیات، آرمانها، ارزشها، آموزشها، و عادات فرهنگی ما دارند (Browne & Keeley, 2007). در اینصورت، چنانچه بخواهیم از لحاظ فکری رشد کنیم، نیازمندیم تا احساسات خویشتن را بشناسیم و تا جایی که میتوانیم بر اساس آنها عمل نکنیم. تنها در اینصورت قادر خواهیم بود آن هنگام که دیگران استدلالهایی را بیان میکنند که باورهای کنونی ما را به چالش میکشد با دقت به آنها گوش فرا دهیم. این سعه صدر در برابر افکار و عقاید مخالف یک ویژگی بسیار مهم محسوب میشود زیرا بسیاری از دیدگاهها و نقطه نظرات ما درباره موضوعات مورد بحث لزوماً خردمندانه و نیز منصفانه نیستند. ما بسیاری از نظرات خود را از دیگران وام گرفته ایم و با گذشت زمان نسبت به آنها دلبستگی عاطفی پیدا کرده ایم. در واقع زمانی که با نظراتی مخالف نظرات خویش مواجه میشویم غالباً این احساس در ما به وجود می آید که مورد حمله قرار گرفته ایم. خطری که از بابت دلبستگی عاطفی به باورها و عقاید، ما را تهدید میکند این است که احتمال دارد استدلالها و نظرات نیکو و درستی را نادیده بگیریم که ممکن بود تنها در صورت شنیدن آنها مواضع نادرست خویش را تغییر میدادیم. دلبستگی های عاطفی نباید اساس و شالوده پذیرش یا عدم پذیرش نظر یا عقیده ای بخصوص قرار گیرند. در بهترین حالت، دخالت احساسات عاطفی باید در مرحله ای پس از استدلالهای منطقی و عقلانی واقع شود. بنابراین هنگامیکه ما به مطالعه مطلبی مبادرت میورزیم یا با شخصی در مورد مطلبی خاص بحث میکنیم همواره باید تلاش کنیم تا دلبستگی های عاطفی و احساسی خود را در مواجهه با آراء و نظرات متفاوت موجود در بحث دور نگاه داریم و تنها از ابزار تعقل و منطق در ارزیابی نظرات و آراء ارائه شده استفاده کنیم. کسانی در امر آموختن موفق هستند که همواره به تغییر و نیز ارتقاء وضعیت فکری خود به سطحی بالاتر تمایل دارند. چنانچه بخواهیم اندیشه خود را به وضعیت بهتری تغییر دهیم باید پذیرا و شنونده آرام آراء و نظراتی باشیم که در برخورد اول ممکن است برای ما عجیب و غیرقابل قبول بنظر آیند. بطور خلاصه، یکی از موانع عمده در راه نیل به تفکر انتقادی پیشداوری ها و تعصبات کورکورانه[12] است. افراد، تا اندازه ای، دارای تعصبات شخصی هستند زیرا همگی ما درباره درستی یا نادرستی بسیاری از امور در ذهن خود پیشداوریهایی داریم. تعصبات کورکورانه یا پیشداوری های ما که ریشه در میهن پرستی، نژاد، مذهب، طبقه اجتماعی، قومیت، یا جنسیت ما دارند بر طرز تفکر و شیوه اندیشه ی ما تأثیر میگذارند (Boostrom, 1994).

بنابراین، اگر ما واقعاً قصد داشته باشیم در ارتباط با موضوعاتی همچون مسایل اجتماعی، سیاسی، و نیز دینی منتقدانه بیاندیشم باید خالی از تعصب و دارای اندیشه ای باز باشیم. این امر مستلزم قبول این احتمال است که نه تنها نظرات دیگران ممکن است نظراتی کاملاً درست باشند بلکه این احتمال نیز وجود دارد که نظرات و دیدگاههای ما درباره ی مسایلی که به آنها اشاره شد نظراتی ناصحیح بوده باشد. در بسیاری از موارد، افراد بدون اینکه برای نادرست بودن عقاید، استدلالها و نقطه نظراتشان در ارتباط با موضوع مورد گفتگو با طرف مقابل کوچکترین احتمالی را در نظر بگیرند، با طرف گفتگوی خود به مجادله میپردازند. افرادی

---

[12] prejudices

که از تفکر انتقادی بهره میبرند اشخاصی پویا و فعال هستند که همواره با پرسشها و تحلیل های خود و نیز بکارگیری آگاهانه از شیوه ها و تدابیر مدبرانه میزان درک صحیح از شرایط پیش رو را در خود افزایش میدهند. اینان درهای ذهن خود را بر روی افکار و نیز نظرات جدید میگشایند و از به چالش کشیده شدن اعتقادات و نظرات خود در رویارویی با نقطه نظرات جدید باکی ندارند و آنرا عاملی برای ارتقای قوای تعقل و استدلال در خویشتن می یابند. در مقابل، افرادی که از تفکر انتقادی سودی نمیبرند به دنیای پیرامون خود ساده لوحانه مینگرند و بجای تلاش برای رسیدن به سطح بالاتری از شعور و درک از دنیای اطراف، همه چیز را در پیرامون خویش سیاه و سفید میبینند. پر واضح است که برخلاف دسته اول، این افراد تنها دیدگاههای خود را معقول و منطقی میابند و درهای ذهن خود را بر روی دیدگاههای متفاوت همواره بسته نگاه میدارند.

4. ضرورت و فواید تفکر انتقادی
این بخش را با نقل قولی در خور تأمل از دی بونو آغاز می کنیم:

در عالم تنها یک وجود است که نمی اندیشد. آن وجود همانا خداوندگار عالمیان است. اندیشیدن حرکت از نقطه ای فرودست به سوی نقطه ای والاتر از دانش است حال آنکه خداوند خود دانش مطلق است و همواره از پیش در آن مکان والاتر ایستاده است.... آنچه اندیشه کردن را بر ما ضروری میسازد فقدان کامل دانش است.

(De Bono, 1982 quoted in Moon, 2007 p.15)

هرچند توانایی تفکر انتقادی همواره از اهمیتی غیر قابل انکار برخوردار بوده است اما این توانایی برای افرادی که در ابتدای قرن بیست و یکم زندگی میکنند به ضرورتی حیاتی تبدیل شده است. نسلهای امروزی در مقایسه با نسلهای پیشین خود برای نیل به سطح بالاتری از کیفیت در زندگانی خود به آموزشهای بیشتری نیازمندند زیرا دنیای امروز با سرعت فزاینده ای به سمت استفاده از فناوری های پیچیده و پیشرفته در حرکت است. انفجار اطلاعات در دوران اخیر را میتوان یکی از دلایلی دانست که نیاز ما را به ارائه و نیز بکارگیری آموزشهای خاص در بکارگیری قدرت و توان اندیشیدن پررنگتر از سابق میکند. بر اساس ارزیابی های انجام شده توسط دانشگاه کالیفرنیا[13] در سال 2001 میلادی، کل تولید سالانه اطلاعات، چه بصورت چاپی، چه به شکل فیلم یا محتویات مغناطیسی یا نوری به 1.5 میلیارد گیگابایت ذخیره سازی نیاز دارد. این میزان از اطلاعات یاد شده معادل 250 مگابایت برای هر فرد (اعم از مرد، زن و کودک) بر روی کره زمین است. در دنیای امروز حجم عظیمی از اطلاعات در دسترس ما قرار دارد که برای دستیابی به آنها کافیست از طریق رایانه خود و از طریق اتصال به شبکه جهانی اینترنت در دنیایی از اطلاعات مرتبط با موضوعات مورد نظر خود به جستجو بپردازیم. بدین ترتیب میزان اطلاعاتی که در دسترس قرار خواهند گرفت بسیار چشمگیر و غیر قابل باور خواهند بود بطوریکه توان تجزیه و تحلیل فرد را در انتخاب مطالب مورد نظر از میان حجم عظیم اطلاعاتی که دائماً رو به گسترش است از کار می اندازد (Davidson, 1996 cited in Bensley, 1998). اطلاعات معتبر و همچنین مرتبط با موضوع مورد نظر باید انتخاب، تفسیر، تحلیل، ارزیابی، آموخته و بکار گرفته شوند. در غیر اینصورت، اطلاعات مورد بحث را چنانچه در یک کامپیوتر ذخیره سازی کنند، یا لابلای صفحات کتابهای موجود در قفسه های کتابخانه ای دور قرار دهند از هیچ فایده ای برخوردار نخواهند بود. اگر ما نتوانیم در مواجهه با انبوهی از مسائل موجود پیرامونمان به طریقی هوشمندانه عمل کنیم در معرض خطری جدی قرار میگیریم و آن خطر داشتن تمام جوابها در حالی است که معنی آنها را در نمی یابیم. توانایی دوگانه ای که ما را قادر میکند تا بدانیم چگونه باید بیاموزیم و چگونه باید بوضوح درباره انتخاب از میان حجم عظیمی از اطلاعات رو به گسترش دنیای اطرافمان بیاندیشیم، از مهمترین مهارت های فکری لازم برای زندگی در قرن 21 میلادی محسوب میشوند. عرضه بیش از اندازه اطلاعات و نیز تغییرات دائمی محیط های کاری تنها دلایل اهمیت روزافزون تفکر انتقادی در مقایسه با دورانهای پیشین در تاریخ زندگی انسان نیست. برای اولین بار در طول تاریخ بشری، انسان به این توانایی دست یافته است که میتواند کل حیات را بر روی این کره خاکی به یکباره از میان بردارد. تصمیمهایی فردی و جمعی که بشر امروز در خصوص موضوعاتی چون اقتصاد، حفاظت از منابع طبیعی و توسعه یا عدم توسعه سلاحهای کشتار جمعی اتخاذ میکند سرنوشت کل انسانهای روی زمین و نیز نسلهای بعدی آنها را نیز تحت تأثیر قرار میدهد. لذا در یک چنین فضایی ما باید در ارتباط با طیف گسترده ای از موضوعات جمعی و شخصی تصمیم گیری نماییم. در نتیجه هنگامیکه دست به اتخاذ تصمیمی میزنیم باید پیش از انتخاب که میکنیم کلیه جوانب و پیامدهای مثبت و منفی آن را ارزیابی نماییم. این فرایند که تفکر انتقادی نام میگیرد، با توجه به توضیحاتی که پیش از این ارائه شد، اهمیتی حیاتی پیدا میکند. تجزیه و تحلیل شواهد در راستای اتخاذ یک تصمیم صحیح فرایندی کلیدی است که ما را به یک شخص فکور بدل میسازد که بر اساس برهان و منطق دست به انتخاب میزند. در هر انتخاب، تفکر انتقادی نقش مهمی را ایفا میکند خواه انتخاب مورد نظر انتخاب پاسخ مناسب از میان چندین گزینه دیگر در یک آزمون چند گزینه ای باشد، خواه انتخاب یک شریک برای ادامه راه زندگی یا مواردی باشد که پیشتر به آنها اشاره شد. در اینصورت شخصی که آموزش های لازم برای به کارگیری تفکر انتقادی را فراگرفته است در مواقع لزوم احتمالاً کمتر دست به انتخابهای نادرستی میزندکه منشاء زیان و خسارت برای خود و دیگران است. افرادی که در به کارگیری تفکر انتقادی مهارت دارند میتوانند پیامدهای بالقوه اقدامات خود را تا حد مؤثری پیش بینی نمایند.

5. تفکر انتقادی در محیطهای آموزشی (مدارس، دبیرستانها و دانشگاهها)
در شیوه ی سنتی آموزش و پرورش، معلمان در فرایند تدریس از روش آموزش تعلیمی[14] استفاده میکنند زیرا در انتقال اطلاعات به دانش آموزان ظاهراً شیوه ای

---

[13] University of California

[14] Didactic Instruction

عملی و نیز کارآمد است. در این نوع از روش تدریس، معلمان کانون و محور اصلی کلاس محسوب میشوند (Jensen, 2000). به عبارت دیگر، در این روش از تدریس، دانش آموزان در ردیف هایی منظم در کلاس مقابل معلم خود می نشینند و تمام اختیارات در دست معلم قرار دارد و این معلم است که تعیین میکند در طول کلاس چه کاری باید انجام شود. بدون آنکه دانش آموزان تعامل زیادی با معلم خود داشته باشند منفعلانه هر آنچه را که معلم درس میدهد دریافت میکنند و تنها به کپی برداری از مطالبی میپردازند که در کلاس از زبان آموزگار خود می شنوند. فِرِر (Freire, 2000) این شیوه سنتی آموزش را آموزش بر اساس شیوه های بانکداری نام نهاد[15]. در این نوع از نظام آموزشی، آموزگاران، بعنوان تنها مرجع صاحب نظر در کلاس، به امر تدریس می پردازند حال آنکه تنها وظیفه دانش آموزان فراگیری مطالب ارائه شده در کلاس است. در این شیوه معلمان دانای کل و دانش آموزان فاقد هرگونه دانشی بحساب می آیند. آموزگاران می اندیشند و دانش آموزان اندیشه های آنان را قبول میکنند. معلمان گوینده و دانش آموزان شنونده هستند. معلمان ادب میکنند و دانش آموزان ادب میشوند. روش ارائه مطالب درسی را معلمان انتخاب و بر دانش آموزان تحمیل مینمایند و دانش آموزان خود را با روشهای انتخابی از طرف آموزگارانشان مطابقت میدهند. بنابراین، در این نوع از نظام آموزشی وجود یک رابطه نابرابر بین آموزگاران و دانش آموزان که در آن معلمان نقش صاحب نظرانی را ایفا میکنند که وظیفه انتقال دانش به دانش آموزان و ارزیابی آنها را بر عهده دارند، هرگونه تلاش در راه رسیدن به یک فضای پژوهشی مبتنی بر گفتمان واقعی بین آموزگاران و دانش آموزان را بی ثمر میگذارد.

در سالیان اخیر، بسیاری از محققان مسایل آموزشی طرح پرسشهایی را آغاز کردند که از مشکلات ناشی از شیوه آموزش تعلیمی پرده برداشت. آنها اعلام کردند که شیوه آموزش تعلیمی به فرایند یادگیری در دانش آموزان آسیب میرساند و آنها را از منتقدانه اندیشیدن و نیز شرکت در فعالیت های کلاسی باز میدارد. در این نوع از آموزش، تنها عملی که دانش آموزان در کلاس انجام میدهند دریافت هر آن چیزی است که معلمان به آنها ارائه میکنند. افزون بر این، نظام سنتی آموزش و پرورش تعمداً مجموعه ای خاص از ارزشها را به دانش آموزان عرضه میکند که بر آن اساس دانش آموزان به یافتن پاسخ ها و تفسیرهای درست تشویق میشوند. غوطه ور شدن در ایدئولوژی های خاص، مانع از تربیت دانش آموزانی میشود که منتقدانه و فکورانه می اندیشند(Scheffler, 1973) . در این راستا و به منظور ایجاد فضاهای آموزشی پویا و مؤثر، تمرکز بر ارتقای توان تفکر انتقادی دانش آموزان به امری حائز اهمیت تبدیل میشود. در نظام های آموزشی که هدف مورد نظر تربیت افرادی با سطحی بالا از توان فکری است، هم آموزگاران و هم دانش آموزان از فرصت های برابر جهت بیان تجارب و عقاید و نظرات خود برخوردار هستند که در نتیجه سطح بالایی از اعتماد، تعهد شخصی، و گفتمانی برابر بین طرفین را ممکن میسازد. همچنین احساس توانمندی دانش آموزان در بیان خود و نیز افزایش مهارت های تفکر انتقادی از درون، انگیزه های یادگیری را در آنها تقویت میکند. بنابراین، دانش آموزان با بکارگیری تفکر انتقادی به یافتن راههای نوین جهت کنترل افکارشان برای درک بهتر از خود و دیگران تشویق میشوند. فرایند یاد شده در دانش آموزان انگیزه های لازم را برای به چالش کشانیدن افکار و ایده هایی که با آنها روبرو میشوند، ایجاد مینماید. تفکر انتقادی به آنها کمک میکند تا به درک بهتری از محدودیت های دانش خود نایل آیند و در پرتوی دانسته های جدید، آراء و نظرات پیشین خود را مورد بازبینی قرار دهند. همانگونه که دانش آموزان بر توانایی های خود مبنی بر خردمندانه و منتقدانه اندیشیدن می افزایند ارزش قضاوت دقیق و سنجیده بیش از پیش بر آنان آشکار میشود بطوریکه شوق رسیدن به استقلال در اندیشیدن نیز در آنها افزایش میابد.

6. تفکر انتقادی و موانع موجود

تفکر انتقادی نوعی خاص از تفکر است که همه افراد از عهده انجام آن بر نمی آیند. موانع موجود در راه نیل به تفکر انتقادی از فردی به فرد دیگر متفاوت است اما پشت سر گذاشتن آنها معمولاً امکان پذیر است. در این بخش به برخی از موانع عمده در این خصوص اشاره میشود تا با اطلاع از این موانع، به درک بهتری از میزان تأثیرگذاری آنها برخود در راه رسیدن به تفکر انتقادی برسیم. اولین مشکلی که با آن روبرو هستیم سوء تعبیر از معنای واژه انتقاد است؛ برخی بر این باورند که نقد یک موضوع، تنها به معنای بیان نظرات منفی درباره آن موضوع است. در نتیجه، ایندسته از افراد به هنگام تحلیل یک موضوع بخصوص، تنها به جنبه های منفی آن اشاره میکنند. شیوه ای که به آن اشاره کردیم ناشی از عدم تعبیر صحیح افراد از واژه نقد است. ارزیابی منتقدانه در معنای صحیح آن شناسایی جنبه های مثبت و نیز جنبه های منفی یک موضوع یا تشخیص کارآمدی و ناکارآمدی موضوعی بطور همزمان است. مشکل دیگری که با آن مواجه میشویم، برآورد بیش از اندازه از توانایی خود در استدلال عقلانی از موضوعات است: ما اکثراً دوست میداریم که خویشتن را موجودی خردمند و عاقل تصور کنیم. این تمایل در ما وجود دارد که شیوه های فکری خود را همواره بعنوان بهترین شیوه ها در نظر میگیریم و بر این باوریم که در ارتباط با آنچه که می اندیشیم و انجام میدهیم دلایل پسندیده ای در دست داریم. کسانی که تنها راه خود را در پیش میگیرند و با تفکری ضعیف در این راه پیش میروند ممکن است دچار این توهم شوند که در انجام امور از استدلال های نیکویی بهره میبرند. مثلاً کسانی که از میدان مباحثات پیروز خارج میشوند ممکن است بطور اشتباه این پیروزی را به توانایی های بالای خود در ارائه دلایل و برهان های صحیح نسبت دهند حال آنکه پیروزی در یک مباحثه لزوماً به این معنی نیست که ما بهترین دلایل یا شواهد قانع کننده را ارائه کرده ایم. موفقیت ما در از میدان به در کردن رقیب ممکن است مرهون عدم توانایی رقیب ما در تشخیص دلایل و استدلال های ضعیف ما در زمان بحث بوده باشد یا شاید طرف مقابل در زمان بحث به دلیل اجتناب از درگیری، از ادامه آن منصرف شده باشد. مانع دیگری که در نیل به تفکر انتقادی حائز اهمیت است فقدان روشها، ترفندها، یا تمرین های لازم در این زمینه است. هرچند برخی افراد برای منتقدانه اندیشیدن تمایل بیشتری از خود نشان میدهند اما عملاً نمیدانند که برای بهبود و افزایش مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی در خود چه گامهایی را باید بردارند. بعضی دیگر غافل از این نکته هستند که استراتژی ها یا ترفندهای مورد استفاده در یک مکان خاص و در ارتباط با موضوعی خاص ممکن است در مکان و در رابطه با موضوعی متفاوت کارایی و تأثیرگذاری خود را از دست بدهند. با وجود این، اکثر افراد با تمرین و ممارست مداوم قادر هستند مهارتهای مرتبط با تفکر انتقادی را در خود ایجاد کنند و افزایش دهند. عدم تمایل به انتقاد از کارشناسان یکی دیگر از موانع پیش رو در رسیدن به مهارتهای وابسته به تفکر انتقادی است. تحلیل انتقادی متون یا دیگر آثاری که افراد مورد احترام ما خلق کرده اند در ما بطور طبیعی ایجاد اضطراب میکند. این موضوع که دانش آموزان با توجه به دانش اندکشان در رابطه با موضوعی خاص دست به انتقاد از آثار کسانی بزنند که از انتقاد از آثار کسانی بزنند که از انتقاد بطور یقین نسبت به آنها از تجربه بیشتری بهره مند هستند ممکن است به نظر عجیب برسد. برخی از دانش آموزان انتقاد از آموزگاران خود را که نسبت به آنها از دانش و تخصص برتری دارند امری

---

[15] Banking Education

گستاخانه و مغایر با موازین ادب و احترام میدانند. و سرانجام، آخرین مانعی که در راه رسیدن به تفکر انتقادی، در این قسمت، به آن اشاره میکنیم عدم تمرکز کافی و توجه به جزئیات است: تفکر انتقادی مستلزم بکارگیری دقت و صحت نظر است که این امر در جای خود نیازمند توجه دقیق به جزئیات است. یک نقد ضعیف ممکن است محصول قضاوتی باشد که بر اساس یک نظر اجمالی بسیار کلی، در ارتباط با یک موضوع خاص، حاصل شده است.

7. برخی محدودیت های موجود جهت آموزش مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی در محیط های آموزشی

7.1. مقاومت دانش آموزان و دانشجویان در برابر یادگیری مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی

گاهی اوقات آسان ترین توضیحی که آموزگاران و مدرسان دانشگاه درباره عملکرد ضعیف دانش آموزان و دانشجویان از خود ارائه میکنند به کاهلی و تنبلی دانش آموزان و دانشجویان باز میگردد. بی شک چنین نسبتی همواره صحیح نیست. با وجود این، مقاومتی که دانش آموزان/دانشجویان در برابر یادگیری مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی از خود نشان میدهند احتمالاً تنها بدلیل سستی و کاهلی آنها در این امر نیست. در گفتگویی که با برخی دانش آموزان/دانشجویان در این زمینه صورت گرفته است آنها به موانعی در راه کسب مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی اشاره کرده اند که در ادامه به تعدادی از آنها اشاره میکنیم:

بعضی از دانش آموزان اینگونه عادت کرده اند که از پیش به آنها بگویند چه کاری باید و چه کاری را نباید انجام بدهند. این امر بخصوص و بیشتر در مورد دانش آموزانی صدق میکند که در گذشته افراد دیگری (نظیر والدین، معلمان، مربیان، و دیگر افراد صاحب اختیار) در ارتباط با امور متفاوت برای/بجای آنها تصمیم گیری کرده اند. بنابراین از نگاه این دسته از دانش آموزان، در حالیکه دیگران بجای آنها فکر میکنند، دلیل واضحی برای کسب مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی وجود نخواهد داشت.

هنگامیکه دیگران بجای ما و برای ما تصمیم میگیرند، مسئولیت تصمیم های اتخاذ شده دیگر متوجه ما نخواهد بود. عدم تمایل به استفاده از تفکر انتقادی به دلیلی که به آن اشاره شد با مفهموم پیروی از دستورات در یک سطح قرار میگیرد- از آنجایی که بمن گفته اند چه کاری را باید انجام بدهم و من نیز همان کار را انجام داده ام، لذا از بابت انجام آن کار مسئولیتی متوجه من نیست و در این رابطه فرد پاسخگو من نخواهم بود زیرا من تنها به انجام کاری مبادرت کرده ام که بمن گفته شده بود (من مأمور بودم و معذور!).

برخی از دانش آموزان احتمالاً خود را کوچکتر از آن میدانند که درباره افراد صاحب نظر به قضاوت بنشینند. بسیاری از دانش آموزان دارای پیشینه ای هستند که در آن آموخته اند باید از افراد صاحب نظر پیروی کرد. نکته ای که اشاره شد این مفهوم ضمنی را در ذهن تداعی میکند که «من برای اتخاذ تصمیم در مورد مسایل مربوط به خودم آماده نیستم و در انجام این امور نیازمند راهنمایی افراد مسن تر، داناتر و آگاهتر از خودم هستم».

بعضی دیگر از دانش آموزان عادت کرده اند بجای تفکر درباره اطلاعاتی که به آنها ارائه میشود تنها مطالب عرضه شده را به خاطر بسپارند. بدون شک از بر کردن آمار و ارقام کاری مستلزم تلاش و صرف وقت فراوان است اما تردید و دودلی حاصل از تفکر را بدنبال ندارد، حالی که برای بعضی از دانش آموزان ناراحت کننده است.

عده ای از دانش آموزان برای یادگیری مهارتهای مربوط به تفکر انتقادی وقت کافی ندارند. اینان افزون بر تأمین مخارج تحصیل خود مجبورند با اشتغال در شغل های پاره وقت و تمام وقت خود نیز، همزمان با ادامه تحصیل، حمایت کنند. این قبیل دانش آموزان/دانشجویان بر این باورند که زمان کافی برای شرکت در برخی از کلاسها، کلاسهایی که انجام تکالیف آنها مستلزم بکارگیری نیروی اندیشه و تحلیل فکورانه ی موضوعات است، ندارند. واحد های درسی همچون مقاله نویسی، روشهای تحقیق، نقد ادبی و ... که نیازمند ارائه مقاله، ایراد سخنرانی و یا ارائه تکالیف دیگری میشوند که نیازمند بکارگیری مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی در تحلیل و ارزیابی موضوعات مورد بحث است در زمره کلاسهای اشاره شده قرار میگیرند.

سرانجام اینکه، برخی از دانش آموزان/دانشجویان در ارتباط با موضوعات مورد بحث فاقد دانش اولیه مورد نیاز جهت تفکر انتقادی هستند. لذا به دلیل فقدان پیشینه علمی لازم برای درک عمیق مطالب ارائه شده، تحلیل و تفکر منتقدانه درباره موضوعات مطروحه را رها میکنند و بدون فکر آنها را میپذیرند.

7.2. مقاومت مدرسان/آموزگاران در برابر آموزش مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی

مدرسان و آموزگاران نیز همچون دانشجویان و دانش آموزان ممکن است از زیر بار آموزش مهارت های مرتبط با تفکر انتقادی شانه خالی کنند و با اجتناب از به کار بستن تفکر انتقادی در کلاسهای خود عملاً فرصت دانش آموزان برای فراگیری مهارتهای مذکور را از بین ببرند. آموزگاران و استادان مدارس عالی و دانشگاهها برای آموزش مهارتهای لازم جهت تفکر انتقادی اشتیاق نشان میدهند اما انجام امری چنین مهم وجه بهیچ وجه کار آسانی نیست. اعمال فعالیتهایی که از لحاظ فکری چالش برانگیزند و نیز طرح مسایلی که دانش آموزان/دانشجویان برای یافتن راه حل های مناسب برای آنها چاره ای جز بکارگیری توان تعقل و منطق خویش ندارند و نیز دیگر تکالیف نیازمند به تفکر و تعمق، همگی در گروه فعالیتهایی قرار میگیرند که نیازمند بکارگیری مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی در معنای واقعی خود هستند. هرچند بسیاری از آموزگاران و مدرسان دانشگاهی از طرح موضوعات چالش برانگیز در کلاس خود استقبال میکنند اما آموزگاران/مدرسان در طی مصاحبه ای که با تعدادی از آنها انجام شد به دلایلی اشاره کردند که بر همان اساس از آموزش مهارت های تفکر انتقادی به دانش آموزان/دانشجویان خود اجتناب میورزند. در ادامه به تعدادی از این دلایل اشاره میکنیم:

دانشجویان غالباً در مواقعی که از آنها درخواست میشود تا انتقادی بیاندیشند، رنجیده خاطر میشوند و مدرسان نیز خواهان محبوب بودن/ ماندن نزد دانشجویان خود هستند. از همین رو برخی از مدرسان/آموزگاران اِعمال منتقدانه اندیشیدن در کلاس را به خاطر حفظ محبوبیت خود نزد دانشجویانشان قربانی میکنند. نکته حائز اهمیت دیگر این است که همه مدرسان و آموزگاران از مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی برخوردار نیستند لذا ایندسته از معلمان رغبتی در این راستا که از شاگردان خود بخواهند منتقدانه بیاندیشند، نشان نمیدهند. داشتن مدارج تحصیلی همچون مدرک کارشناسی ارشد یا مدرک دکتری این امر را تضمین نمیکند که صاحبان مدارک یاد شده قادر به منتقدانه اندیشیدن هستند. بسیاری از معلمان و استادان در عین حال که برای منتقدانه اندیشیدن ارزشی فراوان قائل میشوند و آرزو میکنند که شاگردانشان مجهز به مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی باشند، عملاً دانشی در چگونگی تدریس این مهارتها به دانش آموزان/دانشجویان خود ندارند.

8. لحن و روش بکارگیری تفکرانتقادی

بعنوان یک متفکر انتقادی، ما این توانایی را خواهیم داشت که همچون یک جنگجوی همیشه آماده همواره به مقابله با کسانی برخیزیم که از مسیر استدلال منطقی و عقلانی دور میشوند. اما نباید فراموش کنیم که امر یادگیری، از بسیاری جهات، یک فعالیت اجتماعی است. ما برای نیل به پیشرفت، به وجود یکدیگر نیازمندیم. برای گفتگو و تبادل آراء و نظرات وابسته به یکدیگر هستیم و باید این نکته حائز اهمیت را همواره در نظر داشته باشیم که هیچیک از ما به اندازه ای تیزهوش و با استعداد نیست که بتواند یک تنه در برابر پیچیدگی هایی که در طول زندگی با آن روبرو میشود بایستد. چنانچه از مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی به درستی بهره مند شویم این توانایی ما را به شخصی متکی به خود تبدیل میکند. در نتیجه، متفکران انتقادی باید درباره آنچه که از خود به نمایش میگذارند بیاندیشند. ما با استفاده از مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی به دیگران نوعی پیام میفرستیم که این پیام حاوی برداشت شخصی ما از مفهوم تفکر انتقادی است. این پیام، بخصوص زمانی از بیشترین تأثیرگذاری برخوردار خواهد بود که آمیزه ای از کنجکاوی و نیز هیجان کودکانه را همراه با ماهیت شک گرایانه بهترین دانشمندان، با شیوه ای متواضعانه و در عین فروتنی و اُفتادگی، ارائه نماید. بنابراین ارائه انتقاد حاصل از تفکر انتقادی در ارتباط با یک موضوع مشخص تنها به منظور ارائه روشی برای رسیدن به نتایج بهتر انجام میشود. ما در پی ارائه نتیجه گیری هایی که بواسطه بکارگیری مهارت های تفکر انتقادی به آنها دست یافته ایم در پی فخرفروشی یا بالابردن خود در بین کسانی نیستیم که به نتایج دیگری نایل آمده اند و تنها بدنبال حرکت بسمت جلو و بسوی درک بهتر و شناخت عمیقتر از کیستی و چیستی خویشتن هستیم. و فراتر از هر آنچه که بیان شد در پی افزایش قدرت تعقل و منطق به عنوان یک فرد صاحب اندیشه هستیم.

انتقاد، عملی نیازمند به دقت بسیار است. در بسیاری از خانواده ها و نیز مدارس، اختلاف نظر را امری نکوهیده در نظر میگیرند. در چنین محیطهایی «وظیفه اجتماعی ارجح»، نمایش لبخندی به نشانه موافقت با هر نوعی از استدلال است که از طرف مقابل بیان میشود. به عنوان یک متفکر انتقادی، در یک چنین محیطهایی باید نسبت به ماهیت ناخوشایند پرسشهای انتقادی خود واقف باشیم و بطرزی خودآگاهانه عمل کنیم بطوریکه تفکرات انتقادی ما در بهترین شکل خود دیده شوند. در همین راستا، بهترین ترفندی که میتوانیم از آن استفاده کنیم این است که خود را فردی نشان دهیم که دوستدار شخصی است که با او در حال مباحثه و ارائه استدلال است، اما همواره برای رسیدن به بهترین نتیجه باید هوشیار باشیم. صداقت و گشاده رویی در تفکر انتقادی ارزش بسیاری دارد و ما میتوانیم بواسطه اشتیاق که برای گوش سپردن به نظرات طرف مقابل و درک بیشتر او از خود نشان میدهیم این صداقت و گشاده رویی را به نمایش بگذاریم. در تفکر انتقادی، این نکته که چه کسی _زودتر_ به یک نتیجه بهتر میرسد اهمیت ندارد و نکته حائز اهمیت تلاش برای رسیدن به نتیجه **بهتر** است. اگر ما به گونه ای متقاعد کننده رفتار کنیم بطوری که طرف مقابل، ما را در فرایند کشف و حصول به نتایج بهتر شریک خود احساس کند، در این صورت طرف مباحثه سؤالات انتقادی ما را بعنوان ابزاری سودمند و نیز ضروری برای رسیدن به نتایج مطلوب در نظر میگیرد.

9. راهبردهای تأثیرگذار در بکارگیری تفکرانتقادی

اولین سؤالی که احتمالاً در راستای بکارگیری استراژی های مناسب و مؤثر در بکارگیری تفکر انتقادی ذهن ما را بخود معطوف میکند این است که ما چگونه میتوانیم این احساس را در دیگران ایجاد نماییم که انتقاد یک روش پسندیده و دوستانه است، روشی که قادر به بهبود کیفیت زندگی شنونده، گوینده، خواننده و نیز نویسنده انتقاد متفکرانه است؟ همانند دیگر متفکران انتقادی ما نیز همواره در تلاش برای پاسخ به پرسش مذکور هستیم. بنابراین، شایسته است تا توضیحاتی هرچند اندک اما روشنگر در مورد مفاهیمی همچون مباحثه [16] و اختلاف نظر [17] ارائه کنیم. باید بخاطر بسپاریم که مباحثه با اختلاف نظرداری یک معنی نیستند. ما میتوانیم با مواضع فکری طرف بحث مخالفت کنیم بدون اینکه توضیحی در مورد دلایل مخالفت خود ارائه نماییم یا هیچ اقدامی در راستای ترغیب طرف بحث برای تغییر مواضع فکری اش انجام ندهیم. در تفکر انتقادی مفاهیمی همچون موضع فکری [18] ، همداستانی [19] ، اختلاف نظر، و مباحثه از یکدیگر متمایز هستند. در این صورت _موضع فکری_ یک شخص همان دیدگاه ها و نقطه نظرات آن شخص محسوب میشود. _همداستانی_ زمانی اتفاق می افتد که طرفین بحث با یکدیگر هم عقیده باشند. _اختلاف نظر_ زمانی رخ میدهد که یکی از طرفین بحث دیدگاهی متفاوت از دیدگاه طرف مقابل را مطرح میکند. و سر انجام در _مباحثه_ دلیل/دلایل مرتبط با دیدگاه مطروحه بیان میشود بطوری که مخاطبان آشنا یا غریبه ممکن است در راستای موافقت با دیدگاه مطروحه و تصدیق آن ترغیب و یا تشویق شوند. در یک مباحثه ممکن است اختلاف نظر بین طرفین بحث وجود داشته باشد اما تفاوت آن با اختلاف نظر در آن است که در مباحثه دلایل اختلافات بیان میشوند (Cottrell, 2005).

بر اساس توضیحاتی که به آنها اشاره کردیم، تفکر انتقادی را گاهی از اوقات با اختلاف نظر اشتباه میگیرند. با این حال، در تفکر انتقادی، یک متفکر انتقادی میکوشد تا نتایجی را که به آنها دست یافته است با ارائه دلیل/دلایل مستدل به طرف/طرفین مباحثه ارائه کند و به این وسیله آنها را نیز به پذیرش آن نقطه نظر ترغیب نماید.

نکته دیگری که اشاره به آن در اینجا اهمیت دارد مفهوم _شرح یا توصیف_ یک موضوع است. شرح یا توصیف یک مسئله در واقع ارائه گزارشی درباره چیستی و چگونگی آن مسئله است. توصیفات ممکن است کاملاً دقیق باشند و به همین دلیل ممکن است با تفکر انتقادی که شامل تحلیل هایی دقیق هستند مورد اشتباه قرار گیرند. توصیفات نه گزارشی مستدل و منطقی از چگونگی و چرائی یک رویداد ارائه میکنند و نه پیامد های حاصل از آن را ارزشیابی مینمایند. در گزارشها و مقالات دانشگاهی، توصیفات باید واقعی، دقیق، و عاری از قضاوت هایی همچون ارزشیابی باشند. توصیفات موجز و مختصر ممکن است نقش مهمی را در معرفی یک

---

[16] Argument

[17] Disagreement

[18] Position

[19] Agreement

موضوع خاص، پیش از ارزشیابی آن موضوع، ایفا کنند. ارائه توضیحات و ارائه جان کلام، ظاهراً، ساختاری شبیه به مباحثه دارد زیرا آنها نیز شامل ارائه دلایل، نتایج و بیان جملاتی میشوند که در مباحثات مورد استفاده قرار میگیرند. در هر صورت، ارائه توضیحات به قصد ترغیب مخاطبین در پذیرش یک نقطه نظر خاص صورت نمیگیرد. هدف از ارائه توضیحات یا توصیفات تنها بمنظور به تصویر کشیدن چرایی و چگونگی یک موضوع میشود و در حوزه ی ارائه دلایل موافق یا مخالف ورود نمیکند (Cottrell, 2005).

یک متفکر انتقادی فردی است که هنر خوب شنیدن را تمرین میکند. چنین شخصی در پس خوب شنیدن، خوب می اندیشد و در انتها زبان به سخن میگشاید. یک متفکر انتقادی توانا به دنبال رسیدن به اجماع، ارزش قائل شدن برای اختلافات، یافتن زمینه های مشترک، زبان مشترک، و در نهایت مفاهیم مشترک است. ما آموزگاران و مدرسان جهت آموزش تفکر انتقادی به دانش آموزان و دانشجویان خود میتوانیم از شیوه ها و راهکارهایی استفاده کنیم که در ادامه به تعدادی از آنها اشاره مینمائیم:

1. در مباحثات باید نشان دهیم که براستی در پی درک تمامی مطالبی هستیم که از سمت طرف مقابل در بحث مطرح میشود.

2. پرسشهایی را مطرح کنیم که نشاندهنده تمایل ما در برخورد با عقاید جدید و همچنین پذیرش نتایج نوین باشد و برای حصول اطمینان از فهم کامل عقاید طرف مقابل به طرح پرسشهایی جهت هرچه روشنتر شدن موضوع بپردازیم.

3. هنگام مباحثه تماس چشمی خود را با طرف مقابل حفظ کنیم و در همین حال به گونه ای که حاکی از توجه و حمایت ما از ایشان باشد آرامش و سکوت خود را حفظ نمائیم و برای پاسخگویی، تا پایان یافتن صحبتهای طرف مقابل صبورانه منتظر بمانیم.

4. آنچه را که شنیده یا خوانده ایم برای خود بازگو کنیم و با خود این پرسش را مطرح کنیم که آیا درک و فهم ما با استدلال شنیده یا خوانده شده مطابقت دارد.

5. مشاهده دقیقی از فضای حاکم بر مباحثه داشته باشیم و از نکات مهم و کلیدی یادداشت برداریم تا بدرستی بدانیم چه کسی چه چیزی را چگونه و در چه زمانی و خطاب به چه کسی گفته است.

6. لحن بیان سؤالات انتقادی ما باید به گونه ای باشد که حس کنجکاوی ما را نشان دهد. هیچ رفتاری در بیان تفکر انتقادانه زیانبار تر از این نیست که ما بطرف مقابل خود بگوییم: «در این قسمت از بحث، شما دچار اشتباه شده اید».

7. سؤالات بیشتری را مطرح کنیم، شاید این کار باعث شود فرد طرف بحث استدلال های قویتری را بیش از پیش ارائه کند.

8. از طرف مقابل اجازه بخواهیم تا به ما این فرصت را بدهد که با یکدیگر به بررسی هرگونه ضعف احتمالی در استدلالهای مطرح شده بپردازیم. با این ترفند ما میتوانیم طرف مقابل را به بررسی دوباره استدلالهای مطرح شده ترغیب نماییم.

9. احساسی از همدلی را به طرف مقابل بحث منتقل کنیم بطوریکه او ما را یاور و همکار خود در کوشش برای رسیدن به نتایج بهتر در ارتباط با یک موضوع خاص بداند.

10. با طرح پرسشهای غیرمغرضانه و نیز استدلالی و خلاقانه به طرف دیگر مباحثه نشان دهیم که برای او احترام قائل هستیم.

10. نتیجه گیری

اگر دیگران همواره در ارتباط با گفته های خویش واقعاً صادق و روشن بودند، اگر تمامی افراد افکار و عقاید بنیادین خود را بوضوح به ما نشان میدادند، اگر نوشته ها و گفتارهای نویسندگان یا گویندگان در بیان استدلال هایشان عاری و مبرا از هر خطایی بود، و اگر تمامی افراد صاحب دانش در مورد پاسخ ها و پرسش های مهم با یکدیگر هم نظر و همدل بودند، بیشک این دنیا به مکانی بهتر و آرامتر برای زندگانی تبدیل میشد. اگر دنیایی که در آن زندگی میکنیم به گونه ای بود که در جملات پیشین ترسیم شد، آنگاه ما میتوانستیم منفعلانه بخوانیم و بشنویم و به دیگران این اجازه را بدهیم که بجای ما اندیشه کنند. اما دنیای ما دنیایی کاملاً متفاوت است. استدلالهایی که افراد ارائه میکنند غالباً واضح نیستند و بر اساس منطق و خردورزی بنا نشده اند. بنابراین، برای درک و تشخیص افکار صحیح و منطقی از افکار نادرست و غیر منطقی که ویژگی بارز بیشتر افکاری است که این روزها با آن مواجه میشویم، ناگزیر از یادگیری و بکارگیری مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی جهت منتقدانه خواندن و منتقدانه شنیدن و منتقدانه اندیشیدن درباره شنیده ها، خوانده ها و در نهایت دیده ها هستیم. ما باید خواننده و نیز شنونده ای فعال باشیم و میتوانیم این امر مهم را با طرح پرسشهای مناسب درباره خوانده ها و شنیده ها جامه عمل بپوشانیم. تقریباً همگان این ضرب المثل را شنیده اند که «انسانها همانگونه هستند که می اندیشند». اما شاید درستتر این باشد که بگوییم: «ما بیشتر شبیه آن چیزی هستیم که درباره آن سؤال می پرسیم.» کسانیکه در زندگی خویش به بیشترین موفقیت ها نائل میشوند در زمره ی افرادی نیستند که تسلیم سرنوشت یا آنچه که از آن به تقدیر تعبیر میشود باشند. آنان همچنین حاصل اندیشه هایی نیستند که در ذهن خود دارند. آنها به بالاترین جایگاهها در زندگی خود میرسند زیرا میدانند که درباره رویدادهای رخ داده برایشان و افراد و محیط اطرافشان چگونه باید به پرسش بپردازند. هنر بکارگیری تفکر انتقادی، هنر طرح پرسشهای بجا و منتقدانه است. بنابراین، آموزش مهارتهای تفکر انتقادی در مدارس، دبیرستانها و دانشگاهها در دانش آموزان و دانشجویان ما این توانایی را ایجاد میکند تا بر اساس ارزیابی دقیق شواهد و مدارک در رویارویی با مسایل گوناگون و در تمامی عرصه های زندگی شخصی و اجتماعیشان به قضاوتی صحیح و سالم دست بزنند. هرچند آموزش توانایی تفکر انتقادی به دلایلی که در بخشهای پیشین توضیح داده شد مورد غفلت قرار میگیرد اما باید فرصتهای آموزشی مناسب در این راستا برای دانش آموزان و دانشجویان فراهم شود تا در آینده شاهد نسلی از افراد فرهیخته و فعال باشیم که خود طباخ غذاهای فکری خویشتن باشند نه خورندگان آنچه برایشان پخته اند.

REFERENCES:

Bensley, D. A. (1998). *Critical Thinking in Psychology: A Unified Skills Approach.* Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Pub.

Moon, J. (2007). *Critical Thinking: An Exploration of Theory and Practice.* Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Boostrom, R. (1994). *Developing Creative and Critical Thinking.* Lincolnwood, Illinois: National Textbook Company.

Bowell, T., & Kemp, G. (2002). *Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide.* London and New York: Routledge.

Browne, M. N., & Keeley, S. M. (2007). *Asking the right questions: a guide to critical thinking* (8 ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Cottrell , S. (2055). *Critical Thinking Skills: Developing Effective Analysis and Argument.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Facione, P. A. (2013). Critical Thinking: What It is and Why it Counts. *Insight Assessment*, 1-28.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th Anniversary ed.). (M. B. Ramos , Trans.) Bloomsbury Academic.

Halpern, D. F. (2003). *Thought and Knowledge: An Introduction to Critical Thinking* (4 ed.). Mahwah, New Jersey : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Jensen, M. S. (2000). Each year I teach less and less: Confessions of a newly tenured professor. *The Journal of College Science Teaching, 30*(3), 206-208.

Paul, R. W., Elder, L., & Bartell , T. (1997). *California Teacher Preparation for Instruction in Critical Thinking: Research Findings and Policy Recommendations* . Sacramento California: Foundation for Critical Thinking.

Scheffler, I. (1973). *Reason and Teaching.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.