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Welcome to the third edition of volume nine of the year 2013. The Iranian EFL Journal has had strong growth over the last few years with a monthly readership now exceeding 2500 readers. For a journal examining the topics of EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies, the growth and readership has been pleasing. Statistically, readers are coming from almost eighty countries. The bi-monthly Iranian EFL Journal has attracted many readers not only from the Middle East but also from different parts of the world and in this way; the number of our reviewers has also increased. We have increased the number of our reviewers and now, more than ninety five reviewers are cooperating with the journal and evaluate the articles. In this edition, we have presented twenty six articles, discussing different issues of EFL/ESL, literature and translation studies. In the first article, Ahmad Alibabaee and Mozhdeh Shahzamani present enhancing Iranian EFL Learners' awareness of hedging through explicit teaching. In the second article of the issue, Marzieh Naderishahab and Mohammad Hassan Tahirian have studied foreign language learners' collocational competence and its relationship to their productive skills. In the third article of the issue, Gholam-Reza Abbasian and Sahar Sadat Afshar Imani present learners’ evaluation of modular EFL program: translation courses entitled audio-visual materials vs. deeds and documents. In the next article, the impact of religiosity and locus of control on language achievement of Iranian EFL students is presented by Alireza Amini. In the fifth article of the issue, Maryam Bansaeid presents the relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and strategy-based vocabulary acquisition of Iranian EFL learners. The next article which is about the merits of exploiting error analysis and reformulation on grammatical accuracy of Iranian EFL learners' written output is done by Ali Eliasi and Hamide Vahidi Borji. In the seventh article of the issue, Abdollah Baradaran and Fereshte Haji Hatamlou have presented from consciousness-raising to input enhancement: implications for theory and practice. In the eighth article of the issue, the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety, reading anxiety and reading achievement among Iranian high school EFL students is done by Mohammad Reza Talebinezhad and Reza Rezaei Rahimi. In the next article, language engagement in task-based interaction: focus on intonation is studied by Ali Akbar Ansarin and Zohre Mohamadi. In the tenth article of the issue, Parvin Safari and Seyyed Mohammad Alavi have studied on the relationship between recasts and learner's uptake: evidence from a young adult EFL class. In the eleventh article of the issue gender differences in motivation to learn a second or foreign language a review of thirty research articles (2001-2012) is studied by Mahboobeh Tavakol and Sima Sayadian. In the twelfth article, the effect of familiarity with cultural background of the texts on incidental vocabulary acquisition of the Iranian intermediate EFL learners is presented by Hamid Boadhar.
article, Mohammed Nasser Vaezi, Seyyed Amir Hossein Sarkeshikian and Mohammad Reza Shah-Ahmadi have presented the impact of pre-modified input on Iranian EFL Learners’ listening comprehension. In the fourteenth article of the issue, the effects of skimming and scanning via a multimedia CD on the reading comprehension of Iranian female English translation students is studied by Hassan Iravani and Farnaz Atghia-ee. In the fifteenth article of the issue, Seyed Foad Ebrahimi and Mohsen Khedri present multiple theme and cohesion: a case of EFL students composition writing. In the next article, the study of gender differences regarding the types and amount of learners’ misbehaviors is studied by Fereidoon Vahdany, Niloofar Mansoory and Mahmood Ghanipoor. In the seventeenth article of the issue, Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh has presented an article entitled: sympathy is aroused for the avenger. The next article which is about a componental approach to testing reading comprehension: a case of Iranian EFL learners is presented by Sajad Kabgani. In the next article of the issue Hamid Reza Haghverdi, Hamid Reza Khalaji and Reza Biria have presented an article entitled: does planning in writing affect the quality of written narrations? (a case study of Iranian EFL learners). In the twentieth article of the issue, Persian translation of English print advertisements for cosmetic and hygienic products is presented by Bahareh Lotfollahi, Saeed Ketabi and Hossein Barati. In the next article, the effect of peer feedback instructed by teacher vs. peer feedback discovered by Students on Iranian EFL students’ writing is done by Sanaz Behrouzi and Fatemeh Hemmati. In the next article of the issue Mostafa Naghipoor and Leila Boloori have studied the role of translation tasks in foreign language listening comprehension. In the twenty third article of the issue, teachers perception and practice in the post method era concerning teaching conversational dialogs and reading comprehension passages is presented by Kamran Rabani Ebrahimi Pour. In the next article, Sedigheh Vahdat and Seyyed Mohammad Khavandgaran have presented an article entitled: the relationship between verbal and emotional intelligences and Iranian EFL learners’ reading comprehension ability. In the next article of the issue, digitized and non-digitized language assessment: a contrastive study of Iranian EFL language learners is presented by Jahanbakhsh Nikoopour, Mohammad Amini Farsani, Hamid Salimi and Afsaneh Rashidi. In the last article of the issue, on the effects of gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, and proficiency level on the field-independency/ dependency of EFL learners and instructors is studied by Mohammad Javad Rezai and Mahdieh Noori.

We hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to your readership.
Title

Enhancing Iranian EFL Learners' Awareness of Hedging through Explicit Teaching

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Biodata

Ahmad Alibabaee is Assistant Professor of applied linguistics at Sheikhhahae University, Isfahan, Iran. He received his Ph.D. from University of Isfahan, Iran, in 2010. His major areas of research are in research methodology and second language acquisition.

Mozhdeh Shahzamani M.A from Islamic Azad University, Tehran South branch. She is currently teaching general English and ESP courses at undergraduate program at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. She has published some articles in national journals.

Abstract

This study was conducted to see what impact explicit instruction of hedging and its associated linguistic elements has on EFL learners’ understanding and using of these devices in journalistic English. Eighty five Iranian university EFL learners were selected from three universities to participate in the study. To elicit the second language learners’ awareness of hedging devices, a pre-test was administered to the participants. Then, the participants were taught about the forms and functions of the hedging devices in Journalistic English through an instructional treatment. Finally, they were given a post test to see to what extent the explicit instruction had been effective. From the statistical analysis of the
participants’ performances it could be informed that explicit teaching of hedging devices had significant impact on the L2 learners’ translation and reading comprehension abilities. The obtained findings, by implication, indicate that raising L2 learners' awareness of the forms and functions associated with metadiscoursal features can be a great help for them in reading, translating or writing journalistic texts.

Keywords: Hedging, Journalistic texts, Language awareness, Metadiscorsal features

1. Introduction

Ever since Language Awareness (LA) was generally conceptualized as “a person’s sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life” (Donmall, 1985, p. 7), a growing number of language teaching researchers have tried to characterize the possible trends LA may make fuel for L2 pedagogy research (Ellis, 1995; Goshgarian, 1997; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Long, 1996; Schmidt, 1994, 1995; Schmidt & Frota, 1986). As to the practicing of second language classroom teaching, General Language Awareness (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), a sub-branch of LA, proposes a research framework in which LA is treated “as an awareness of linguistic and sociolinguistic features governing language use” (p. 156). From this perspective, linguistic and sociolinguistic features of the target language may be a promising area for implementation of a plethora of experiments to see whether they are amenable to being taught.

Within this framework, the focus of L2 teaching on linguistic features may amount to a deliberate attempt, on the part of the teachers, to draw the learners’ explicit attention to the grammatical features of the target language. This activity is referred to as “consciousness-raising” (Rutherford, 1987) and the consequence is the L2 learners’ metacognitive awareness which is claimed to facilitate second language learning (e.g., Carr & Curren, 1994; Ellis, 1998; House, 1996; Hyland, 2000; Rêfega de Figueiredo-Silva, 2001; Sengupta, 1999; van Lier, 1995). In LA studies, it is, in fact, assumed that some degree of awareness about the recognition and use of L2 linguistic features is constructive for learners to internalize them.

This study, highlighting the role of metadiscoursal features in consolidating a writer’s position and building up a relationship with an interlocutor (Hunston & Thompson, 2000; Hyland, 2005), seeks to examine the possible impact of enhancing Iranian EFL learners’ metacognitive awareness of hedging devices on their understanding and using of these devices in journalistic English. Hedging devices are defined in this study as the linguistic
elements used to minimize the responsibility or commitment a claim may put on the shoulders of a language user (Varttala, 2001).

2. Review of literature

Metalinguistic awareness has received great attention in language pedagogy and has been in the limelight in the past two decades. The obtained findings of the studies on the possible influence of raising L2 learners’ awareness of the L2 linguistic features have almost all agreed that L2 consciousness-raising is beneficial or even necessary to learners, if they tend to become better L2 readers or writers. In this regard, to date, different aspects of target language have been under scrutiny, including linguistic (Ellis, 1998; Woods, 1995; Youhanaee & Alibabaee, 2010), pragmatic (House, 1996; Rasekh, Rasekh & Fatahi, 2004), and discoursal aspects (Bhatia, 1993; Sengupta, 1999; Shekari & Tahiririan, 2006).

Sengupta (1999) enhanced rhetorical consciousness of a group of L2 tertiary student readers and then examined the extent of its possible influence on the learners’ reading and writing. Raising rhetorical consciousness of the learners was implemented through a series of class discussions on the features of ‘reader-friendly’ texts. The participants were interviewed and then asked to write an essay. The analysis of the data indicated that the L2 learners’ awareness of the nature of written discourse had developed and they had been able to use the devices that make texts reader-friendly to grasp the main idea of a text. This advantage of consciousness raising has been consolidated in the findings of studies on other target language features including speech act comprehension which can be developed significantly by explicit instruction (Rasekh, Rasekh & Fatahi, 2004) and obligatory subjects suppliance (Youhanaee & Alibabaee, 2010).

However, when closely examined, the related literature reveals that metadiscourse is a domain which has received insufficient attention. In fact, studies on explicit L2 instruction have tended mostly to focus on L2 grammatical aspects (Ellis, 1998) and ignored metadiscoursal features. Such features are highly coveted in interpersonal communications and are vital for language users in the expressions of their attitude to the propositional content of their spoken or written performances and also in the characterization of the interaction they would like to have with their interlocuters about that content (Hyland, 2005). Yet, despite the significance of metadiscoursal features in L2 acquisition and the research interests the due elements may embody, they have never been recognized as a major target language dimension in studies of L2 consciousness-raising in second language acquisition. Interesting
research trends, indeed, come by light by linking metalinguistic awareness research perspective and that of metadiscoursal elements including hedging.

To the best of the researchers’ knowledge there are very few studies on raising L2 learners’ awareness of hedging (Hyland, 2000; Rêfega de Figueiredo-Silva, 2001), which are in turn limited to English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Hyland (2000) and Rêfega de Figueiredo-Silva (2001), concerning teaching EAP courses, and reading and writing of academic texts, respectively, stressed on the importance and also necessity of the teachers and students’ attendance to hedges while working on English as used in academic contexts. They found that raising L2 learners' awareness about the hedging phenomenon helps L2 learners to read or write more effectively and perform more native like in the academic community. Such awareness prevents L2 learners from making some serious mistakes of misunderstanding in receptive language skills and misapplying hedging devices in productive ones. They also suggest that it can be valuable to both L1 and L2 students to be conscious of the hedging phenomenon to cope with new ways of thinking about writing, reading and speaking and raising their awareness in this respect helps them to have information about the writer's attitude, culture and their position in the community.

In Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen’s (1993) taxonomy of metadiscoursal features, “hedging” is included in the interpersonal, interactional elements and its variety, of course, is not limited to specific word type. Hedging devices may include such modal auxiliaries as may and can, adverbs as possibly and presumably, adjectives like probable, nouns like hypothesis, and some verbs like seem and appear. Hedging with such variety of devices represents a multi-faceted phenomenon and scholars in the field have tried to demystify its complexity scrutinizing it from different perspectives including politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1978, 1987; Leech, 1983; Myers, 1992), semantics (Lakoff, 1983), logic (McCawley, 1981; Zadeh, 1972), the nature of hedging (Hyland, 1997, 1998; Markkanen & Schroder, 2000; Varttala, 1999, 2001; Vold, 2006), and contrastive linguistics (Atai & Sadr, 2008; Davoodifard, 2006; Hyland, 1994, 1996; Salager-Meyer, 1994; Skelton, 1988; Tahririan & Shahzamani, 2009).

On the other hand, journalistic language in newspaper editorials, a quite distinct genre from academic language, is an area in which hedging devices are used quite commonly (Tahririan & Shahzamani, 2009) and can cause problems for nonnative speakers of English. Such texts follow discourse types in which hedges can be investigated. Misuse of hedges in journalistic language can cause misunderstanding, misinterpretation, ambiguity and vagueness, and one may seem more assertive or uncertain than intended. In reading and
translating journalistic English, hedges often may be unnoticed by EFL readers or even by L1 readers (Low, 1996). EFL students often appear to be unaware of these devices in reading and writing and the roles they play in the interaction between the writer, reader, context and language conventions of the genres. Being unaware of this linguistic feature, nonnative speakers of English may face many problems such as using hedges too frequently or too rarely which makes their written and spoken performances seem more non-native.

All in all, while consciousness-raising is not a new concept in the EFL classroom and there are studies which have investigated the effects of EFL explicit instruction, there is still more room for further research regarding consciousness-raising. This study was, therefore, planned to see what impact explicit instruction of hedging devices and their associated linguistic elements has on EFL learners’ understanding and using of these devices.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants were 171 male and female EFL learners, aged between 20 and 24, studying English Literature or Translation Studies at Sheikhbahaee University, University of Esfahan and Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan, all in Isfahan, Iran. They had already passed Reading Courses I, II, and III, and had signed up for Reading Journalistic English and Translation of Journalistic English courses. They had been involved in learning English for a minimum of nine years; six years in secondary school and three years in college with English as their major course of study. Therefore, it was assumed that the students had developed the basic skills of reading comprehension.

The participants were selected on the basis of their Grade Point Average (G.P.A) instead of their performance on a standardized test. To do so, first, the mean of each participant’ scores on all English credit courses s/he had passed in college and then the standard deviation of all the obtained means were calculated. Those whose G.P.A scores fell below or above -1 to +1 standard deviation were screened out, and thus 110 students were selected from among whom 85 students participated in all the three stages of data collection. The rationale behind using this method was that it could provide a more comprehensive picture of the participants’ ability and knowledge from their university education.

3.2. Instrumentation

To examine the extent of the participants' awareness about the hedging phenomenon and associated linguistic elements a test was designed and developed by the researchers in three
parts. The first part included 8 English sentences extracted from the English editorials to be translated into Persian. The second part included 5 passages each followed by one multiple-choice reading comprehension question. The reading comprehension test items and their alternatives were developed in such a way that they merely assessed the participants’ recognition and comprehension of hedging devices. The third part included 13 True/False reading comprehension questions. The passages and the questions were all rewordings of the authentic texts present in daily newspapers.

The hedges used in the test items were drawn from among the most common hedging devices Tahririan and Shahzamani (2009) had found through a contrastive analysis of a 94000 word corpus of English and Persian newspaper editorials. The test included such hedges as modal verbs (e.g., can and may), if clauses, non-factive reporting verbs (e.g., suggest and argue), tentative cognition verbs (e.g., hope and suspect), and probability adverbs (e.g., probably), which were common in the students' daily encounters with English. Moreover, to ascertain the validity of the test, it was given to two experts to be judged on its content. The experts’ modifications and suggestions were implemented in the final version of the test.

3.2.1. Pilot study
The test was piloted on a few participants before being administered to the target groups of participants. The participants in the pilot study were selected from those whose G.P.A scores fell between -1 to +1 standard deviation. The purpose of the pilot study was to assess the time required to administer the tests, the quality of the instructions, and the quality of the individual test items in terms of choice distribution and item facility. The pilot study indicated that 35 to 45 minutes was required for the participants to take the test. The results of the pilot study were also used to correct few problems in vocabulary and spelling in the test items and to revise lack of clarity regarding the instructions.

3.3. Data collection
After having been selected, the participants took the pre-test in one 45-minute session. They were provided with clear instruction in both written and spoken modes. After a one-week interval, the participants were given an instructional treatment both in English and Persian in two one-hour sessions. The intention behind giving the treatment was to inform them about and make them aware of the existence of such devices as "hedges" which may act like a break or obstacle in reading. To this end, the participants were provided with several discourse fragments containing hedges. The hedges were then described in terms of their meaning and implications. This was done to attract the participants' attention to the phenomenon of
hedging and highlight the differences in meaning and function among the associated devices. The participants were also provided with examples, in which there were words which were similar to hedging devices but did not function as hedges. Note the following examples:

1. Researchers *may* have found a cure for influenza.
2. Patients *may* only smoke outside the building.

The auxiliary in 1 is used epistemically to express tentativeness of the information presented, which may also be seen as a hedging device (Varttala, 2001), while in 2 the contextual expression is very revealing as it changes the meaning of MAY from possibility to permission, a non-epistemic meaning with no hedging role. So the participants were made aware of the fact that the context has a crucial role in hedging. In addition, they were informed that hedges could not be deduced merely from the combination of individual clausal elements and their illocution. To this end, the samples of hedges from newspaper editorials were read to the learners to decide what words or expressions possessed a potential hedging function in the selected texts. There was a one-week time interval between the two sessions of instructional treatment in order for the participants to relieve the possible boredom.

As the participants of the study were from three different universities, the treatment sessions were held separately in each university in the learners’ regular and weekly-scheduled classes. After instructional sessions, the participants attended another 45-minute session to take the post-test which was similar to the pre-test. The participants, thus, attended four sessions, two for data collection and two for the treatment purposes.

### 3.4. Scoring procedure

The elicited performances on the pre- and post-test were rated as follows: For the translation tasks, which involved language production, a five-point scale was considered for each hedge as: 5 for completely right, 4 for very close to right, 1 for somehow right and 0 for completely wrong. Multiple choice and T/F reading comprehension questions were given one point each for the correct answer. The total score obtained by each participant would be out of 58 (40 for translation items, 5 for multiple-choice reading comprehension items, and 13 for True/False items) which, for the sake of clarity, was then converted to a 0-20 basis. The scoring procedure was implemented by two raters. To minimize the inter-rater discrepancies, each participant’s responses in each part of the test were scored by two raters and the average of the two obtained scores were taken as the final score for that part.

### 3.5. Data analysis

Following the scoring phase, means and standard deviations for the pre- and post-tests and then raw frequencies for the presence of each individual hedging type in the pre- and post-
tests were calculated. The second stage was one in which the obtained statistics were subjected to paired sample t-test and chi-square test as determined in the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) 18. The former was run to see if the difference between the participants' performances before and after the explicit teaching was statistically significant. The reason for conducting the latter was to examine the degrees of the differences between the raw frequencies of the suppliance of individual hedges in the pre- and post-tests. The alpha level for the t-test and all chi-square tests was set at P < .05.

3.6. Results

In this section, the empirical results are presented. The descriptive analysis of the data is first given and then the results of inferential statistical analyses on the overall performances on the pre- and post-test and on the performances on the individual hedging devices are provided. As far as the results of descriptive statistics for the pre- and post-test are concerned, a mean difference of about 2.5 was observed, as shown in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>10.6310</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.40279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>13.1451</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.97223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table illustrates, a rather remarkable difference between the participants’ performances on the pre and post test was observed in the data. This was supported by the results of performing a paired t-test which revealed that the elicited performances after the treatment differed significantly from the one before the treatment at P < 0.05 (Sig. = 0.000). This may reserve a constructive role for enhancing L2 learners’ awareness of hedging through explicit teaching.

In an in-depth analysis, the elicited performances on each hedging device were further analyzed statistically to see if the differences between the frequencies of recognition and production of individual hedges in the two tests were significant. The obtained results led the researchers to come up with three distinct categories of hedges in terms of the effectiveness of teaching on their understanding and use (Sections 3.6.1 – 3.6.3, below).

3.6.1. Easily accessible hedges

The first category includes *if*, *some* and *nearly* with which the participants were quite familiar, both in the pre- and post-test, in terms of the function they serve - lessening the degree of the language users’ certainty and commitment. This category is called ‘Easily Accessible Hedges’ in this study. Table 2 reports on the participants’ performances on such hedging devices in the pre- and post-test.
Table 2. The participants’ performance (%) on easily accessible hedges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>If</th>
<th>some</th>
<th>nearly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square (Sig.)</td>
<td>0.616</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 2 indicates, the majority of the participants performed well on these hedges both in the pre- and the post-test. The Chi-square test results also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between the frequencies of these hedges before and after the treatment.

3.6.2. Inaccessible hedges

The second recognized category in this study is ‘Inaccessible Hedges’ including *might, may, can* and *likely* on which the participants performed poorly both in the pre- and post-test. Table 3 shows the performances of the L2 learners’ on the recognition and suppliance of these hedging devices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>might</th>
<th>may</th>
<th>can</th>
<th>likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square (Sig.)</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.441</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported in Table 3, while some L2 learners attended to one or more of these hedges, their awareness was very patchy and most of them did not realize those items and their associated function. The results of conducting Chi-square tests indicated that there were no significant differences between the frequencies of these hedges before and after the treatment, suggesting the ineffectiveness of the explicit teaching on the understanding and using of this category of hedging devices.

3.6.3. Hedges accessible through instruction

In contrast, instructional treatment did have significant effects on the participants’ understanding and using of a third recognized category of hedging devices including *probably, seemingly,* and *at least.* These hedging devices were, in fact, accessible through the instruction the participants were provided with. Table 4 indicates the participants’ performance on such devices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>probably</th>
<th>seemingly</th>
<th>at least</th>
<th>most of</th>
<th>predict</th>
<th>around</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 4. The participants’ performance (%) on the hedges accessible through instruction
Regarding the above table, it was revealed that the instruction worked for raising L2 learners' awareness on some hedging devices and their associated functions. The Chi-square test results also indicated that the differences between the frequencies of the hedges in the third category before and after the treatment were statistically significant.

3.7. Discussion

This present study focusing on the awareness of L2 university students of hedges revealed that these linguistic features may be unnoticed by L2 readers having difficulty in recovering the intended strength of propositions in texts (Evidenced in Table 1). Besides, raising L2 learners' awareness of hedges can be a great help for them in reading, translating and writing journalistic texts. This may contribute to the body of evidence that students benefit considerably from teaching practices that enhance an awareness of what is to be learnt, and some degree of conscious attention, or noticing, is essential for linguistic input to become part of the learner's interlanguage system (Carr & Curren, 1994; Hyland, 2005; Schmidt, 1995). Without some explicit focus on these linguistic devices, indeed, it seems likely that L2 learners do not acquire their strength of propositions and may fail to be aware of them in their reading, translating and writing performances. Besides, focusing specifically on hedges, the L2 learners’ awareness helps them to have information about writer's attitude, culture and their position in the community. By knowing the interactional and interpersonal preferences of writers in different communities, according to Hyland (2005) "we are able to learn more not only about those approved rhetorical practices but also about the values, norms, understandings and institutional structures which they reflect and conjure up" (p. 202).

The possible explanations for the general observation that the students mostly ignored hedges in the text (evidenced in Table 1) may be either the L2 learners’ failing to notice the test items themselves or attributing inappropriate degree of certainty to them or neglecting the role of hedges. More specifically, as to those hedging devices which appeared not amenable to being taught, it seems that the instruction had not much effect in this respect because an overemphasis on hedging may influence students to be overtly cautious. Another potential explanation for this observation might be that of Varttala (1999), stating that offering an
awareness of the functions served by hedges is essential, but it should be noted that a full grasp of the concept of hedging "includes knowledge about the danger of their misuse and L2 learners should indeed be advised that superfluous and stylistically unusual hedging in discourse might not be looked on favorably" (p. 194).

Varttala’s (1999) explanation may highlight the role of second language teachers’ sensitivity to raise their students' awareness about differences between the convictions, values and expectations dominating different systems of writing. To materialize this need, Salager-Meyer (1994) proposes some reading and writing classroom exercises to empower the young readers to learn about hedges and to help their comprehension. This awareness can also be helpful for learners' in productive skills; thereby cultural misunderstandings and pragmatic failures in this area will be prevented or at least reduced. Another important aspect the L2 teachers are concerned with in the instruction aimed at developing students' awareness would be a consideration of the kinds of hedges used in different types of discourse, to what degree hedges are employed and why. Varttala (2001) provides the teacher with the general solution of contrasting the various kinds of discourse. This may lead L2 learners to consider not only the frequency and variety of hedges, but also the various reasons underlying the use or non use of hedges in text that differ according to topic, sender-receiver relationship, and general purpose of language use.

Closely related to the role of the teachers, second language teaching materials should be given due attention in enhancing the L2 learners’ awareness of hedging. In this respect, teaching materials which introduce relatively simple taxonomies of hedging devices (e.g. Hamp-Lyons & Heasley, 1987) might be useful in so far as they provide nonnative speakers with basic tools for expressing different degrees of commitment. The question which may come up here is to what extent such simplified lists of hedges correspond to the hedging phenomena employed by native speakers. According to Varttala (2001), it seems that they offer a good starting point from which non-native speakers may strive toward a better command of the skill of hedging, the lack of which in higher education, Hinkel (1997) says, "may reflect negatively on the NNS writer" (p. 362). Varttala (2001) puts forward another seemingly reasonable justification for the support of incorporating a simple taxonomy of hedging devices in pedagogical materials. He claims that such incorporation “could better assist learners in acquiring information as how to tint their writing with a degree of hedges appropriate to a given topic, purpose of language use and author-audience configuration"(p. 279). This seems to have been materialized in Skelton’s (1988) suggestion that two types of
exercises namely; sensitization exercises and rewriting exercises in which sets of hedging devices are employed may be beneficial as a starting point in elementary courses.

Accordingly, it is valuable to both L1 and L2 students to be conscious of the hedge phenomenon to cope with new ways of thinking about writing, reading and speaking. Students can benefit from courses where they have opportunity to investigate and discover the appropriateness of these roles and be made aware of the conceptual, cultural, social and psychological factors underlying them. The practice of reading, therefore, presents students with a particular challenge which may mean that, non-propositional elements of the texts receive less attention than they should. Crismore and Vande Kopple (1988) and Hyland (2000) found that students learn more from texts which include hedges than from texts in which they were omitted. Analyzing texts can also be a useful help for highlighting features of this type of discourse which can help the perception of the readers.

Overall, hedges are rarely given priority in second language curricula and may fail to attract attention when they are encountered in texts leading the readers to simply focus on propositional information for making decision, and over-riding the epistemic significance of the target items. In university contexts, the acquisition of subject specific content knowledge is often a top priority for faculty and students alike. In such circumstances there is a considerable danger that learners will fail to process these interpersonal features adequately and, therefore, ignore their crucial contribution to the meaning of the text. If learners fail to perceive the importance of hedging signals, they may not decode the writer's intention appropriately and misunderstand the propositional information. English for Academic Purposes textbooks have tended to focus on how referential information is typically conveyed, and largely disregarded epistemic aspects of texts (Hyland, 1994).

3.8. Conclusion

In this study, the extent to which a group of L2 university students attend to the presence of hedges in journalistic English and their understanding of these features were experimentally examined. Generally, the findings confirmed that the devices L1 writers use to modify their claims, referred to as hedges, may accentually be unnoticed by L2 readers. The results give rise to the idea that, raising learners' knowledge about hedges can help them in reading, comprehending and writing journalistic texts. With growing numbers of students studying English, it is imperative that these important markers of writer attitude be made more conspicuous to learners. A clear awareness of the pragmatic impact of hedges on grasping the
language users’ real intention is crucial to the acquisition of English as a second or foreign language. So it seems more reasonable to give hedges, as an important linguistic feature, a greater priority in both our teaching and research.

References


Title

Foreign Language Learners' Collocational Competence and its Relationship to their Productive Skills

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Abstract

This study was set out to explore the relationship between collocational knowledge of (37) Iranian students majoring English at Esfahan Sheikhbahaee University and their speaking and writing productions. Seven lexical collocation (LC) subtypes: LC1(noun + verb), LC2 (verb + preposition), LC3 (adjective + noun), LC4 (verb + noun), LC5 (noun + noun), LC6 (adverb + adjective), LC7 (verb + adjective), and LC8 (quantity + noun), and as well as grammatical collocations (GC): GC1 (noun + preposition), GC2 (preposition + noun), GC3 (adjective + preposition), and GC4 (verb + object + infinitive) were taken into consideration. A sixty-item fill-in-the-blank test, a 60 item multiple choice test, and The Pear Film were administered in order to measure the participants' collocational perception, and writing and speaking production of the collocations under study. The correlations were measured using the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation formula. The results showed that a significant correlation existed between the participants' perception of collocations and their production in speaking. However, the correlation between their
perception of collocations and their production in writing was insignificant. Furthermore, the results revealed that the relationship between the participants' perception of lexical collocation subtypes: LC2 (verb + preposition), LC5 (noun + noun), LC6 (adverb + adjective), and LC7 (verb + adjective), as well as their production in writing was also significant. No significant correlation was observed between the participants' perception of grammatical collocation subtypes and their production in writing. Analysis of the participants' errors in their writing productions revealed that the major sources of the learners' errors were first language interference and synonymy. In other words, the participants resort to their first language and the existing synonym words in their lexicon, in order to compensate for their collocational deficiency.

**Keywords**: Collocations, Lexical collocation subtypes, Grammatical collocation subtypes, Collocational knowledge

1. **Introduction**

Any speaking community sets a group of idiomatic ways of expressing ideas through the use of certain and specific complete phrases and also through filled phrases frames (Wray 2000, 2002a,b). Peters (1983) asserts that ordinary conversation consists almost entirely of institutional clauses, which are analyzable in terms of syntactic rules. Yet they are stored and produced as single chunks. These chunks, formulaic sequences, are more than just word stringed together. Formulaic sequences are generally expressed and referred to multi-word units such as *how do you do* and multi-form units (rain-ed, can-'t) which are produced and encoded as a whole chunk rather than produced from single words by applying syntactic rules. Moreover, they are memorized as single units in the lexicon; therefore they are at hand for immediate use than novel and creative sequences made by the speaker. From the communicative aspect, these word strings have an important role in the production of acceptable, natural, and native-like communication. On the other hand breaking the multi-word units into smaller parts makes the encoding process difficult.

In the BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations by Benson, Benson, and Ilson (1986), which they according to the degree of cohesiveness categorize lexical combinations into 5 groups which are: a) **compounds** which are completely frozen and there is no variation at all e.g. *aptitude test, floppy disk*; b) **idioms** which in the multi-word units they are relatively frozen expression whose meaning do not reflect the meaning of the individual.
elements e.g. to have one’s back to the wall, hammer and tongs; c) transitional combinations that they are more frozen and less variable than collocations and their meaning is near to the meaning of the individual elements e.g. foot the bill, to be in the tight spot; d) collocations which are loosely fixed and arbitrarily combined and the meaning of the whole combination is understood from putting together the meaning of the individual elements e.g. pure chance, to commit murder, keep competition; and e) free combinations which they are the least cohesive of all combinations. In regard to compositionality they are the freest of word combinations.

Collocations appear more or less in all languages. They are the co-occurrences of single words that make single meaning units. Collocations are part of the native speakers’ repertoire and are understood and noticed by language intuition. With the use of collocations, complex ideas can be expressed very simply and easily (Lewis, 2000). When learners face collocational deficiency and shortage of collocations, they resort to grammaticalised expressions, which the native speakers express in shorter collocational expressions and correspondingly use of little grammar (Lewis, 2000). Therefore, lack of collocational knowledge forces the foreign language learner to get help from grammar in order to express his/her notion which will certainly result in grammatical errors. “The more collocations learners have at their disposal, the less they need to grammaticalise” (Morgan Lewis, 2000, p. 16); hence, the cause of many grammatical errors is lexical deficiency (Lewis, 2000). Consequently, lack of multi-word units generally and collocations specifically in the learners’ lexicon result in the production of unnatural language.

Therefore, collocations are the most essential and also problematic part of language. Many researchers have pointed out the significance of teaching and learning collocations in developing language fluency, increasing language and communicative competence (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Channell, 1981; Howarth, 1998; Nattinger, 1988). Accordingly, collocational knowledge is a necessary tool in the language teaching and learning.

2. Literature Review
2.1. Empirical studies on collocations
2.1.1. Knowledge of collocations

Among the empirical studies on collocations in EFL and ESL, the focus has been on measuring learners’ knowledge of collocation, investigating the relationships between EFL learners’ collocational knowledge and their overall language proficiency, error analysis, and
exploring the effects of collocational instruction on the learners’ collocational competence. The aim of most studies has been exploring and examining the learner’s knowledge of collocations. The results of these studies show that learners do not have the sufficient and necessary collocational knowledge. Researches and studies reveal that not only learners possess an insufficient knowledge of collocations, but also teachers’ collocational competence is undesirable (Farghal & Obiedat, 1995).

In conducting studies on learners’ collocational knowledge, Channell (1981), who was one of the first researchers, conducted a study to measure second language learners’ knowledge of collocations. Her results indicated that the learners were able to understand collocations but were unable to put them into use or produce acceptable collocations. She concluded that the students must be encouraged and eager to pay attention to collocations. Aghbar (1990) too, reached the same results as Channel (ibid) had reached. The results showed that ESL learners used a few number of appropriate word combinations and only performed good on *get* collocations.

Conducting a study on post secondary German learners, Bahns and Eldaw (1993), the analysis of their data revealed that German learners had insufficient knowledge of lexical collocation. Farghal and Obiedat (1995) reached the same conclusion that Bahns and Eldaw (ibid) reached. They state that collocations are important and yet neglected variable in EFL classes and materials. The results of their study indicated that the principles used in answering the questionnaires was synonymy, avoidance, transfer and paraphrasing. Among these lexical simplifications synonymy was the most frequent strategy used by both groups. The results of their study confirmed the previous research findings that synonymy is the easiest strategy used by both teachers and learners, native and non-native speakers for compensating their shortage of collocational competence (Blum and Levenston, 1978).

Later on, Gitaski (1997) measured the collocational knowledge of 275 Greek learners. The findings showed that lack of collocational knowledge causes deficiency in the production of accurate and acceptable collocations. His results were confirmed by Lin and Yuan (2001). In their study thirty-two English majors and fifty-six non-English majors studying at Ming Chuan University (MCU) in Taiwan was used. The participants were given a translation test on 15 verbal collocations to perform on. The data showed that only small number of the target collocations were produced appropriately, (34% and 30% respectively) which reveals that there is no much difference between English and non-English majors’ collocational knowledge. This forced them to conclude that English teachers should put collocations on top of their teaching syllabus, especially unpredictable collocations.
Li (2005), studying collocational error types in ESL/EFL college learners’ writings explored that in the learners’ writing samples the LC1 (verb + noun) and GC8 (D) (verb + preposition + Object/verb + object + preposition + object) occurred most frequently, and the GC6 (adjective + infinitive) was the least occurring collocation in their writings. Moreover, what the learners thought were the most difficult, differed from those errors which occurred in their writings. They considered GC8, GC4 and GC5 were the most difficult collocations. However, the ignorance of the rule was the major reason of the collocational errors of the learners.

Furthermore, in 2005 Mahmoud studied 42 essays of third-year Arabic speaking university students majoring in English and found 420 collocations in their studies. About 64% of the collocations were incorrect. 80% of the total collocations were due to lexical collocations, and 61% of the incorrect collocations (10.71% grammatical and 53.33% lexical collocations) were because of the students’ transfer from L1. He believes that because post-intermediate and advanced students’ mental lexicon is filled with a great number of lexis, it might be a source of the students’ mis-collocations.

Hsue-Hueh Shih (2005) conducted a study on collocational deficiency of Taiwanese learners of English. The aim of the study was to study the Taiwanese collocational deficiency from the perspective of overuse and also to explore the context of collocational errors. The results showed that when the learners refer to an abstract concept the collocations of big, great, and large are overused. It was also found that high frequency collocations are used to express vague ideas when actually more specific information has to be conveyed on the part of the learner. The Problem of the use of big, great, and large are to some extend due to L1 transfer. In addition, it was revealed that certain commonly used simple words are overused by L2 learners by the use of lexical simplification which provides easy irretrievability and immediate availability. Her results indicated that: a) for abstract concepts the learners over use the adjective big, b) transfer and synonymy is the most frequent strategy used by Taiwanese learners to compensate their collocational competence shortage, and c) the words which collocate with big are more frequent in the L2 learners’ language than the natives’.

2.1.2. Use of collocations and language proficiency

Some researchers have focused their studies on the relation between the learners’ knowledge of collocations and their language proficiency. Zhang (1993) found a significant correlation between the knowledge and use of English collocations as well as writing proficiency. He noticed that collocational knowledge is a source of proficiency in writing. Afterwards, Al-Zahrani (1998) studied the university students’ knowledge of collocation and the relationship
between the subjects’ general English proficiency. He reports that there is a strong correlation between the subjects’ collocational knowledge and their overall language proficiency. Later on, Sung (2003) and Chiu and Husu (2006) examined lexical collocations and their relation to speaking proficiency of freshman students and college EFL learners in Taiwan respectively. Their results suggest that EFL learners’ speaking proficiency and knowledge of lexical collocation is significantly associated.

2.1.3. Collocations and fluency

Collocations are the key to fluency. Apart from expanding the learners' mental lexicon, collocations increase written and spoken fluency. As Lewis (1997, p. 15) says, "fluency is based on the acquisition of a large store of fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated items, which are available as the foundation for any linguistic novelty or creativity". James (1998, p.152) also agrees that the correct use of collocations enhances the speakers' “idiomacity and nativelikeness” which finally results in a fluent language and a fluent communication. Because collocations are widespread in usage in a language, fluency cannot be gained without using it in speech. Owing to the fact that collocations occur repeatedly in a language, by identifying the word that occur together in a relatively large sample of language, specific and common collocations can be highlighted.

2.2. Empirical studies on Iranian Learners

A review of literature in Iran shows that there is a virtual lack of empirical research on collocations in general and on the relationship between collocations and language proficiency in particular. Akbari (1995) reports that, in EFL learners’ written production, language specific collocations were among the major sources of error. His results showed that over 50% of EFL learners' errors were due to lexical collocations. Moreover, Zarei (2002) found that Iranian EFL learners face problems when it comes to English collocations. He classified English collocational patterns into 10 groups and found that collocations of prepositions (adjective + adverb) and fixed expressions are among the most problematic and easy collocations, respectively.

In 2005, Salimi conducted a research on 120 Iranian students in order to examine the relationships between Iranian EFL learners' collocational competence and their performance on a cloze test. The learners’ performance on the test shows that learners’ collocational competence and proficiency level are closely related.

Later on, Koosha and Jafarpour (2006) performed a study to see whether applying materials which are presented to the learners through data driven learning has any affect on teaching and learning collocations of prepositions; and also, to find out whether different
levels of EFL learners’ proficiency influences the perception of collocations of prepositions, and finally to explore if Iranian EFL learners’ knowledge of collocations of preposition is influenced by their first language. The analysis of their data revealed that data driven learning approach was very useful in teaching collocations of preposition, and the higher the learners’ level of proficiency the better they perform on collocations of preposition. In addition, the findings showed that the learners relied on their first language for producing collocations.

According to the existing studies on collocations and language proficiency, especially in Iran, lack of studies on Iranian EFL learners' collocational competence and language proficiency is seen. Therefore, the attempt of the present study was to find whether any relationship exited between Iranian EFL learners' collocational perception and their production in speaking and writing.

3. Materials and Method

The design of the current study is descriptive. According to Gass and Mackey (2005) this study is an associational study which tries to examine the relationships between the variables and to see to what extent these relationships are significant. In the present study three variables were examined. The participants’ writing and speaking performances serve as the dependent variables and their perception of collocations serves as the independent variable.

The participants of this study were 96 senior English major students selected from Al-Zahra and Sheikhbahaee universities: twenty eight from Al-Zahra University in Tehran, and sixty eight students from Sheikhbahaee University in Esfahan, Iran. Twenty eight of the sixty eight participants took part only in one of the tests or took part in both tests but did not show interest in taking part in the speaking test. Out of the forty remaining participants, three took part in a pilot test conducted for the Pear Film speaking test, to see whether it was practical or not in Iranian context. Therefore, only thirty seven of the participants completed the three multiple choice, writing, and speaking tests. From these 37 senior English majors, 32 were female and 5 were male, studying literature and translation at Sheikhbahaee University. The participants had a background of learning English from intermediate school to pre-university for 6 years, and also they had learnt English as their university major for about 3.5 years, which adds up to nearly 10 years. Therefore, ten years of study had provided them with the opportunity to learn and put into use a number of collocations, both in writing and speaking.

3.1. Instruments

3.1.1. Pretest
For constructing a multiple choice test, first a test of 55 fill-in-the-blank items was prepared by the researcher. Four to six examples of each of the collocation subtypes under study were included in the test. The collocations were of common words. Some of the sentences were chosen from the Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English and some sentences were made by the researcher. The 55 fill-in-the-blank items test was administered to a university class consisting of 26 senior students majoring in English literature at Al-Zahra University. The part of speech (e.g. noun, preposition, verb…) of the missing collocates were given as a clue in order to avoid misunderstanding and unwanted answers. For example I don't like to _______(verb) make-ups when I go to university. The participants’ high frequency wrong answers were chosen for constructing the options of the multiple choice test.

3.1.2. Multiple choice test
In order to measure the participants’ perception of collocations, a multiple choice test was constructed by the researcher. The options of each item were the wrong answers which Al-Zahra students had produced. Because the number of the options for each item was 4, therefore, only the three wrong answers of Al-Zahra students with the highest frequency were selected.

In addition to the 55 items, 5 other items which tested the LC8 (quantity + noun) collocation subtype were given in a matching style in the multiple choice test, and for the writing test they were given in the fill-in-the-blank form. Therefore, the total number of items in the comprehension and the writing test was 60. These 60 items tested both the lexical and grammatical collocation subtypes under study which were: five (LC1) noun + verb; five (LC2) verb + preposition; five (LC3) adjective + noun; six (LC4) verb + noun; four (LC5) noun + noun; four (LC6) adverb + adjective; five (LC7) verb + adjective; and five (LC8) quantity + noun, and six (GC1) noun + preposition, six (GC2) preposition + noun, five (GC3) adjective + preposition; and four(GC4) verb + object + infinitive. The table on text below shows the details.

3.1.3. Writing production test
For the purpose of testing the participants' production of collocations in their writing production, the fill-in-the-blank test which was administered to the students of Al-Zahra University was applied in order to measure the writing production of Sheikhbahaee students. It is worth mentioning that the multiple choice test and the fill-in-the-blank test tested the same sixty collocations. The only difference was that the collocations were put into similar sentences. The intention was to see whether the participants' collocational knowledge
correlates with their production of the collocations or not. For example to test the attitude towards in the fill-in-the-blank it was presented as: Your attitude ________ (prep) your parents is very bad. You must think of what you are doing. And in the multiple choice test the same collocation was tested as:

1) I think your attitude _____ your sister is very bad indeed.
   a) towards    b) at    c) between    d) with

The reliability of the tests was measured using the KR-21 formula.

3.1.4. The Pear Film test

The Pear Film was used in order to measure the participants’ production of collocations in speaking. The Pear Film is a six minute film which has sound effects but no words are uttered in it. The film shows universal experiences. It shows a man harvesting big green pears. The collected pears are stolen by a boy who has some adventures with other children at his age. Professor Wallace Chafe (1975) designed the Pear Film in order to elicit different language samples worldwide. According to Chafe, after viewers had watched the film, they should be able to recall the film and answer questions related to the film (The pear film can be downloaded from Chafe’s website).

3.2. Data collection procedures

The descriptive data were collected through comprehension, writing, and speaking tests. The data collection procedure consists of five phases: conducting a pilot test, administering a pretest, administering the comprehension test, administering the writing test, and finally administering the Pear Film. All of the phases are described in details below.

3.2.1. The pilot test

The pilot test was administered to 3 Sheikhbahaee students majoring in English literature. The aim of the pilot test was to see whether administering the Pear Film was practical in the Iranian university context and whether it was an appropriate tool for eliciting the participants’ production of the expected data under study.

3.2.2. Administering the pretest

After examining the practicality of the Pear Film test, in order to construct the multiple choice test, 55 common English words were chosen and their appropriate collocates were identified using the Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English. These collocations were put into sentences by using the examples of the Oxford Collocations Dictionary and sentences made by the researcher. One part of each collocation was omitted in order to make the participants produce the appropriate collocate e.g. I don’t know him well. He is of our ________ (adj) relatives. Moreover, the part of speech of the omitted collocate
was given for avoiding misunderstanding and also avoiding the production of unwanted collocates. The test was administered to an English literature class held in Al-Zahra University consisting of 26 senior students. The answers to each item were collected and counted. The three highest frequent wrong answers were selected for constructing the options of the comprehension test.

3.2.3. Administering the multiple choice test and the fill-in-the-blank test

Because of time limitation, the order of administering the multiple choice test and the writing test to the translation and literature students was different. While the literature students first received the multiple choice test and within a day they received the writing test, the translation students received the writing test first and after a week they received the multiple choice test. This difference in the order of test administrations paved the way for the researcher to see whether this difference of test administration affected and influenced the literature and translation participants' performances on the tests or not. However, it is worth mentioning that the multiple choice and writing tests were not administered by the researcher. The teachers of the three classes were asked to administer the tests, so that the participants would take it seriously. The participants’ completion of the multiple choice and writing tests approximately took about 20 minutes.

3.2.4. Administering the Pear Film test

The participants were asked to write their phone number on their test paper so that the researcher could make an appointment for the future speaking test. Some students did not show interest taking part in the research. Therefore, only 37 participants were left at the end of the study. After the participants had taken both the multiple choice test and the fill-in-the-blank test, the researcher made an appointment with each participant for the speaking test. In the interviews the researcher invited the participants to watch the Pear Film. They were told that after the film was over they had to answer a number of questions related to the film. Their speech was recorded. The speaking test approximately took about 30 minutes and in this period of time the students were encouraged to speak as much as possible.

Some of the questions were asked in the participants’ mother tongue, Farsi, in order not to give clues for the production of the specific collocations under study. For example if *wearing clothes* was asked in English it would provide the collocation which is a verb + noun kind of lexical collocation. The answers to these questions produced most of the collocations under study and the subtypes which were provided in the written test. Later on, the participants’ oral production was transcribed for the purpose of counting and recording the produced collocations.
3.3. Scoring procedures
For scoring the multiple choice test and the fill-in-the-blank test the correct and acceptable answers, according to the Oxford Collocations Dictionary of students of English and the internet which were used as supportive tools for the acceptability and correctness of collocations, and in order to prevent bias selection of the correctness of collocations, received 1 point and the wrong answers received 0 point. Therefore, the final scores were the ratio of the total number of correct answers to the number of test items which was 60. Furthermore, in order to make a comparison between the participants' scores for the multiple choice and writing tests at an equal scale, the proportional scores were calculated out of 100. For example, a student who got 41 out of 60 on her multiple choice test his proportional was 68.3.

Furthermore, the spoken data collected from the Pear Film was transcribed and all of the produced lexical and grammatical collocations were counted. The correctness of the collocations was based on Oxford Collocations Dictionary and the internet which were used as supportive tools for the acceptability and correctness of collocations. The ratio of the correct collocations to the total number of produced collocations (both right and wrong) was the participants' scores of the Pear Film test. Since all of the participants' length of speech differed, therefore the total number of collocations produced were different. Hence, in order to have an equal scale the proportional scores were calculated out of 100 e.g. if a participant had produced 150 collocations in his speaking test and 125 of them were correct his score for the Pear Film would be 83.3. As mentioned above, the correctness of the participants' production of collocations was based on Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English. If a participant had selected quit as a collocate for smoking in the multiple test, but stop in the writing test which, according to Oxford Collocations Dictionary and the internet both stop and quit are correct, they were scored as correct, too.

4. Result
After scoring the three tests - the multiple choice test, the writing test, and the speaking test - in order to have all the three scores in one scale, proportional scores were computed and they were calculated out of 100. Other necessary statistical operations were computed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 16.

4.1. Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and their production
The first research question was "Is there any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and their production?" For answering the question, the Pearson
Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for measuring the possible correlation between the scores of the multiple choice test and the sum of the writing and the speaking tests scores. The results revealed that a statistically significant correlation existed between the participants' performance on the comprehension test and their general production of collocations \((r = 0.48, \rho = 0.003)\) (Table 1).

### 4.1.1. Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and their production in writing

The second research question was "Is any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and their production in writing?" Using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, the correlation between the participants' multiple choice and writing test scores were measured. The results of the measurement revealed that a correlation existed between the participants’ scores, but it was not statistically significant \((r = 0.27, \rho = 0.107)\) (Table 1).

### 4.1.2. Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and their production in speaking

What the third research hypothesis stated was "there any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and the their production in speaking?" Using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, the correlation between the participants’ multiple choice test scores and their speaking test scores were calculated. The statistical measurements indicated that a significant correlation existed between these two variables \((r = 0.57, \rho = 0.000)\) (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PC</th>
<th>CP</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>SP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>r = 0.48**</td>
<td>r = 0.27</td>
<td>r = 0.57**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\rho = 0.003)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.107)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The asterisks ** show that the correlation is significant at 0.001 level and asterisk * shows that at 0.05 level the correlation is significant.

### 4.2. Collocational subtype analysis of the data

As mentioned in chapter two, collocations are made of two different subtypes: lexical and grammatical collocations. According to Benson et al. (1986) lexical collocations are of 7 types and grammatical collocations are of 8 types. In this study the seven types of lexical collocations defined by Benson et al. (ibid) in addition to the quantity + noun subtype, and also 4 subtypes of grammatical collocations were studied. The following two sections reveal the correlation between the participants' perception of these two groups of subtypes and their production in writing.
4.2.1. Participants’ perception of lexical collocation subtypes and their production in writing

What the above figures imply is that the correlations between the participants’ perception of the second lexical collocation (LC2) verb + noun \((r = 0.42**, \rho = 0.01)\), the fifth lexical collocation (LC5) noun + noun \((r = 0.56**, \rho = 0.001)\), the sixth lexical collocation (LC6) adverb + adjective \((r = 0.33*, \rho = 0.45)\), and the seventh lexical collocation (LC7) verb + adjective \((r = 0.44**, \rho = 0.007)\), with their writing production were significant. But the correlations between the first (LC1), third (LC3), fourth (LC4), and eighth (LC8) lexical collocation subtypes were insignificant (Table 2).

**Table 2. Pearson Correlation between the Participants’ Perception of Different Lexical Collocation Subtypes and their Production in Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WLC1</th>
<th>WLC2</th>
<th>WLC3</th>
<th>WLC4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPLC1</td>
<td>(r = 0.023)</td>
<td>(r = 0.42**)</td>
<td>(r = 0.26)</td>
<td>(r = 0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\rho = 0.171)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.01)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.127)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.591)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPLC2</td>
<td>(r = 0.56**)</td>
<td>(r = 0.33*)</td>
<td>(r = 0.44**)</td>
<td>(r = 0.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\rho = 0.001)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.045)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.007)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.141)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2. Participants’ perception of grammatical collocation subtypes and their production in writing

By using the participants’ scores of the four grammatical collocation subtypes in the multiple choice and the writing tests, the correlation between these two groups of scores was measured. The results revealed that an insignificant correlation existed between the participants' perception of the four grammatical collocation subtypes and their production in writing (Table 3).

**Table 3. Pearson Correlation between the Participants’ Perception of Four Grammatical Collocation Subtypes and their Production in Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WGC1</th>
<th>WGC2</th>
<th>WGC3</th>
<th>WGC4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPGC1</td>
<td>(r = 0.22)</td>
<td>(r = 0.29)</td>
<td>(r = 0.30)</td>
<td>(r = 0.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\rho = 0.194)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.077)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.075)</td>
<td>(\rho = 0.153)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Performances of translation and literature students on the tests

In addition to the measurements of the correlations between the participants' perception of lexical and grammatical collocations and their production in writing, what was interesting for the researcher was comparing the different performances of translation and literature students on the different variables. The comparison was measured by the use of T-test. The different performances of the translation students and the literature students on the different variables
were not significant, except for their performances on the comprehension test which the two groups’ performances differed significantly ($r = -2.78$, $\rho = 0.009$) (Table 4). The difference between the translation and literature students' performances on the writing production of LC1 (verb + noun), LC3 (adjective + noun), and LC5 (noun + noun) were significant. However, there were no significant differences for the rest of the lexical collocation subtypes in their production in writing (Table 4).

**Table 4. Comparison between the Performance of Translation and Literature Students on Different Variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean TRN. Students</th>
<th>Mean LIT. Students</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>81.20</td>
<td>77.93</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>-1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>40.89</td>
<td>36.61</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>-2.78 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>32.11</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC1 (verb + prep)</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>0.864</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC1</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>2.06 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC2 (verb + noun)</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td>-1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC2</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPLC3 (adj + noun)</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC3</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>2.96 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC4 (noun + verb)</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>-2.08 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC4</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>0.575</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC5 (noun + noun)</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC5</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>2.12 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC6 (adv + adj)</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>-2.48 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC6</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC7 (verb + adj)</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>0.479</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC7</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>0.390</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC8 (quantity + noun)</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>0.407</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLC8</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGC1 (noun + prep)</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>0.644</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGC1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGC2 (pre + noun)</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>-2.37 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGC2</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>0.776</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGC3 (adj + prep)</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>-0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGC3</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>0.447</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGC4 (verb + noun + inf)</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>-1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGC4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>0.337</td>
<td>-0.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** The asterisks ** and * are significant and insignificant at the 0.05 and 0.10 level respectively.
4.4. Error analysis
The analysis of the frequency of the participants' errors showed that the major sources of their errors were first language interference and synonymy. For example, in order to compensate their lack of knowledge of collocation *smiles to*, the participants used their first language and produced *smiles at*. The result confirms the results of Farghal and Obiedat (1995). Analyzing the data they concluded that:

1. The selection of synonymy for a lexical item in a collocation group may refer to the open choice principle. This selection is not because of absence or unavailability of the pivot word in the learners’ lexicon, but the reason is that the learners are not aware of the collocability of items in a collocation is related to the tendency to teach single words which results in applying the open choice principle.

2. Transfer, a simplification strategy which the learner gets help by relying on his/her first language in communicating, is a one-to-one correspondence between first language and second language and used by all learners regardless of their level of proficiency.

To sum up, based on the statistical analysis and measurements, a significant correlation existed between Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations (both lexical and grammatical collocation) and their overall production of collocations \((r=0.48^{**}, \rho=0.003)\), and also between their perception of collocations and their production of collocations in speaking \((r=0.57^{**}, \rho=0.001)\). No significant correlation existed between their perception of collocations and their production of collocations in writing.

The statistical analysis of the relationship between the participants' perception of lexical and grammatical collocation subtypes and their writing production reveals that the participants' perception of LC2 (verb + noun), LC5 (noun + noun), LC6 (adverb + adjective), and LC7 (verb + adjective), significantly correlates with their production in writing. On the other hand, no significant correlation between the participants' perception of grammatical collocation subtypes and their production in writing was found.

5. Discussion
In this study the aim was to see whether any relationship exists between the Iranian EFL learners' perception of collocations and their production in writing and speaking. Furthermore, the aim was to explore the relationship between the participants' perception of eight lexical and four grammatical collocation subtypes in their production in writing. The
results showed that a significant correlation existed between their perception of collocations and production of collocations in general and their speaking production in particular.

The results of the previous studies (Hsu & Chiu, 2006; Sung, 2003), reveal that a significant correlation exists between the EFL learners' knowledge of collocations and speaking proficiency. These studies examined the knowledge of lexical collocations and its relation to the speaking proficiency of Taiwanese international students. They concluded that the L2 learners apply their knowledge of collocation in their oral production of collocations, and in general the production of collocations.

According to the findings of the current study, an insignificant correlation existed among the participants’ perception of collocations and use of collocations in their writing production. This means that the participants do not put into use their perception of collocations when producing collocations in writing. Therefore, perception of collocations may not guarantee Iranian learners’ correct production of them in writing. Consequently, the writing production of the participants may not be a good factor for measuring Iranian learners’ perception of collocations. The findings of the current study are in line with the findings of previous studies. Sung (2003) also found that a low correlation existed between the participants' perception of collocations and the use of collocations in writing production. But, in contrast, Zhang (1993) found a correlation between EFL learners' knowledge of collocations and their writing proficiency. Therefore, in order to make an exact conclusion and generalize the results of the relationship between perception of collocations and writing production more studies must be further conducted.

In this study the participants' perception of eight lexical and four grammatical collocation subtypes were correlated with their production in writing. The perception of three lexical collocation subtypes, LC5, LC6 and LC7 significantly correlated with their production in writing. In other words, the participants had the perception of the collocation subtypes and also produced them correctly in their writing. Moreover the participants' perception of the grammatical collocation subtypes did not correlate significantly with the writing production of these subtypes. Their production differed to their perception of collocations. This implies that the participants, when writing, do not put into use their perception of grammatical collocation subtypes.

What is worth mentioning is that awareness and knowing the rules, its dos and don’ts, plays an important role in learning in general and in Language learning in specific. In vocabulary learning, when an EFL learner is explicitly/implicitly taught about what collocations are and that they exist in languages, it will improve their perception. They will
know and will become aware of that such a thing as collocations exists in languages, even in their native language which they have been using subconsciously throughout their lives. They will understand that language is not just only stringing and tangling words together. They will come to this knowledge that like learning grammar that is leaning of rules, leaning vocabulary has its own rules too. When they learn vocabulary through collocations they will experience that learning isolated words is a mistake and time consuming.

This awareness has implications on both teaching and learning. On the teaching part, the teacher must aware the EFL learner about collocations. She/he can gain this goal by several methods such as comparing and contrasting. Giving examples about the collocations that exist in their first language, the learner will come to this knowledge that even though he wasn’t aware of it, it exists in his first language which he has been using them subconsciously. The teacher, by comparing and contrasting collocations in different languages, will help the learner to understand that using his first language and literal translation for putting words next to each other without considering that words collocate with certain words, does not convey the correct meaning in the target language and will not sound native. Moreover, once the learner is aware of collocations, the teacher must highlight and put more force on them mostly in reading activities. Consequently, the teacher will encounter fewer errors in the learners’ productive skills which are due to lack of awareness of such an important issue in lexicography.

On the learner’s part, once the EFL learner is aware of collocations, he can find his own way to learning and using vocabulary effectively and he will pay attention that each word collocates and comes with certain word(s). In his reading and writing activities, he will be more active. Therefore, in his readings he will pay attention to the words and to their collocates too. He will be cautious in choosing and putting words next together in his speaking and writing, for he knows that choosing words are not that random that he once thought. He will notice the collocations and for learning and expanding his vocabulary he will not rely on single words, but a block of words.

6. Conclusion
What can be concluded from the findings of the current study is that Iranian EFL learners' collocational perception correlates with their collocation production in general and their speaking production in particular. Therefore, Iranian EFL learners' speaking production reveals their perception of collocations; hence, their speaking production is an appropriate
tool for examining their perception of collocation. On the other hand, because Iranian EEL learners’ perception of collocations does not correlate with their production in writing, their writing productions may not be a good indicator of their overall perception of collocations.

Collocations have specific characteristics such as arbitrariness, being specific only to human language, reoccurring in context and also being common in technical terms. What is worth mentioning is that, when these properties are taken into consideration along with the learners’ sources of collocational errors we can conclude that when arbitrariness is violated, it causes the use of synonymy e.g. *powerful tea* for *strong tea*. On the other hand if the language specific character of collocations is violated it will cause transfer resulting in the production of unacceptable collocations.

According to the existing studies on Iranian English learners, it can be concluded that their lack of essential collocational knowledge and consequently their collocational deficiency results in the production of unnatural and unacceptable language. To compensate their shortage of collocational competence learners resort to grammar in order to produce language, which this results in grammatical errors. Hence, this deficiency affects the learners’ fluency. To overcome this deficiency and prevent the production of unnatural language the language should be taught and learned in chunks from the scratch and from the beginning levels of language learning process.

Based on the findings of the current study, in order to have an effective teaching, teachers can base their lesson plans on elaborating different properties of words and especially their collocational fields. They should avoid breaking language into small pieces and teaching single words. Teachers should keep the language chunks intact and not to teach words unless in their collocational fields. Teachers can expose the learners to language through collocational dictionaries and concordances. They can help students to notice these chunks and put them in to use in their productive skills during their learning process.

Moreover, teachers can raise the learners’ awareness of different collocations and not solely focus on teaching words in isolation. As Hill (2000) states, students should be able to notice collocations, for the reason that noticing is an important factor in awareness raising. This raising of awareness can be gained by making the learners to pay attention to the words’ collocational field with the aid of extensive reading. And more effective is when the extensive reading is proceeded by productive skills in order to provide the learners the opportunity to put their knowledge of collocation into use. Syllabus designers and material writers in the field of learning and teaching English vocabulary, should pay attention to and focus on language chunks and provide the learner with natural language rather than broken-
to-pieces language. For, according to Lewis (2000), collocations aid and promote language acquisition and learning.

The comparison made between the translation and literature students' performances on different variables, indicated that they differed in their perception of collocations and their use of collocation subtypes: WLC1, WLC3, KLC4, WLC5, PLC6, and PGC2 (Table 4). Accordingly, based on needs analysis, teachers should focus and handle collocations differently for different majors. They should be aware of these differences so that their teaching would be in line with the learners’ needs, deficiencies, and shortages. The reason for these differences may relate to different courses which translation and literature students pass in their different majors. The translation students are exposed to the first language as well as English and also just short passage for translation. But on the other hand literature students are just exposed to much more than the translation students. Moreover the amount of L2 reading of novels, poems short stories, which literature students do, is incomparable to translation students.

During any study and research procedure more questions are generated than answered. Here are a number of suggestions for further study for those who are interested in collocations. The findings of the current study on the one hand are in line with Sung (2003), but on the other hand are not in line with Zhang’s (1993) findings on writing production. In order to generalize the findings of the current study on the relationship between Iranians perception of collocations and their production in writing, more studies must be conducted on Iranian learners. In this study the participants’ perception of collocations correlated with their speaking productions but not in writing which they had the opportunity to go back, think more, and correct their produced collocations, since in speaking this opportunity does not exist. More researches can be conducted to examine this difference and the factors that affect this difference. Since participants were senior English major students, similar studies can be done on junior students and/or non-student studying non-English majors.

For examining the participants’ knowledge of different collocation subtypes several comprehension tests can be administered. Therefore, the real score of the participants' perception of lexical and grammatical collocation subtypes can be gained. Furthermore, this study can be repeated on MA and PhD students majoring in English, or fields other than English, including only one lexical and grammatical collocation subtype, taking gender as a variable, and comparing different gender performances on different collocation subtypes as well as examining their receptive skills. Moreover, this study can be conducted in experimental design in order to investigate the effect of different techniques of teaching.
lexical and grammatical collocations and their subtypes on Iranian EFL learners' language proficiency.

Finally, in this study an insignificant correlation was found between the participants' perception of collocations and their production in writing. Therefore, Iranian EFL learners' writing production of collocations can be further examined. The collocational error sources of Iranian EFL learners can be examined and discussed. In addition, the frequency of each lexical and grammatical collocation subtypes in EFL learners' productive skills can be measured.

References


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Learners’ Evaluation of Modular EFL Program: Translation Courses entitled Audio-Visual Materials vs. Deeds and Documents

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Abstract

Modular English Language Education Program implemented by the University of Applied Science & Technology claims to fulfill students’ professional needs by offering specialized language education through various relevant modules in two specific fields: Audio-Visual Translation Course and Translation of Deeds and Documents. Contrary to significant academic achievements, the program has been subject to continuous scholarly criticisms. However, no explicit empirical studies can be traced on both internal and external validity measures as well as on the extent of compatibility of both courses with the standards and criteria of scientific educational program. In a bid to address these issues, this study was conducted to evaluate the program from the perspectives of the respective students. The students’ perspectives addressed their needs and problems in four skills and also
their viewpoints toward the program content and its efficiency. Methodologically, the study is based on the requirements of both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. To this end, a sample of 200 students was given a 125-item need analysis questionnaire followed by three open-ended course evaluation questions. The findings revealed controversies over all the four skills, students’ needs and compatibility of the program with well-established standards; suggesting exercise of comprehensive revisits and modifications on all the aspects of the program as a whole.

**Keywords:** Modular Education-EFL Education- Program Evaluation- Translation Courses

1. **Introduction**

Language education program in Iran is run by both public and private sectors. Although the Ministry of Education has a full supervision over the public institutions, private sector is mainly managed on financial basis and is viewed as a business opportunity for its stakeholders. Therefore, it is probable that such organizations lack necessary qualifications for a successful educational program. Modular Language Educational Program, implemented by the University of Applied Science, is claimed to satisfy the need for a better job opportunity through teaching various modular courses, when accompanied by each other, build up the required skills which at last lead to an official certificate. Contrary to the claims made and although a substantial amount of time, money and effort are allocated for teaching and learning process, it seems that neither students nor the instructors are much pleased with the outcomes of the programs presented at this university. This study is confined to two of the programs, which are namely *Audio-Visual Translation and Deeds and Documents Translation*. Given that since the establishment of these two courses there has been no previous research carried out to evaluate their effectiveness, the researcher feels that there is a gap in the relevant literature which needs to be filled. Thus, she aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the two courses as well as the extent of their compatibility with standards of a conventional educational program, from the perspectives of both instructors and students.

1.1. **Translation of Deeds and Documents**

The Translation of Deeds and Documents undergraduate course of Modular language learning program aims to provide students with set of practical skills in deeds and documents translation. It also enables them to undertake professional deeds and document translation
activities in translation agencies and documentation centers. This course is defined in nine
distinguished modules which are as follows:
Module 1. Basic Module 2. Reading comprehension Module 3. Conversation module
Module 6. Translation of commercial documents Module 7. Translation of political
documents Module 8. Internship Module 9. General courses

1.2. Audio-Visual Translation Course
The Audio-Visual Translation undergraduate course of Modular language learning program is
an educational program in which students learn essential skills of audio-visual material
translation and enables them to cooperate with translators in research and academic centers.
Large volume of economic, cultural and academic exchanges has emphasized the importance
of translation of audio-visual materials as a profession.

This course is defined in eight distinguished modules which are as follows: Module 1:
Principles and methods of translation Module 5: Written Audio-Visual Translation Course
Module 6: Oral Audio-Visual Translation Course Module 7: Internship Module 8: General
courses

1.3. Language Education Programs
Generally speaking, program is defined as series of activities performed leading to a pre-
determined purpose. More specifically, an educational program is identified as a set of
“…courses linked with some common goal or end product. (Lynch, 1997, p.2). There are
some dimensions which address the quality management in educational systems in general
and language educational systems in particular. Morris (1994) cited by Richards (n.d.)
Characterizes eight factors for educational programs:
1. There are clearly stated educational goals
2. There is a well-planned, balanced and organized program which meets the needs of its
   students
3. Systematic and identifiable processes exist for determining educational needs in the
   school and placing them in order of priority.
4. There is a commitment to learning, and an expectation that students will do well.
5. There is a high degree of staff involvement in developing goals and making decisions.
6. There is a motivated and cohesive teaching force with good team spirit.
7. Administrators are concerned with the teachers’ professional development and are
   able to make the best use of their skill and experience
8. The school’s programs are regularly reviewed and progress towards their goals is evaluated.” (p.4)

Simultaneously, Richards (n.d.) refers to some aspects that need to be constantly examined in order to maintain the quality of teaching and learning in language educational programs aligned with standards. They are “… design of the curriculum, the quality of instructional materials, the role of tests, provisions for teacher training, and the kinds of administrative support provided by schools and educational institutions.” (Richards, n.d., p.1). Referring to the large volume of research done in reaching methods and techniques, he also criticizes this excessive attention paid to detailed aspects of language teaching and suggests a shift towards the context of teaching and more specifically to the quality teaching. Therefore, he identifies four factors including institutional factors, teacher factors, teaching factors and Learning factors, which play an important role in the success of language teaching program.

- **Institutional factors**: a sense of mission; a strategic plan; quality assurance mechanisms; flexible organizational framework; good internal communications; professional treatment of teachers; and the teaching context
- **Teacher factors**: skills and qualifications; and support for teachers
- **Teaching factors**: teaching model and principles; and evaluating teaching
- **Learning factors**: understanding of the course; views of learning; learning styles; motivation; and support

### 1.4. Program Evaluation

There has been a notable attention to evaluation and its uses in recent years. Evaluation research varies depending on who carries out the study, which methods are used and how findings are implemented. Murphy (2000) defines evaluation as a way to determine the degree in which a program is effective in terms of its objectives. At the same time, it gives support to stakeholders in decision making for program improvement through careful analysis of information gathered. Kiely (2009, p.99) asserts that “evaluation has evolved from focused studies of teaching methods inspired by language learning theories to a curriculum management enterprise with a focus on quality assurance and enhancement”. Lynch (1996) distinguishes the difference between evaluation and assessment in terms of scope and purpose. He argues that evaluation can draw on assessment tools such as tests and many other instruments such as interviews. Noting the purposes for which assessment
instruments can be used, he defines the purpose of evaluation as "…the systematic attempt to gather information in order to make judgments or decisions." (p. 2)

Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick (1997) provide a more detailed definition for program evaluation which is as follows: "…evaluation is the identification, clarification, and application of defensible criteria to determine an evaluation object’s value (worth or merit), quality, utility, effectiveness, or significance in relation to those criteria. Evaluation uses inquiry and judgments methods, including (1) determining standards for judging, (2) collecting relevant information, and (3) applying the standards to determine value, quality, utility, effectiveness, or significance. It leads to recommendations intended to optimize the evaluation object interrelation to its intended purpose(s).” (p.5) Becket & Brookes (2006) use the term "quality measurement" instead of evaluation. They propose a number of key elements which have to be identified in order to assess higher education quality:

- Internal and external stakeholder perspectives
- Education as a system of inputs, processes and outputs
- Quality dimensions
- Qualitative versus quantitative data
- Quality snapshot or longitudinal benchmarking

1.5. Language Program Evaluation and its Benefits

Balint (2009) asserts that there are abundant publications in general educational program evaluations compared with language specific evaluation studies. However, there has recently been a substantial amount of books and in journal articles on language program evaluation whose dates imply the fact that the Language Program Evaluation is a recent issue to a certain extent. He further refers to two outstanding articles which have had a remarkable influence in today’s language program evaluation approaches. The first one is carried out by Bachman (1981) cited by Balint(2009), which supports curriculum development through administrating formative evaluation held by curriculum planners. The second study is conducted by Long (1984) cited by Balint(2009), which at that time altered the perspectives from product-oriented language program evaluation approaches to the Process-oriented ones. Cumming (1988) holds an “idealistic stance” about second language program evaluation. He suggests that the value of language program evaluations is higher than merely performing a service for those who are in charge and being paid. In his perspective, evaluation studies are tasks with an instructive nature that can be useful for programs’, teachers’ and learners’ development. Cumming has reviewed numerous evaluation studies and developed seven “educational benefits” which are namely: validating educational innovations, informing
program development, illuminating the perspectives of learners, clarifying educational rationales, bringing to light social inequalities, and appreciating the art of educating. Following is the summary of these benefits:

- Validating Education Innovations
- Informing Program Development
- Illuminating the Perspectives of Learners
- Clarifying an educational rationale
- Bringing to light social inequalities
- Appreciating the art of educating

2. Method

This research study was conducted with a randomly selected participation of 200 students attending Audio-Visual Translation & Translation of Deeds and Documents Courses in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 at University of Applied Science. To collect the required data, an amalgamate of the “Needs analysis questionnaire for non-English-background students” used at the university of Auckland, New Zealand (from Gravatt, Richards, and Lewis 1997, cited by J.C. Richards, 2009) and the “Course” evaluation section of “a student appraisal form” from Department of English, City University of Hong Kong was implemented.( J.C. Richards, 2009). In order to avoid misunderstanding the questionnaire was translated in to the participants’ native language (Farsi).

3. Findings

3.1. Students ‘Data :Deeds and Documents Translation Course

Does Translation of Deeds and Documents Course meet the Learners' expectations?

Unlike the teachers’ questionnaire which follows a uniform pattern of items with five choices, the students’ questionnaire consists of different types of items with different patterns of choices (two choices to five choices). That is why an overall analysis is not produced for the Audio-Visual and Deeds and Documents groups.

3.1.1. Minor research question 1

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the speaking problems they face?

As displayed in Table 1majority of the respondents, i.e. 51.11 percent believe that they always or usually face the mentioned problems when speaking English.
Table 1 Frequencies and Percentages Speaking Problems Deeds and Docs Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>24.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>25.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>34.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>13.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pie Chart 1 displays the above mentioned percentages.

**Pie Chart 1**: Percentages speaking problems Deeds and Docs students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 1 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2$ (4) = 266.87, $P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 1 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the first minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Deeds and Document students believe that they always or usually face the mentioned problems when speaking English.

Table 2 Analysis of Chi-Square Speaking Problems (Deeds and Document Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOICES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
<td>266.876a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.2. Minor research question 2

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the listening problems they face?

As displayed in Table 3 majority of the respondents, i.e. 45.82 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned listening problems.

Table 3 Frequencies and Percentages Listening Problems Deeds and Docs Students
An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 3 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2 (4) = 551.20$, $P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 3 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the second minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Deeds and Document students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned listening problems.

Table 4  Analysis of Chi-Square Listening Problems (Deeds and Document Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOICES</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>23.41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>45.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>22.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.3. Minor research question 3

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the writing problems they face?

As displayed in Table 5 majority of the respondents, i.e. 56.84 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned writing problems.

Table 5  Frequencies and Percentages Writing Problems Deeds and Docs Students

Pie Chart 2: Percentages listening problems Deeds and Document students

Pie Chart 2 displays the above mentioned percentages.

Table 4  Analysis of Chi-Square Listening Problems (Deeds and Document Students)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>25.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>56.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>15.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1476</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pie Chart 3 displays the above mentioned percentages.

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 5 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2 (3) = 952.63$, $P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 5 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the third minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Deeds and Docs students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned writing problems.

Table 6 Analysis of Chi-Square Writing Problems (Deeds and Docs Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>952.634a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 396.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.4. Minor research question 4

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the reading comprehension problems they face?

As displayed in Table 7 majority of the respondents, i.e. 51.11 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned reading comprehension problems.

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages Reading Comprehension Problems Deeds and Docs Students
Pie Chart 4 displays the above mentioned percentages.

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 7 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square (χ² (2) = 146.02, P = .000 < .05) indicates that the differences observed in Table 7 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the fifth minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Deeds and Docs students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned reading comprehension problems.

### Table 8 Analysis of Chi-Square Reading Comprehension Problems (Deeds and Docs Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOICES</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful</td>
<td>146.028*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 285.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.1.5. Minor research question 5

How do you rate the content (both content and skills taught) of your course?

As displayed in Table 9 and using the cut-point of 4 as the middle value, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 38.46 percent believe that the content of the course and the skills taught are not useful or are of low use.

### Table 9 Usefulness of Content and Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.5. **Minor research question 6**

How do you rate the educational materials (textbooks, pamphlets, etc.)?

As displayed in Table 10 and using the cut-point of 4 as the middle value, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 54.10 percent believe that the educational materials are not useful or are of low use. Table 10 Usefulness of Educational Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1.6. Minor research question 7

Which aspects of the educational course are useful?

As displayed in graph 3 the three most useful aspects of the educational course are;
1: Specialized translation Course (18.6 %).
2: Grammar Courses (10.8 %) 3: Laboratory Courses (9.8 %).

5.1.7. Minor research question 8

Which aspects of the educational course are less useful?

As displayed in graph 4 the three most less useful aspects of the educational course are;
1: Conversation and Speaking Skills (14.9 %)
2: Listening Skills (8.3 %) 3: Writing Skills (6.6 %)
Graph 4: Less useful aspects of educational course Research Question 9

What are your suggestions to improve the course?

As displayed in graph 5, the students have made the following suggestion to improve the course;

1: Other suggestions (13.6 %) are the highest number of suggestions made to improve the course.
2: Better Facilities (11.4 %) 3: Reading Class Hours (8.3 %).

Graph 5: Suggestions to Improve the Course *Other: Having fewer classes in a week, Taking harder exams, Teachers pronunciation be standardized, Changing content of textbooks, evaluate students based on their true abilities and fail unsuccessful and demotivated ones, Provide additional tutoring for less competent students, Having fewer number of students in classrooms, conducting need analysis and consider students individual differences in program planning, define course objectives for students.

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3.2. Students ‘Data :Audio-Visual Material Translation Course

Does Audio-Visual Translation Course meet the Learners' expectations?

Unlike the teachers’ questionnaire which follows a uniform pattern of items with five choices, the students’ questionnaire consists of different types of items with different patterns of choices (two choices to five choices). That is why an overall analysis is not produced for the Audio-Visual group.

3.2.1. Minor research question 1

Are the Audio-Visual Students consistent in their views towards the speaking problems they face?

As displayed in Table 11 majority of the respondents, i.e. 46.06 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned problems when speaking English.

Table 11  Frequencies and Percentages Speaking Problems Audio-Visual Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pie Chart 5 displays the above mentioned percentages.

Pie Chart 5: Percentages speaking problems Audio-Visual Students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 11 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2 (4) = 232.99, P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 11 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the first minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Audio-Visual Students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned problems when speaking English.

Table 12  Analysis of Chi-Square Speaking Problems (Audio-Visual Students )
3.2.2. Minor research question 2

Are the Audio-Visual Students consistent in their views towards the listening problems they face?

As displayed in Table 13 majority of the respondents, i.e. 49.15 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned listening problems.

Table 13 Frequencies and Percentages Listening Problems Audio-Visual Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>17.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>49.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldom</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>26.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pie Chart 6 displays the above mentioned percentages.

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 13 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2 (4) = 341.40$, $P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 13 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the second minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Audio-Visual students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned listening problems.

Table 14 Analysis of Chi-Square Listening Problems (Audio-Visual Students )
3.2.3. Minor research question 3

Are the Audio-Visual Students consistent in their views towards the writing problems they face?

As displayed in Table 15 majority of the respondents, i.e. 86.65 percent believe that they usually or sometimes face the mentioned writing problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pie Chart 7 displays the above mentioned percentages.

Pie Chart 7: Percentages writing problems Audio-Visual Students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 15 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2$ (3) = 480.51, $P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 15 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the third minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Audio-Visual Students believe that they usually or sometimes face the mentioned writing problems.

Table 16 Analysis of Chi-Square Writing Problems (Audio-Visual Students)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHOICES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
<td>480.518a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 209.8.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.4. Minor research question 4

Are the Audio-Visual Students consistent in their views towards the reading comprehension problems they face?

As displayed in Table 17 majority of the respondents, i.e. 59.71 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned reading comprehension problems.

Table 17 Frequencies and Percentages Reading Comprehension Problems Audio-Visual Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>18.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>59.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>21.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pie Chart 8 displays the above mentioned percentages.

Pie Chart 8: Percentages reading comprehension problems Audio-Visual Students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 17 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2$ (2) = 150.64, $P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 17 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the fifth minor null-hypothesis is rejected. Majority of the Audio-Visual Students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned reading comprehension problems.

Table 18 Analysis of Chi-Square Reading Comprehension Problems (Audio-Visual Students)
3.2.5. Minor research question 5

How do you rate the content (both content and skills taught) of your course?

As displayed in Table 19 and using the cut-point of 4 as the middle value, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 47.69 percent believe that the content of the course and the skills taught are not useful or are of low use.

Table 19 Usefulness of Content and Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 6: Usefulness of content and skills

3.2.6. Minor research question 6
How do you rate the educational materials (textbooks, pamphlets, etc.)?
As displayed in Table 20 and using the cut-point of 4 as the middle value, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 74.60 percent believe that the educational materials are not useful or are of low use. Table 20 Usefulness of Educational Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 7: Usefulness of educational materials

3.2.7. Minor research question 7
Which aspects of the educational course are useful?
As displayed in graph 8 the three most useful aspects of the educational course are;
1: First modules (14.3 %) 2: Specialized Translation Courses (14.3 %)
3: Teachers, New Words and Idioms and Reading Comprehension Skills (9.5 %)
3.2.8. Minor research question 8

Which aspects of the educational course are less useful?

As displayed in graph 9 the three most less useful aspects of the educational course are:
1: Laboratory Courses (14 %). 2: General Courses (11.6 %) 3: Other Courses (11.6 %).

3.2.9. Minor research question 9

What are your suggestions to improve the course?

As displayed in graph 10, the students have made the following suggestion to improve the course; 1: Better Facilities (26.4 %) 2: Other (22.6 %)
3: Having experienced and knowledgeable Teachers (20.8%).

![Graph 10: Suggestions to improve the course](image)

Other: Having fewer classes in a week, Taking harder exams, Teachers pronunciation be standardzed, Changing content of textbooks, evaluate students based on their true abilities and fail unsuccessful and demotivated ones, Provide additional tutoring for less competent students, Having fewer number of students in classrooms, conducting need analysis and consider students individual differences in program planning, define course objectives for students.

**4. Discussion and Conclusions**

Majority of the students believed that the course content and course materials are not much useful and the course does not meet the students’ expectation properly. Particularly, Deeds and Document Translation students pointed out that there are some aspects of the program more important than others, including: Specialized and translation courses, Grammar Course in the introductory modules and Laboratory courses. Similarly, majority of the Audio-Visual Translation students explicitly pointed out that there are some aspects of the program which are more important and useful than others including: The introductory modules, specialized courses, new words and expressions, reading comprehension and grammar courses. Additionally, some of the students found group work and projects to be informative and motivating.

Moreover, majority of the students of both groups found the introductory modules to be more useful. It should be noted that modules one, two, three and four are mainly concerned with General English (GE) courses and focus on the four main skills (reading, writing
listening and speaking) and the two sub skills (grammar, vocabulary). However, as in Deeds and Documents Translation course, modules five, six, seven and eight include more specialized translation courses such as commercial translation, legal translation and political translation. Likewise, the students separately mentioned that those aspects of the program which focus on the writing, speaking, listening skills, reading comprehension and pronunciation are the most useful. It can be concluded that majority of the students expect the translation courses to fulfill their general English needs. In other words, they view the program as an EFL program, offered by a private institution. However, as the curriculum description states, the program aims to enable the students to obtain practical skills in translation and perform professional deeds and document and audio-visual translation activities in translation agencies, documentation centers or film studios. As a result, it can be concluded that the students do not have a true justification of the program and its objectives which cause them to be demotivated and dissatisfied when they are offered with the specialized courses. To support the above mentioned claim, it is worthy to mention what Richards (?) identifies as “understanding of the course” as a determining factor in effectiveness of an EFL/ESL program: “It is important to ensure that learners understand the goals of the course, the reason for the way it is organized and taught, and the approaches to learning they will be encouraged to take…” (p.19).

Class timing is another major problem which has been identified by students. Majority of the students have complained that, considering the massive amount of courses to be covered in each semester, the class hours specified for each course are not enough. They also stated that classes are held in two consecutive days in a week which makes the students frustrated and reduces learning. Also, the students pointed out that as majority of the students are employees, they do not have enough time to practice, so it will be better if the class hours are increased and lessons be taught in a slower pace. The students further complained that the course sequencing is not well planned. It seems that there is a gap between the introductory modules and the specialized modules. According to the students, in the first four modules, the mere focus is on general English and the four skills, soon after, in specialized modules (5, 6, 7 and 8) students with no background in translation are bombarded with lots of specialized translation courses which have to be covered in few limited sessions, with less amount of practice. Moreover, the students stated that the teachers are not experienced enough aware of the current teaching methodologies. Some others have criticized lack of facilities such as a language lab, lack of access to internet, library, heating and cooling systems. Besides, some students stated that there are courses such as CA, Linguistics and general courses which are
time-consuming and not useful. The students also indicated that the admission requirements are not reasonable. Therefore, the classes are heterogeneous and there are many students who are not motivated enough. They maintained that the students should be placed based on their language competency and less studious and motivated students should not enter the program or at least pass the courses easily. They further questioned the content validity of the exams. They also point out that the students are not judged fairly and they easily pass the courses. Additionally, other students also noted that some of the textbooks are outdated and others are too hard for them in terms of content parameters. Moreover, majority of the students mentioned that courses are not mostly taught in English; thus, they suggested that speaking in English should be obligatory for both teachers and students in and outside of the classroom. They also mentioned that the internship projects are quite higher than their knowledge and academic level. As a result, students mostly ask the translation houses to do the job for them. They further suggested that it’s better that the projects be assigned on the basis of students’ individual competencies and in smaller number of pages.

Overall, majority of the students believed that the Modular English Language Education Program do not meet their educational and professional needs. After all, it can be concluded that drastic measures are needed to re-evaluate, modify and change the curriculum in terms of admission, planning, implementation, sequencing and graduation requirements. On the basis of the findings of the study, some suggestions have been listed below that could assist in eliminating the problems and improve the Modular EFL Program:

1. The number of credits for some courses such as English Grammar and specialized courses should be increased. 
2. Translation courses should be taught in workshops with much amount of emphasis on practice and project work. 
3. Teaching four language skills alongside with grammar and vocabulary sub skills should be continued up to the ending modules. 
4. Compiled, institutionally-prepared materials should be assigned regarding the students’ academic background. 
5. All centers should be provided with at least a decent language laboratory with the highest quality audio-visual systems (CD, DVD players, TV), a library which can offer all types of mono-lingual and bilingual general, commercial, political, business and judicial dictionaries, an internet website for students. 
6. A testing unit consisting of a panel of expert teachers should be founded so as to have an organized and systematic team for the exams and evaluations.
7. An age limit, proficiency level of English, GPA requirements (at least 14 out of 20) should be included as admission criteria.
8. A comprehensive need analysis should be conducted as soon as students are admitted to the university to identify their pedagogical needs.
9. Extra tutoring sessions should be considered for less competent students.

References


Title

The Impact of Religiosity and Locus of Control on Language Achievement of Iranian EFL Students

Author

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Biodata

Alireza Amini is a faculty member of Language Department in Chabahar maritime University, Iran. He has been teaching English for more than 8 years in different universities as well as language institutes. His MA thesis was on reading skill and the research area of his interest includes teaching skills and psycholinguistics.

Abstract

In the present study the relationship between religiosity, locus of control, and English language achievement of Iranian EFL students was examined using Rotter’s (1966) locus of control scale, Religiosity scale which measured both students’ overt and covert religiosity (designed by the author), and students’ GPA used as the measure of their language achievement. A positive relationship between covert religiosity and students’ language achievement as well as between internal locus of control and language achievement was found. No relationship between overt and overall religiosity and language achievement was discerned. Data also showed that students who scored high on religiosity scale tended to have internal locus of control.

Keywords: Religiosity, Overt religiosity, Covert religiosity, Locus of Control, Language Achievement

1. Introduction

It is believed that people who are religious are more committed and exercise more effort and time to fulfill their goal no matter whatever it is. They also tend to avoid risky behavior and engaging in useless activities. Thus, religious students are more likely to be better achievers compared with their non-religious counterparts.
Studies by Lee (1985) and McAllister (1985) showed that religiosity is one of the predictors of academic success and students who are more religious have better GPAs than their less religious counterparts. Religious involvement provides opportunities for youth to gain skills, such as discipline and respect for authority that would help them succeed in school. Religious involvement also provides a context in which students may develop social contacts that help them in their education and puts them in contact with religious leaders and youth group coordinators who often serve as positive role models (Gardner, 2004). Religious involvement also deters involvement in deviant activities. According to Johnson et al. (2000) students who spend more time in religious activities tend to spend less time involved in deviant activities. Religious activities may foster conventional behaviors such as working on school projects, doing homework, seeing education as a worthwhile pursuit, and avoiding deviant peer networks.

The concept locus of control was first introduced by Rotter (1966). According to Rotter (1966), the individual acts in a certain way with an expectation from that behavior. It is believed that an individual may have either internal or external locus of control. Internal locus of control is the tendency of the individual to perceive events, good or bad, that affect him/her as the results of his/her own abilities, features, and behaviors. On the other hand, a person with external locus of control perceives events as the results of outer powers like fortune, fate, and the others. Locus of control is also one of the predictors of Language success. It is believed that students who show internal locus of control tendencies know that their academic success depends on themselves and pay more attention to every piece of information in order to reach their target.

The aim of this study is to find out whether there is any relationship between religiosity as an overall construct and language achievement, also between covert and overt religiosity and language achievement. The relationship between locus of control (external or internal) and language achievement, and religiosity is also examined.

2. Definition of terms

2.1 Overt religiosity: The term is coined by the author to refer to the part of the individual religious convictions that can be observed objectively, like going to mosque, participating in religious community, praying, etc.

2.2 Covert religiosity: The term is coined by the author to refer to the individual’s belief and way of thinking toward religion. For example, the individual with covert religiosity
believes that he is surrounded by God and avoids cheating; he does not condemn others, and uses faith to cope with stressful situations.

2.3 Locus of control: The term refers to the tendency of the individual to perceive events whether as the result of his/her own ability and behavior (internal) or as the result of outer power like fate (external).

3. Literature Review

3.1. Religiosity

A review of literature relative to the effect of religiosity on academic success leaves one wanting for empirical data. Little has been done. Through the works of Zern (1987a, 1987b 1989), however, we have insight though limited. In Zern’s (1987a) study, a sample of 251 college students were asked to describe their degree of religiousness and the home atmosphere in which they grew up. Participants gave self-report measures of their total religiousness, their belief in God, and their ritual observance. When these measures were related separately to subjects’ cumulative grade point average (GPA), no relation was found for either present or past degree of religiousness. It is interesting to note, however, that approximately 10 percent of the sample indicated that they were more religious at the time of the study than they were in their childhood home atmosphere. Of this 10 percent, approximately 75 percent of them had GPA’s above the mean and the remaining sample exhibited GPA’s below the mean. This may imply that students that are more religious have higher GPA’s than their less religious counterparts.

In a later study by Zern (1989), he sought to explain the relationship between religiousness and cognitive functioning. At the conclusion of this study, he revealed that “although there was no relationship between two dimensions (GPA and religiousness)”, he did, however, discover that "religiousness fostered accomplishment” (p. 893). In other words, short of innate cognitive ability, students who were more religious often achieved better grades. He further purported that this may be so because religious people would have a natural proclivity to exhibit obedience, a characteristic necessary for a disciplined life. According to Zern (1989, p. 894) “Religious involvement at any level seems to provide the motivation and/or structure necessary to maximize accomplishment, given one’s inherent abilities”.

Lee (1985), in studying successful African American adolescents in the rural south, gained the findings that conflicted with those reported by Zern (1989). In the Lee (1985) study, it was discovered that academically successful high school students indicated a strong
faith in God and cited God as the source of their success. Analysis of the interviews suggests that there are certain psychological variables related to academic and social success of the participants. The variables of Lee's study can be summarized as "close and supportive family networks with strong direction from parents; moderate to conservative attitudes, and strong religious convictions" (Lee, 1985, p. 140).

McAllister (1985) found some connection between religiosity and academic success. Studies by Regnerus (2000) and Regnerus, et al. (2003) have addressed the association between religiosity and academic achievement and show that adolescents' church participation is associated with greater educational expectations which would then lead to higher math and reading scores on standardized tests. In addition, according to Muller and Ellison (2001) the religious involvement of adolescents in 10th grade is consistently and positively associated with subsequent academic achievement. This association held for African American (Brown & Gary, 1991) and Latino youth (Sikkink & Hernandez, 2003).

### 3.2. Locus of control

Results from Prociuk and Breen’s (1974) study of psychology college students indicated that an internal locus of control was positively correlated with successful study skills and academic success, while an external locus of control was negatively correlated with study skills and academic success. Kaiser (1975) concluded that students with an internal locus of control obtain higher test scores and credit their academic success to internal factors rather than fate and luck.

Findley and Cooper (1983) conducted an extensive literature review of studies conducted on locus of control and academic achievement. They also examined the potential moderating effects of personal variables such as age, race, and gender. They concluded that locus of control and academic achievement are significantly and positively related and that the magnitude of the relationship is small to medium. However, the relationship tended to be stronger for adolescents than for adults and more substantial among males than females. Nelson and Mathias (1995) provided evidence that showed that an internal locus of control is associated with higher self-motivation, higher social maturity and greater independence. They also found that an internal locus of control correlates positively with academic achievement in college students. Kalechstein and Nowicki (1997) concluded that locus of control predicted significant differences in academic achievement with an internal locus of control significantly and positively related to academic success. Onwuegbuzie and Daley (1998) postulated that identifying correlates of study skills in college students might increase an understanding of the relationship between study skills and achievement by identifying the
attributes of successful students. Results from their multiple regression model showed that locus of control is the best predictor of successful study skills, explaining 27 percent of the variance. Other variables included perceived self-worth, perceived intellectual ability, and social interdependence. Students with the best study skills tended to score higher on the internal locus of control scale. Research has also indicated that two of the most important internal motivational factors that correlate with engagement and academic success are self-esteem and locus of control (Sisney, et al., 2000). Sisney et al. (2000) reported that locus of control has been associated with school success. They added that studies with high school students have shown that an external locus of control correlated to lower academic achievement and higher dropout rates. The study of Nilson-Whitten, et al. (2007) examined the relations among locus of control, optimism, and academic success of students and found significant relations between academic success, locus of control, and optimism. In another study, Rastegar (2003) using causal modeling path analysis found causal relationship between internal locus of control and language proficiency.

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants
The participants of this study were 41 male and female senior students in Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman majoring in English literature and translation. All of them are Muslim. The age range of the participants is from 21 to 25.

4.2. Instruments
Rotter’s (1966) locus of control scale was used to determine students’ internal and external locus of control. A scale was designed and constructed by the author to measure the degree of religiosity of the students. The religiosity scale contains 19 items in Likert scale format. 9 items measuring the students’ overt religiosity and the other 10 items measure the students’ covert religiosity. Students’ GPA was used as the measure of their language achievement.

4.3. Data collection
The two questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Instruction was given on how the questionnaires should be answered. Participants were given 20 minutes to try all the items, where students had difficulty in understanding the meaning of a word or phrase, the Persian translation was provided.

5. Result
The collected data was statistically analyzed utilizing SPSS to find out the relationship between religiosity, locus of control and students’ language achievement. The descriptive statistic of the data is presented in Table 1.

### Table 1  Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall religiosity</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>79.00</td>
<td>65.07</td>
<td>8.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overt religiosity</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>27.24</td>
<td>5.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert religiosity</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>37.82</td>
<td>5.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11.47</td>
<td>19.56</td>
<td>16.47</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.1 Religiosity and language achievement

In order to find whether there is any significant relationship between overall religiosity and language achievement Pearson product moment correlation was run. The result as can be seen in Table 2 indicates that there is no significant correlation ($r=0.30$) between students’ overall religiosity and their achievement.

### Table 2  Correlation between Overall religiosity & Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>religiosity</th>
<th>achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Religiosity</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To find whether there is any significant relationship between covert and/or overt religiosity and language achievement Pearson correlation was run. The results as can be seen in Tables 3 & 4 below indicate that there is a non-significant positive correlation ($r=0.30$) between students’ overt religiosity and their achievement. Moreover, there is a positive and moderately significant correlation ($r=0.397$) between students’ covert
religiosity and their achievement. These findings indicate that students who are covertly religious achieve better in language classes.

Table 3  Correlations between Overt religiosity & Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overt religiosity</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overt religiosity</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): 41</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .030</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): 41</td>
<td>.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Correlations between Covert religiosity & Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Covert religiosity</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covert religiosity</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>.397*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): 41</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .397*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): 41</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

5.2. **Locus of control and language achievement**

There is a moderately significant positive correlation ($r=0.36$) between internal locus of control and language achievement (see Table 5), indicating that students who have internal locus of control are better achievers compared to their counterparts with external locus of control.

Table 5 Correlations between Locus of control & Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Locus of control</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locus of control (internal)</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: 1</td>
<td>.361*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): 41</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .361*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): 41</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3. Religiosity and locus of control

A moderately significant positive correlation ($r=0.4$) was also observed between religiosity and internal locus of control at the level of 0.01, indicating that religious students have more internal locus of control tendency (see Table 6).

![Table 6: Correlations between Locus of control & Achievement](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall religiosity</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation 1.402**</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>.402**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locus of control</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 0.009</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

6. Discussion

The main purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between religiosity and language achievement. Literature shows that there is somehow inconsistency in findings of studies that examined the relationship between religiosity and academic achievement. Some studies for example Lee (1989), Muller and Ellison (2001) reported a positive correlation between these variables. On the other hand, in a number of cases for example Zern (1987a, b, 1989), no relationship between religiosity and academic achievement was found at all. This controversy may, in fact, be due to the scales used in these researches. Some scales used in these studies did not actually differentiate between covert and overt religiosity. Moreover, some tended to measure overt religiosity more exclusively and vice versa. So the findings are not consistent.

In this study students’ overt and covert religiosity were measured separately and it was found that students who are covertly religious are better language learners, while overt religiosity has nothing to do with language achievement. It must be noted that all the subjects in this study were Muslim.

The obtained results related to the relationship between locus of control and students’ language achievement in this study was in line with some studies such as (Kaiser, 1975; Kalechstein & Nowicki, 1997; Prociuk & Breen, 1974; Sisney et al., 2000) that reported a positive correlation between internal locus of control and academic achievement and Rastegar's (2003) study that found causal relationship between internal locus of control and language proficiency.
This study would contribute to realizing two important predicators of language success (covert religiosity and internal locus of control) among a number of language learning factors.

References


Title

The Relationship between Self-regulated Learning Strategies and Strategy-based Vocabulary Acquisition of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

Self-regulated learning is a newly derived topic in the field of language learning and teaching that was originally introduced in psychology. The present study attempted to find the possible relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and Iranian EFL learners’ strategy-based vocabulary acquisition. For this purpose, it was asked from 78 EFL learners at Azad University at Central Tehran to respond to the questionnaires. Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) proposed by Pintrich & DeGroot (1990) was adapted and used to measure learners’ self-regulated learning strategies. The second was the questionnaire of vocabulary learning strategies adapted from Kudo’s (1999) questionnaire and included two parts of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Pearson correlation was conducted and the finding shows that in general there is a significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and EFL learners’ strategy-based vocabulary acquisition. Learners who use more cognitive strategies in learning vocabulary are more self-regulated in their learning. Also it was shown that there is no significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and metacognitive strategies used in vocabulary learning. At the end some implication is considered.

Keywords: Self-regulation, Language learning strategies, Vocabulary learning, Cognitive strategies, Metacognitive strategies

1. Introduction
Vocabulary is regarded not only as one important component of language system but also as part of the language competence necessary for communication. Birnjandi, Mosallanezhad & Bagheridoust (2003) state that vocabulary cannot be taught but it can be presented and then learned by the learners. The emergence of language learning strategies shift the perspective from having product oriented to process oriented methods which put more responsibilities on the learners’ shoulders.

Being strategic in learning partly depends on the teacher endeavors and is largely learner dependant. These are the learners who can device and use the proper strategies in accordance with their task, ability and time. This can also be true in the case of vocabulary acquisition. In learning lexical items the teacher is not the one playing the most important role but rather that’s the learner who set goals, put the time budget and learn words in his/her own way. In fact strategy-based vocabulary acquisition is a learners’ approach devised when facing to any task of learning and retrieving lexical items.

By the emergence of the works on learning strategies that was inspired by the works of Rubin and Stern in the mid 1970s and shaped by the efforts of O’mally and Chamot from 1982 to 1990, the areas in language learning and teaching rendered great changes and so the roles and responsibilities of individuals were tended to be more important.

Ellis (1994) emphasizes on the mediating role of strategy between learners and situational factors and learning outcomes. He defined learning strategy as “the particular approaches or techniques that learners employ to try to learn as L2”. O’mally (1985) and O’mally & chamot (1990) as cited in Brown (2000), and also in Ellis (1994), classify learning strategies into three main groups with 25 subcategories: metacognitive, cognitive and socioaffective strategies. Oxford (1990) classified the general learning strategies into two main categories: direct (cognitive, memory and compensation) and indirect (metacognitive, affective, social). Oxford’s classification consists of sixty two strategies, 35 in direct and 27 in indirect strategies (Eliss,1994).

Accordingly, different taxonomies of vocabulary learning strategies came into existence. Among these taxonomies, Ahmed’s (1989) and Stoffer’s (1995) as the first taxonomies and Schmitt’s (1997) as the most comprehensive one attracted the attention. Schmitt (1997) believes that lack of research in area of vocabulary learning strategies is because of having no compressive list of such strategies.

This taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies includes two main groups: strategies for the discovery of a new word’s meaning (consists of determination and social) and strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered (consists of social, memory, cognitive
and metacognitive). Table 1 is a sample of cognitive and metacognitive part of his taxonomy of vocabulary learning strategies.

### Table 1. Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (Schmitt, 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for consolidating a word once it has been encountered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COG Verbal repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Written repletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Word lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Flash cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Take notes in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Use the vocabulary section in your textbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Listen to tape of word lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Put English labels on physical objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG Keep a vocabulary notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET Use English-language media (songs, movies, newscasts, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET Testing oneself with word tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET Use spaced word practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET Skip or pass new word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MET Continue to study word over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kudo (1999) tries to describe and categorize vocabulary learning strategies and find that the results of his study are congruent with those of Schmitt (1997) descriptive studies and Oxford (1990) classification scheme. The purpose behind proposing these taxonomies was having a framework of teaching techniques for facilitating strategic behavior. So training autonomous learners who regulate and conduct their own learning has become the purpose of many educational systems. Tseng, Dornyei & Schmitt (2006) quote that “this does not mean what learners do to make them strategic learners but rather they put creative effort into trying to improve their own learning (p. 81)”. This improvement can be achieved through selecting and organizing social and physical environments (Zimmerman & Martinez-pons, 1988).

Bandura (1986) views self-regulated learning in a socio-cognitive framework linking personal, environmental and social process in bidirectional ways that can be asymmetrical in strength or temporal patterning (as cited in Zimmerman, 1989).

![Figure1: Reciprocal Interactions in Human Functioning (Meloy, 2009)](image)

Each component of the model deals with different processes, as in the cognitive component metacognition and reflection on performance; in the environmental component social and
contextual influences on the learning process and in the behavioral component actions for manipulating and enhancing the learning environment are considered (Meloy, 2009). Zimmerman (1989) defines self-regulated learners as those who are metacognitively, behaviorally and motivationally involve in the learning process. Metacognitively active in learning process is when the learners self-monitor, plan, skim in doing the tasks (Pintrich & Degroot, 1990).

Self-regulated learners should also be behaviorally active in their learning through self-efficacy and instrumentality perceptions. Bandura (1986) defines self-efficacy as “perceptions about one’s capabilities to organize and implement actions necessary to attain designated performance of skill for specific tasks” (as cited Zimmerman, 1989, P. 2). Pintrich & Degroot (1990) mention those who believe themselves as being capable use more cognitive strategies and metacognition. The third is being motivationally involved that can be best defined as the learners’ reasons and goals for performing the task. Pintrich and Degroot (1990) believe that it is absolutely part of the learners’ affection and emotion like when asking themselves “how do I feel about this task?”

Tseng et al (2006) mention that these days strategic behavior is replaced by self-regulated behavior that is driven from educational psychology because of some major problems underlying with strategy research. Ellis (1994) lists some of these problems as not having a unique definition for the term strategy and an appropriate way to assess it. These days the approach of strategic learning is added by different factors as the learners’ self-efficacy, motivation and goal setting to ensure self-regulation. So by looking from the most comprehensive perspective, having autonomous learners does not mean training learners solely by different prescribed strategies retrieved from divers taxonomies, but rather such trends should be added by some affective tastes as motivation and internal base as self-efficacy.

2. Method
For the purpose of finding whether self-regulated learners use more cognitive and metacognitive strategies when acquiring lexical items or not, the following research questions were stated:

1. Is there any significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and strategy-based vocabulary acquisition of Iranian EFL learners at the academic level?
2. Is there any significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and
cognitive strategies uses in vocabulary acquisition of Iranian EFL learners at the academic level?

3. Is there any significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and metacognitive strategies uses in vocabulary acquisition of Iranian EFL learners at the academic level?

2.1 Subjects
Seventy eight (sixty nine females and nine males) EFL learners whose majors of study were English at Azad University at Central Tehran took part in this study. The range of their ages was from 18 to 35. Their first language was Persian.

2.2 Instruments
In this research two questionnaires were used. In the first part of the questionnaire, there were five questions to which subjects should respond before starting. These five questions were about the subjects’ personal characteristics respectively about their sex, majors, ages, degree and terms of the study.

The first was the questionnaire of vocabulary learning strategies proposed by Kudo (1999) who tried to check the congruency of Schmitt’ (1997) taxonomy with his research. For the purpose of finding learners’ uses of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, the researcher kept only eighteen questions that show cognitive and metacognitive strategies uses. Nine of the statements (statement number 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17) show cognitive strategies uses and the other nine (statement number 2, 3, 6, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18) show metacognitive strategies uses. The subjects were to answer to the YES/NO statement.

The second questionnaire was Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) proposed by Pintrich & DeGroot (1990). It was adapted and used to measure learners’ self-regulated learning strategies and consists of 22 statements by which subjects were to grade from 1 to 5 (respectively correspond to Not at all true of me to Very true of me). These 22 items on the instrument that are scored using a five point Likert scale were directed to reveal how much subjects regulate their own learning process. This questionnaire includes two main parts one of which is cognitive strategy use (13 statements) and the other is self regulation (9 statements).

Self-regulation part itself has two component of metacognitive and management effort. Metacognitive strategies are planning, skimming and comprehension monitoring and effort management included individual persistence at difficult or boring tasks and working diligently.
3. Statistical procedures

For investigating the relationship between two variables, the data obtained through the questionnaires was analyzed by SPSS. The questionnaires were both piloted before hand with subjects with the same characteristics of the main study. The reliability of the questionnaire that was calculated through Cronboch alpha procedure was equal to 0.8040 which means the questionnaires are reliable (N=78, No. of items=40). The correlation coefficient was calculated by Pearson correlation formula.

3.1 Descriptive statistics

% 88.5 of the subjects was females.

Figure 2. Bar graph for female vs. male subjects

Most of the subjects (%48.7) are those studying translation

Figure 3. Bar graph for the major of subjects

The researcher put the subjects into three different ranges of age (18-23, 24-29, and 30-35) and most of the subjects (% 47.8) were from the ranges of 18-23 and 24-29.

Figure 4. Bar graph for age of subjects
Most of the subjects’ degree was BA rather MA. (%56.6)

**Figure 2.** Bar graph for B.A. vs. M.A subjects

### 4. Results

The first research question of the study concerns the relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and strategy-based vocabulary acquisition. As displayed in table 2, there is a significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and strategy-based vocabulary acquisition (sig=0.002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strategy-based vocabulary acquisition</th>
<th>self-regulated learning strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strategy-based</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1 .352(**)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocabulary acquisition</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) . .002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| self-regulated       | Pearson Correlation .352(**) 1        |                                  |
| learning strategies   | Sig. (2-tailed) . .002                 |                                  |
| N                    | 78                                    | 78                                |

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

For the second question of study dealing with the relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and cognitive strategies uses, Pearson correlation was conducted and the result
shows that there is a significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and cognitive strategies uses as displayed in table 3 (sig= 0.008).

Table 3. Pearson correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strategy-based vocabulary acquisition</th>
<th>self-regulated learning strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self-regulated learning strategies</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .296(**)</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 78</td>
<td>N: 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive strategies uses</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .296(**)</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 78</td>
<td>N: 78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) \( \alpha < 0.01 \)

The last research question concerns the relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and metacognitive strategy uses. By Pearson correlation calculation it was shown that there is no significant relationship between self-regulated learning strategies and metacognitive strategies uses (sig= 0.063, shown in table 4).

Table 4. Pearson correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strategy-based vocabulary acquisition</th>
<th>self-regulated learning strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self-regulated learning strategies</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .212</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 78</td>
<td>N: 78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metacognitive strategies uses</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: .212</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed): .063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N: 78</td>
<td>N: 78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \alpha = 0.05 \)

By the use of T-test for two independent groups of male and female (sig=0.902), there is no significant difference between male and female in strategy-based vocabulary acquisition.

Table 5. group statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>X1</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.4444</td>
<td>3.08671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.3768</td>
<td>2.94110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Pearson correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy-based vocabulary acquisition</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>9.990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the use of T-test for two independent groups of male and female (sig=0.902), there is no significant difference between male and female in strategy-based vocabulary acquisition.

Table 5. group statistics

<table>
<thead>
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<th>X1</th>
<th>N</th>
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<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.3768</td>
<td>2.94110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the use of T-test for two independent groups of male and female (sig=0.902), there is no significant difference between male and female in strategy-based vocabulary acquisition.
T-test shows that there is a significant relationship between males’ and females’ self-regulated learning strategies. (Sig=0.009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7. Group statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulated learning strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8. Independent sample test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-test for Equality of Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulated learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.90789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.50977</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the use of one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Tests, it was shown that there is no significant difference between strategy-based vocabulary acquisition between four different majors (translation, literature, teaching and linguistics) table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA Table 9. Strategy-based vocabulary acquisition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Squares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the use of ANOVA and Post Hoc Tests, there is no significant difference between self-regulated learning among four groups of English majors. (Sig=0.592)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA Table 10. Self-regulated learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Squares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Conclusion

The results indicate that learners with more uses of strategies in the vocabulary acquisition are more self-regulated learner. Two main categories are cognitive and metacognitive strategies which were shown to characterize self-regulated learners differently. Learners with
more cognitive strategy use in acquiring lexical items were more self-regulated. That is to say their ability to conduct their learning, their metacognition and self-management is in accordance with cognitive strategy uses as such repetition, having vocabulary notebook and other cognitive strategies. Among the cognitive strategies, subjects use more taking notes strategies in class, vocabulary section in their textbook and written repetition while they rarely use flash cards, listen to tape of word list and put English labels on objects.

But it was also shown that although one main component of self-regulation is metacognition, there is no significant relationship between self-regulation and metacognitive strategies uses. That is to say learners who use more metacognitive strategies in their vocabulary learning were not necessarily more self-regulated learners. Among metacognitive strategies, videos and keep on study words over time are the most frequent strategies used in vocabulary acquisition. In contrast Iranian EFL learners hardly ever use spaced word practiced.

This can be summarized that self-regulation is a good predictor of cognitive strategies uses in vocabulary acquisition. Another important finding of the research is that when dealing with the majors of subject, these are the students of translation who uses more strategies for their vocabulary rehearsal. As the major of translation itself challenges the learners to learn more lexical items, since they have to know many word and their equivalents. For the purpose of training more self-regulated learners, the teacher can benefit from having learner to be pushed forward by adding some translational activities replete with valuable and frequent word roots and families. By such activities they are going to use more strategies and thus become more self-regulated, since the research found that there a significant relationship between strategy-based vocabulary acquisition and self-regulated learning strategies.

Self-regulated learners use more cognitive strategies labeled as the first part of the questionnaire. Also it is derived from the questionnaire that they are self-regulated mostly because of the items of effort management rather than metacognition.

For the teacher to be more effective, it can be noted that learners can be better taught by the cognitive strategies in order to be better self-regulated learners. In the field of vocabulary learning, making learners familiar with different techniques dealing with analyzing, organizing, substituting can train more self-regulated learners who manage their learning and are metacognitively involve in it.

Although the number of % 11.5 of the participant is males (and % 88.5 females) and this number cannot be a good predictor of their performance, the result shows that females are more self-regulated. This can be best justified by some reasons. As it was mentioned in the
introduction, although self-regulated behavior is somehow synonymous to strategic behavior and it is newly used instead of strategic leaning, there are two adding points and components to the former: motivation and self-efficacy. These two components are linked to the inner of the individuals and their affection. So there is no place for surprise when women may be more self-regulated learners.

References


Title

The Merits of Exploiting Error Analysis and Reformulation on Grammatical Accuracy of Iranian EFL Learners' Written Output

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Abstract

This study examined the effectiveness of exploiting reformulation technique in a three stage writing task (producing- comparison- revising) proceeded by an error analysis. It studied 30 Iranian low intermediate EFL learners and documented their error sources derived from clinical elicitation. In error analysis stage the data was described in terms of addition, omission, misinformation and misordering lending support to the hypothesis that stabilization led to a great deal of learner errors. The analyzed data helped towards targeting the participants’ commonest stabilized error and presented a three stage error treatment pattern in a quasi experimental study, hypothesizing that after the three stage writing task the participants may benefit from noticing the gap between their Interlanguage and a reformulated version.

Key words: Error Analysis, noticing, reformulation, stabilization.

1. Introduction
Many of the previous studies concerning error analysis only analyzed students' written or oral output leaving behind hundreds of open questions as to whether or not teachers can eradicate those errors or if it is possible at all to tackle them. Many teachers are still perplexed when they come to error correction. What concerns them the most is the technique needed to cope with learner errors. Although some writing researchers think error correction may do more harm than good (Truscott, 1996), still many teachers tend to spend a huge amount of time on their students' error feedback. It is interesting that learners also insist on receiving feedback, whether or not they can take a full advantage of it.

In our view, one helpful way regarding this issue may be error analysis. However, any error analysis that lacks remedial tasks is likely to be fruitless. Teachers have got several options when they come to linguistic errors of their students' written work. Some of these options have been investigated in published scholarly articles of written feedback (for example, Chandler 2003; Ferris 2006). Some of these corrective feedback options include but are not limited to: Direct corrective feedback in which the teacher provides the student with the correct form (e.g. Lalande, 1982) and metalinguistic corrective feedback in which the teacher provides some metalinguistic clue as to the nature of the error. For instance, the teacher writes codes (WW = Wrong Word; WF = Wrong Form). Some studies like Ferris and Roberts (2001) investigated this type of corrective feedback. Other researchers investigated the role of reformulation on students' revisions of their texts (e.g. Sachs and Polio, 2007).

This study is an investigation of the benefits of using error analysis and reformulation on grammatical accuracy of Iranian EFL learners' written language production. It is a partial replication and extension of Haded's (1998) study of error analysis and its benefits for foreign language learning and teaching. In addition to replicating and extending the prior study, the current study seeks to investigate the effects of noticing the gap and reformulation on the incorporation of target like forms in writing. This is while not every research in the field of foreign language teaching took the full advantage of analyzing learner errors to offer a treatment as way out.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Error Analysis

Learners make errors in both comprehension and production. Corder (1974, p. 25) has pointed out: “It is very difficult to assign the cause of failures in comprehension to an inadequate
knowledge of a particular syntactic feature of a misunderstood utterance”.

One central issue concerning error analysis is that whether a distinction should be made between errors and mistakes (Corder 1967). An error takes place when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge. On the other hand, mistakes are regular features of native-speaker speech, reflecting processing failures that arise as a result of competing plans, memory limitations, and lack of automaticity. Corder argues that error analysis should be restricted to the study of errors. Lennon (1991) defines error as a linguistic form or a combination of forms, which in the same context and under similar conditions of production, would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speaker’s native speaker counterparts.

Corder stated that errors provide the researcher with evidence of how language was learnt, and also they serve as devices by which learner discovered the rules of the target language (TL). He mentioned that second-language acquisition should be viewed as a dynamic activity involving the learner’s participation in the process. According to Corder, learners are endowed with an innate force which enables them to construct grammars of their own, i.e., they are equipped with the ability to learn a FL after the acquisition of MT. George (1972) published his influential Common Errors in Language Learning, introducing a model to account for why learners produced errors. Rifkin and Roberts (1995) reviewed 28 error gravity investigations between 1977 and 1995, which focused on such areas as error identification, evaluation of error gravity, native speakers’ reactions to L2 errors, and comprehensibility. Unfortunately identification as respondents’ comprehension of errors seems to have been taken for granted. One exception is Chastain (1980), which aimed, not many of these studies problematized error, at respondents’ subjective assessment of comprehensibility of learner errors. The study claimed that the respondents correctly comprehended 90 per cent of the erroneous utterances in written language. Another study which deserves mention here is Khalil (1985). He aimed at checking the respondents’ ability to find out the intended meanings of writers, but the provision of four alternative reconstructions from which the respondents were supposed to choose the intended meaning of each utterance constrained the study.

Duskova (1969) identified 1,007 errors in the written work of 50 Czech learners of English, who were postgraduate students majoring in science. She found 756 ‘recurrent systemic errors’ and 251 ‘nonce errors’ (i.e. errors that occurred once only). Errors in articles were most common (260), followed by errors in lexis (233) and morphology (180). In comparison, there were only 54 errors in syntax and 31 in word order. She noted that
although she had few difficulties in assigning errors to general linguistic categories such as word ‘order’, it often proved very difficult to classify them accurately into subcategories.

Linguistic studies have revealed that some of L2 learners’ errors do not have their source in L1. Richards (1971) discovered that several errors made by learners were not the result of negative transfer from mother tongue, but were due to other variables independent of SL influence. Selinker (1992) is of the opinion that the learner’s native language is but one of many sources of error; other causes being: interference of target language features, influence of pedagogical procedures, and strategies of learning and communication adopted by learners. Apart from that, Gass (1984: 115) notes that not all of the errors the learner would commit might be ascribed to interference from the native language. Rather, the learner’s deviations from the standard norms of L2 are a reflection of his developmental strategies while trying to approximate utterances in the TL. Choi (1996: 88) states that “EA enables us to classify and explain errors and to take steps to correct them”.

Taha (2006) studied Gender differences in Arabic spelling accuracy of 288 Arabic speaking students from grade 1 to grade 9. The spelling errors of the students were analyzed according to the paradigm of Abu-Rabia and Taha (2004). The results showed that generally across all ages/grades girls made fewer spelling errors, especially in the phonological and semiphonological spelling errors categories. Haded (1998) argues that: A striking aspect of applied linguistic research is its focus on the role of MT in the language acquisition process and the nearly complete neglect of the learning strategies of the learners such as faulty-generalizations, hypothesizing false concepts about the target language, failure to learn conditions under which EL rules apply, and incomplete application of TL rules. If these factors along with the teaching procedures in the classroom play a significant role in language learning/teaching, it is possible that pedagogical methods should account for them.

2.2. Reformulation

Several studies (e.g., Mori, 2002; Sheen, 2004) demonstrated that recasts lead to high amounts of immediate uptake and repair of erroneous utterances. Repair is a term that is used in the field of Conversation Analysis (e.g., Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 2000). According to Schegloff repair is used to refer to “practices for dealing with problems or troubles in speaking, hearing, and understanding the talk in conversation”. It has also been used in research on corrective feedback to describe learners' response to teacher's feedback (e.g. Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Several studies emphasized on the significance of corrective feedbacks in general. These studies include, but not limited to (Braidi, 2002; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Ellis, Basturkmen,
Teachers have always been recommended to choose the best type of feedback. Many teachers use traditional error corrections and tend to be selective in giving feedback. One possible explanation is that teacher written feedback just focuses on specific features of students' written production (e.g. grammar) and ignores many other features like rhetorical and lexical problems (Cohen, 1983, p. 1). Papers that are returned to students are usually full of corrections and confusing for learners. As a result students may not be able to make their writings sound native-like. Learners usually do not know which part of their writing is non-target like (Hyland, 1998).

Another explanation is if we correct students' written production with only marking their errors, we just provide them with negative evidence and thoroughly ignore the role of positive evidence. Instead, we can use reformulation technique that was proposed in the 1970's (Levenston, 1978) as an alternative to traditional error corrections. Reformulation is a kind of feedback that rephrases the learners' erroneous utterances into a targetlike form and is the right way to reduce the number of errors students make in their language productions. When a more proficient native speaker or a teacher reformulates a student's erroneous utterance, not only it provides the student with a corrective feedback but also draws students' attention to their errors. An example of this type of corrective feedback (from Sachs and Polio, 2007: 78) is presented in table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 An example of corrective feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3. Reformulation and Noticing

It is said that reformulation can result in noticing which in turn may lead to Interlanguage development. Noticing that seems to be a necessary condition for learning was first proposed by Schmidt (1990) in his noticing hypothesis. It is a claim how input becomes intake. That part of input that is used for acquisition. In his strong version of the hypothesis Schmidt claimed that noticing is a necessary condition for learning, however, other researchers may prefer a weaker version of the hypothesis arguing that it may not be necessary, but may be helpful for learning. Hence, learners need to notice a form before they can acquire it. Several studies, like research on attention (Leow, 1997), awareness (Tomlin and Villa, 1994), and memory (Robinson, 1995) have all recognized noticing as a necessary condition for second language learning.
Noticing the Gap that is a specific aspect of noticing takes place when learners receive corrective feedback, compare it with their writing and understand that their Interlanguage is different from the target language. This fact has been proved by several researchers like Schmidt & Frota, 1986; Swain, 1998; Williams, 2005 and is known to be cognitive comparison which is necessary for language acquisition. For instance, Swain and Lapkin (2003) hypothesized that if we allow learners to compare their own writing with reformulated versions, it will push them to notice the gap in their language production. This is when learners allocated attentional resources to specific features in the input (Schmidt, 1990) or when forms are made salient through interactional feedback (Nicholas et al., 2001).

In a salient study of reformulation, Qi and Lapkin (2001) pointed to the ability of ESL writers to notice grammatical errors in their own written language production when they were comparing those errors to a reformulated version written by a native speaker. In their study, the subjects demonstrated awareness of a mismatch between their own writing and the reformulated text. As Qi and Lapkin expressed, “this demonstrates that the noticed features of the modeled target language behavior were being constantly compared to the learner's own written text and the subjects own recent experience of output...was an important factor influencing what he/she noticed” (2001: 290).

2.4. Reformulation and the Present Study

The present study was conducted in accordance to the hypothesis that reformulation + teacher interaction or discussion lead to high awareness, more learner repair, and increase the grammatical accuracy of learners' written language production. The hypothesis was drawn from Cohen's (1983 b) study. It indicated that “most students needed assistance in comparing their version with reformulated one and that these comparisons need to be purposely eye-opening and engaging” (p. 17). One way to provide such assistance would be student-teacher discussion as students work through the texts. They can notice the differences and changes between their own writing and the model texts as well as finding the answers to many of their questions. The commonest question would be why these changes might have been made in the model text.

Apart from the aforementioned discussion, any strategy that is suggested for providing learner repair should be relevant to EFL classrooms. Some may prefer elicitation rather than reformulation and say elicitation strategies are more explicit and less ambiguous than reformulations (e.g., Lyster, 1998; Panova & Lyster, 2002). However the degree of repair following feedback may depend on several other factors. This study hypothesized that the
degree of repair depends on learners' awareness of a particular feature (e.g. past tense marking) and how the feedback is provided.

Awareness is an individual's subjective experience of a stimulus or a cognitive feature. Allport (1988) suggested that three conditions must be met in order for a person to be aware of a given experience. First, a learner may show a cognitive or behavioral change as a result of that experience. Second, the learner must report that he/she was aware of the experience. Third, the learner must be able to describe that experience. Leow (2000) divided awareness into two networks. The first is Low awareness in which the first two abovementioned conditions are met. The second one is high awareness that is achieved when all of the abovementioned conditions are met. As a result it can be hypothesized that it is at the level of high awareness that learners take the advantage of a more proficient interlocutor's reformulation, notice the gap between their own writing and the reformulated version and ultimately repair their written output. Based on this assumption it was expected that high awareness may play a significant role in noticing the gap and incorporating the feedback.

2.5. Stabilization

Making errors is an inevitable part of language learning. Making errors not only doesn't hamper learning, but also facilitates adaptation of proper learning and teaching strategies inside and outside the classroom. It will definitely help teachers beware of error sources and know which areas of learning need more attention. Error analysis will certainly play a significant role to this end. My general interpretation of error analysis which was drawn from analyzing my students' erroneous language productions and studying several scholarly articles led me hypothesize that students' errors may be the result of fossilization. The term fossilization was first introduced by Larry Selinker (1972).

Drawing on works by a number of researchers like Han (1998), Han and Selinker (2001), and Long (2003) we carefully decided to not to use the term fossilization as from now and describe our students' errors in terms of stabilization. The main reason was that we investigated them under only a-6-month cross sectional study. As a result the participants’ errors in this study were to be considered stabilized errors rather than fossilized ones. The difference between fossilization and stabilization is permanence which was pointed out by Long (2003).

There are several causal variables of fossilization. These include but are not limited:

- Absence of corrective feedback. Absence of corrective feedback has long been discussed by many like: Higgs and Clifford 1982; Lightbown and Spada 1999; Tomasello and Herron 1988; Vigil and Oller 1976; Valette 1991. Some researchers
like Thep-Ackrapong 1990; Lin 1995; Lin and Hedgcock 1996 made an attempt to use corrective feedback as a diagnostic of errors which were fossilized and demanded that it is the nature of corrective feedback that should be the subject of scrutiny not the learners' performance. These researchers pointed out that merely concentrating on learners' performance following the corrective feedback appears to be problematic.

- Lack of written input that was supported by Schmidt (1983) and VanPatten (1988).
- Language transfer that was pointed out by Han 2000; Jain 1974; Kellerman 1989; Major 2002; Selinker and Lakshmanan 1992.

2.6. Research Questions
The following three research questions were examined.

1. To what extent does reformulation lead to successful learner repair and error eradication?
2. Does reformulation followed by teacher interaction lead to high awareness and increase grammatical accuracy of learner’s written language production?
3. Does the degree of awareness affect learner repair?

3. Method
The experiment took place at a language school in Chalous, a small town located 124 miles north of Tehran, for the academic year 2012-13. The researchers gave the required instructions and supervised the participants to make certain that they are following the instructions. The teachers did not participate in the data collection procedure. Neither the teachers nor the researchers helped the participants when they were completing the task. The study consisted of a pretest, treatment and posttest design.

3.1. Participants
The participants of this study were 30 Iranian low intermediate EFL learners and two nonnative English language teachers who were teaching in advanced levels. The participants were learning English at a language school in Chalous. Based on the levels of their course they enrolled on low intermediate level. They were from the same L1 background (Persian). There were 15 males and 15 females and their ages ranged from 18 to 27 years. The majority of the participants began learning English via the communicative language teaching method at or after the age of 7 (about 93%). Their participation in this course at the language school was voluntary. Their course met for two 1.5 hours per week for 10 weeks. Table 2 shows the participants’ information (sex, age, and years of learning English).
The participating teachers were two male English language teachers (ages: 34 and 28 years). One of them held M. A. in TEFL and the other one was an M.A. candidate in TEFL. They had taught low intermediate and advanced EFL learners at universities and language schools. One of them was teaching the participating students at the time of the research.

**Table 2 Information about Participating students (sex, age, and years of learning English)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reformulation + Teacher Interaction Group</th>
<th>Reformulation Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samaneh</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neda</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reza</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javad</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mina</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neda</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhsen</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hajar</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatemeh</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.2. Tasks**

A picture composition task (clinical elicitation) was used to elicit the participants’ language production to fulfill the function of written samples of the study. This, like a reproduction task, can be used to investigate oral or written narratives. The researchers used the picture composition task to elicit and find the most problematic structures in the participants’ written output. There was no warning that the task would be undertaken and the participants didn’t know that they are going to be investigated. It was not part of a class, at no point there was any teaching directed towards the task, there was no discussion between the participants and staff, and no-one else performed the task before, so it could not be informed with informed peers. With the test in progress, they were told not to use their dictionaries and each other’s help. The participants were also asked to write as much as they were able to. This could facilitate more use of the target language and better evaluation of the results. The researchers were present in the class from the beginning until the end of the test.

**3.3. Data collection**

Using three intact EFL low intermediate classes totaling 30 students, three groups were randomly formed. Each group contained 10 participants. They volunteered to take part in our three stage writing task. First, all participants were asked to take part in stage one of the
study. This could illustrate what the most significant area of concern regarding learner errors is. For the pretest, the participants were given a picture composition task and at the outset, were asked to write their name, age, education, gender and occupation in the spaces provided. They were to work individually within a specific time span of 20 minutes to carry out the task. With the test in progress, they were told not to use their dictionaries and each other’s help. After the given time, their papers were collected for analysis.

The participants’ compositions were given to the teachers for reformulation. Both the participating teachers and the researchers took part in reformulation session. The teachers were asked to revise the participants’ texts to reflect target-language usage while preserving the participants’ original meanings (Swain & Lapkin, 2002, p. 291). A session later, all groups were shown their typewritten reformulated texts and had thirty minutes time to study the reformulated version and compare it with their own writings. The participants were instructed to compare the two versions and find all the differences they could while talking their thought aloud. This could facilitate recording of their voices.

The participants had another chance to discuss their errors with the participating teachers within the same session. They were supposed to discuss why they believed the changes had been made. During participant-teacher interaction, the participants were to meet all necessary conditions required for high awareness. The teachers who had enough knowledge about cognitive psychology, consciousness, awareness and the related terms were supposed to understand whether learners have got high awareness of the particular features. This means if the participants were able to use, report, and describe the morphological rule underlying regular or irregular past tense, they would have high awareness of that particular feature. After the participants compared their written work with the reformulated version the papers were given back to the teacher.

It should be mentioned that the participant-teacher discussion in stage 2 was also audio recorded for transcription. To eliminate any possible effects of memorization, a posttest (stage 3) was given in a fortnight's time. They also didn't know that the task would be undertaken or repeated again. In stage 3, which was conducted 14 days later, each participant was given a typewritten copy of his /her original composition and was asked to revise it.

The teachers and the researchers only monitored the participants and didn't help them at all. We actually wanted to see if they noticed their errors regarding the targeted grammatical structures. After 20 minutes the participants handed in their revised sentences to their teacher. At the end of their revision the participants were asked to write their opinions about this
teaching method on a separate sheet of paper. Table 3 was drawn to describe the time frame and events of the data collection procedure for the study.

**Table 3 Data collection time frame and events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1, Sunday: Stage 1</th>
<th>Session 2, Tuesday: stage 2</th>
<th>Session 3, Sunday: stage 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• composing (pre-test)</td>
<td>• Comparing</td>
<td>• Rewriting (post-test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individually</td>
<td>• first individually, then with the teachers</td>
<td>• Individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the picture composition task reflected our sample of participants’ written language production for the first step. The participants’ compositions were corrected and evaluated to show whether the participants’ grammatical accuracy is ill. In our analysis of the errors, we took absolute errors into account and thoroughly ignored dispreferred forms.

First, we determined which categories should be investigated (i.e. subject-verb agreement, simple past, past progressive, present perfect and past perfect). Then we went through the data and identified obligatory occasions for the use of each category and counted the number of occasions. After that we established whether an error is supplied into each obligatory context and counted the number of times it was supplied. Finally, we calculated the percentage of errors with the following formula:

\[
\text{percent errors} = \left( \frac{n \text{ error suppliance in contexts}}{\text{total obligatory occasions}} \right) \times 100
\]

For example, the error (%) for subject-verb agreement was obtained as follows:

\[
\frac{17}{120} \times 100 = 14.1\%
\]

The percentage of errors shown in (table 4) bellow was derived through the abovementioned equation.

**Table 4 Number and percentage of errors per each category in stage 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total Obligatory Occasion</th>
<th>Error Suppliance</th>
<th>Error%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-verb agreement</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple past</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past progressive</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present perfect</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The abovementioned table was drawn to show how different categories of errors occurred in the participants’ written output. To facilitate a better understanding of the obligatory occasions as well as the number of error supplings, a bar graph was also drawn.

**Table 5 Number and percentage of errors per each category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-verb agreement</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple past</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>22.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past progressive</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>20.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present perfect</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past perfect</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The test revealed different types of errors. In general, Lack of awareness of the appropriate tense usage appeared to be the area that troubled the participants the most. The results also showed that the participants’ performance was 22.94% on the whole text. This fact could be taken as a token of the effectiveness of error analysis in diagnosing the participants’ difficulties in foreign language learning. The participating learners’ error analysis also demonstrated that the highest amount of difficulty was with simple past tense 40.7%, then past progressive 40%. The past perfect ranked third with an error rate of 16.6 followed by subject-verb agreement 14.1. The area that the participants had the lowest difficulty with was present perfect with 3.3% of errors, but that doesn't mean they had thoroughly mastered the tense before the test. In fact there weren't sufficient obligatory occasions where they had to use the tense.

4.1.1. Types of Errors

4.1.1.1. Addition

The error which was noticed the most in the participants’ compositions was addition. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) addition is the presence of a form that does not appear in a well-formed utterance. Dulay et al. (1982) sub-categorized addition into three taxonomies: Regularization, double marking and simple addition. In our analysis of the participants’ errors, regularization appeared to be the most common one. Meanwhile, double
marking ranked the second. In general, the participants’ errors involved wrong formation and overgeneralization of the simple past tense, as in these sentences in table 6:

**Table 6 Learners' addition errors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Erroneous sentence</th>
<th>Correct Form</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Suddenly one of them shooted the ball.</em></td>
<td>shot</td>
<td>regularization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A student taked a ball.</em></td>
<td>took</td>
<td>regularization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>He shoted a ball to me.</em></td>
<td>shot</td>
<td>regularization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>They fulled the hole with water.</em></td>
<td>filled</td>
<td>regularization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The ball was drifted on top of water.</em></td>
<td>drifted</td>
<td>double marking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The ball was appeared in man’s hand.</em></td>
<td>appeared</td>
<td>double marking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Four children were played volleyball.</em></td>
<td>played</td>
<td>double marking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These errors could be related to intralingual errors. Because in some cases the participants used the past tense marker -ed of regular forms to irregular forms which resulted in the generalized forms *shooted, *taked, *shoted, *fullied. It can be concluded that the participating students had a wrong hypothesis about their second language verb system in the simple past tense. In case of *was drifted, *was appeared and *were played they probably assumed that the verb to be should always be used in the past tenses. Here we would like to cite on a work by James (1998). James offered a summarization for the operation of learning strategies which are reflected by intralingual errors. We used his summarization to describe the abovementioned errors in terms of false analogy which is a kind of over-generalization. It is axiomatic that the participants overgeneralized in adding -ed to simple past form of irregular verbs.

4.1.1.2. Omission

**Omission of Copula be and become**

Another group of errors which mainly figured in the participants’ writings was related to the omission of copula be in the past progressive tense and simple past passive. The linking verb become was another case for omission. Omission by definition is considered to be the absence of an item that should appear in a well-formed utterance. Some omission errors which appeared the most in the participants’ compositions are shown in (table 7):

**Table 7 Learners' omission errors**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Erroneous sentence</th>
<th>Correct Form</th>
<th>Type of Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*I was a goalkeeper and we training for a match</td>
<td>we were training</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*...we thinking and suddenly James said...</td>
<td>we were thinking</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*he frightened by seeing the small snake</td>
<td>he was frightened</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*the other guys surprised what he was doing</td>
<td>were surprised</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*eventually students successful in bringing the ball</td>
<td>were successful</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*he frightened by seeing the small snake</td>
<td>was frightened</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*after that they successful to get a ball</td>
<td>were successful</td>
<td>Omission of copula</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the underlined parts of the sentences in (table 7), the participants omitted the copula be and the linking verb become in the simple past tense, as a result of Persian influence. In Persian, individuals normally don't use to be verb in past progressive constructions. The underlined verbs above show that the participants’ L1 influenced their L2 grammatical structures. It affected the rules and modified the usage of second language grammar categories. According to Spratt et al. (2005) this illustrates interference. Interference is the influence of L1 on L2. In our opinion, mother-tongue appears to be the cause of the participants’ omissions of the copula "be" and linking verb become, but the participants’ difficulty in using them may be the result of intralingual transfer, i.e. the participants’ failure to understand the appropriate application of copula.

### 4.1.1.3. Misinformation

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) defined misinformation as the use of a wrong form of a morpheme or structure which is subdivided into regularization, archi-forms, and alternating forms. The commonest errors regarding misinformation were archi-forms. Here are some of these errors. In the underlined part of they* couldn’t gave the ball because the hole was very deep the participating learner made both addition and misinformation error. In case of misinformation it was the result of limited English vocabulary, and confusing meanings provided by bilingual (Persian to English) dictionaries. Probably the participant meant they couldn’t catch the ball and she was not aware of the correct English vocabulary for the aforementioned verb. The misinformation added to her vocabulary problems and respectively changed the meaning of the sentence. The term give meets interference error requirements, and becomes a false cognate. The error can also be described in terms of overlooking co-
occurrence restriction (James, 1998) in which learners fail to recognize that although *give* and *catch* are synonymous, in that context *couldn’t give the ball* is not a possible collocation.

Another type error which was prominent in the participants’ written language production was associated with subject-verb agreement. It seemed that the participants were mainly not aware of the agreement between the subjects and verbs. For instance, the underlined verb phrases in following samples, *two other boys was just watching him, *John and his friends was playing football, *one day four boys who was friend was playing football are described as misinformation-regularization errors.

Archi-form which is a subdivision of misinformation was also salient in the participants’ written production. Some of these errors are listed here:

- *they picked they ball*
- *me and my friend were playing football*
- *Jan called his friend and told his...*

In the underlined parts of the sentences the participants used the subject pronoun *they* instead of its possessive form *their*. In the second case a participant used the object pronoun *me* instead of the subject pronoun *I*. We interpreted this error in three different but interlocking ways. First, it can be an archi-form error for the participants failed to distinguish the object pronoun *me* and the subject pronoun *I* and used them wrongly. Second, it appeared to be an interlingual error. Because in the participants’ mother tongue, Persian, there isn’t a particular distinction between the two aforementioned pronouns and one term is used to express both functions. Third, there seems to be an incomplete rule application (James, 1998) that is a kind of under-generalization. In the same sentence where they made the two previous errors they also failed to use indicative word order. In the last archi-form error, another participant used the subject pronoun *his* instead of the object pronoun *him*, which can also be due to the same abovementioned issues.

**4.1.1.4. Misordering**

Misordering is characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes (Dulay et al, 1982:150). Let’s consider the following erroneous sentence which was written by a participant.

*but in that place ball didn’t stop and go*

The participant incorrectly ordered the words in the sentence. The correct syntactical order and reformulated version would be *but the ball didn’t stop there and rolled along the road*. It
is also evident that the participants’ L1 syntax affected her L2 grammatical structure, changing the L2 word order, affecting meaning, and showing interference.

So far we have concluded that the participants' errors were mainly due to a phenomenon called stabilization. This fact facilitates appreciation and destabilization of the errors' putative causal variables using proper pedagogical strategies.

4.2. Target Grammatical Structure

The target structure we chose for the rest of our analysis was simple past tense and irregular past tense forms for mainly two reasons. First, our error analysis above showed that it was the area that the participants had the most difficulty with. So, it was likely that L2 learners produce overgeneralized forms of irregular verbs again. For example, –ed forms, instead of the appropriate irregular past forms (Dually, Burt and Krashen, 1982, p. 158). Second, many researchers had dealt with this structure in their studies on the effects of interaction. (e.g. Ellis, 1987; Nobuyoshi & Ellis, 1993). In order to investigate whether reformulation leads to successful learner repair, it was of prime significance to create a situation like carrying out a picture composition task in which the participants are likely to produce Interlanguage forms different from those of native speakers. For example, overgeneralization was clear when our participants produced*taked as the past form of the verb take. Our study on learner error analysis was taken into account as a pilot study. As a result there was no doubt that Iranian EFL learners often overgeneralise past irregular forms.

4.2.1. Stage 1

The general results derived from correcting the participants’ written work in stage1 once more acknowledged that the past form of verbs and simple past tense were the most problematic areas of concern among the subjects and that 200 out of 300 (i.e. 66%) obligatory occasions for targeted verbs in stage 1 were incorrect. Table 8 below illustrates the participants’ errors in case of our target grammatical structure (irregular past form of verbs).

It should be noted that we ignored other features of the language.

Table 8 Students' performance in using the target verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>Correctly used</th>
<th>Incorrectly used</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>incorrect usage%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shoot</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bleed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forbid</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.2. Stage 2
The audio recordings from stage 2 were transcribed and typewritten by the researchers and the teachers. The results showed that each individual participant spent at least 13 minutes comparing his/her original text with the reformulated version. For example Samaneh, Fatemeh, and Nazanin from group 2, first read the reformulated sentences, and then circled the use of correct irregular past form of verb in their original text. However not everyone could accept that their speech signaled high awareness of the particular features.

The participant-teacher interactions were also audio recorded and transcribed. For example, Nazanin and her teacher spent about 10 minutes discussing the errors. She read her original sentences one by one. In another step, while they looked at the reformulated and the teacher read the reformulated sentence aloud for her. It was clear that she was aware of the morphological rules underlying that particular verb and was able to describe it. This signaled her high awareness. Here is a part of their discussion:

Nazanin: this –ed is used because we are dealing with past regular verbs.
Teacher: that's correct. Other participants in group 1 underwent the same procedure and the teachers were sure that all of them had high awareness of the rules underlying each verb in the simple past.

4.2.3. Stage 3
4.2.3.1. Learners' Response to Reformulation
The learners' response to reformulation was evaluated based on the degree to which they correctly modified and corrected their erroneous written output which became the subject of reformulation. On the whole, all groups had successful repair of their erroneous written output.

Table 9 shows how the participants of the study responded to the reformulation technique.
### Table 9 Learners’ Response to Reformulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total number of changes</th>
<th>Successful repair</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group one</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group two</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group three</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. Conclusion

In summary, the results of the present study confirm the advantage of using error analysis and reformulation technique for Iranian EFL learners. It also confirmed that reformulation and peer discussions can be helpful in directing the learners’ attention to mismatches between their Interlanguage and the target language. The results of our study also manifested that peer interactions can be helpful in increasing students' awareness of different grammatical structures.

Based on the above findings, we derive some implications for foreign language writing pedagogy. We support that reformulation is a valid pedagogical tool and perhaps the most appropriate type of feedback in EFL classes, but we also propose that there should be an appropriate tool for eliciting learners’ erroneous output. Picture composition tasks have played a significant role to this end.

In conclusion, this study suggests that if teachers conduct an error analysis in EFL classes and diagnose their students’ error sources, they will be more successful in adopting appropriate techniques for tackling their errors. An appropriate technique would be that of reformulation. It will provide the students with a good opportunity to improve their grammatical accuracy as well as their language learning.

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### References


Title

From Consciousness-Raising to Input Enhancement: Implications for Theory and Practice

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Abstract

Sharwood Smith (1986) suggests that input should be interesting, meaningful and largely comprehensible. He argues for a large communicative environment in which the linguistic input can be analyzed together with many kinds of information but also states that it can be selectively manipulated to facilitate acquisition. He makes a distinction between natural occurring salience and the salience that has happened deliberately for pedagogical purposes and considers consciousness-raising as input enhancement. This article aims at representing previous studies of the consciousness-raising and input enhancement to enlighten the future researchers to fill the gap in the EFL studies.

Key words: consciousness-raising, input enhancement, natural occurring salience

1. Introduction

This paper is aimed to examine consciousness raising and input enhancement as the techniques of learning and teaching grammar in the second language. And will provide the previous researches in this regard.
1.1. Consciousness – Raising
Sharwood Smith (1993, p.167), establishes a distinction between input and intake. He considers input as the "potentially processable language data which are made available to the language learner" and intake as "that part of input that actually has been processed and turned to knowledge of some kind." As White (1987) mentions, for input to become intake it needs a particular attention of the learners to actual forms of language.

In 1985, Sharwood Smith and Rutherford examined the role of Consciousness-Raising in the acquisition of grammar teaching. By consciousness-raising the teacher can draw the learner's attention to formal properties of the target language. It is a facilitator for the acquisition of linguistic competence and has nothing to do with the use of that competence in communication or the achievement of fluency.

1.2. How to maintain C-R in classroom environment
In C-R class the syllabus is synthetic and pedagogical materials are designed with specific linguistic focus (Rutherford, 1987). The teachers try to make students aware of the linguistic features by highlighting them in the input more or less concisely or deliberately, and with greater or lesser explicitness and intensity (Ellis, 1991, p. 361). The learners are not encouraged to produce the target items. C-R shows respect for L2 learners' internal syllabus.

In a C-R class specific stages go parallel with the activities:

- **Stage 1:** Identify/Consolidate > the students are asked to go through the data to find out a particular pattern or language form which is used.
- **Stage 2:** Classify (semantic structure) > the students are asked to look for similar forms and usage and different ones to organize them.
- **Stage 3:** Cross-Language Exploration > the students compare the pattern with their own language.
- **Stage 4:** Reconstruction/Deconstruction > the students manipulate the language to reveal the underlying pattern.
- **Stage 5:** Recall > the students are asked to recall and reconstruct elements of a text (http: deil.lang.uiuc.edu, cited in Ozkan, 2005).

1.2.1. C-R Activities
In the field each of the researchers has applied his/her own C-R activities, for example Hinkel and Fotos (2002) listed five kinds of C-R activities:
- **Listening to comprehend:** the students are asked to listen to a continuous text that has examples of the targeted form but the purpose is comprehensive.

- **Listening to notice:** the students are asked to listen to notice the targeted form, to assist the process they can be given a text with gaps; they should listen and fill in the gaps.

- **Understanding the grammar point:** the students are asked to analyze the text to find out the grammar rule.

- **Checking:** the students are given a similar text but by errors, they should correct the errors by using their explicit knowledge.

- **Trying it:** an opportunity is given to the students to try out their understanding of the target form in a short production activity.

**Some tips are given by researchers for designing a C-R activity:**

- Reflect typical classroom use of the language.
- Focus on the formation of the correct examples of language.
- Produce language for display.
- Call on explicit knowledge.
- Elicit a careful speech style.
- Practice language out of context.
- Practice small samples of language.
- Do not require real authentic communication.

(Ellis, 1994)

2. **Related Researches about C-R**

Schmidt (1983) points out that there are no well-documented studies showing that learners have mastered grammatical issues solely through interaction. Therefore some degree of conscious attention is necessary to take place.

White (1987) claimed that specific grammar teaching can be beneficial in SLA. Scott (1989) in analyzing the tests taken by French students has found that those who have been taught explicitly were more successful than those who have received implicit instruction.

Within this line Ellis (1990) presents an argument for formal instruction as a type of consciousness raising activity to develop learners' awareness of grammatical features.

Fotos and Ellis (1991) in their research of direct and indirect C-R, found the indirect more successful. That showed an invitation of discovering the rules can be more beneficial.
than giving the rules to the learners. Fotos (1993) examined the effectiveness of two types of grammar consciousness-raising tasks designed to develop formal knowledge of grammatical structures on the amounts of learners' noticing. Findings suggested significant improvements in learners' noticing as the result of task performance.

Fotos (1994) claims that the grammar Consciousness-Raising tasks should combine the knowledge about problematic L2 grammatical features and meaning. Also Spada (1997) suggests the idea of context based; he argues that language material should be presented in a both structural and meaningful context. The term Consciousness Raising has been turned to Input Enhancement by Sharwood Smith in 1993. Later on the definition and its difference to Consciousness-Raising come across.

3. **Input Enhancement**

Sharwood Smith (1981) in his Pedagogical Grammar Hypothesis states that instructional strategies that draw the attention of learners to specific structural regularities of language will increase the rate of acquisition in comparison to natural acquisition of learning in which attention to form is minimal.

One specific approach to draw the learners’ attention to form that received a considerable attention in recent SLA is input enhancement, planned Focus on Form that requires enriched input. Enriched input consists of input that has been especially modified to present learners with plentiful exemplars of the target form. The purpose of enriched input is to induce noticing of the target form in the context of meaning-focused activity (Ellis, 2001).

Sharwood Smith (1981) devised the term input enhancement, initially considered as Consciousness-Raising, as a reaction to Krashen's (1981) assumption that formal grammar instruction serves little or any in the 2<sup>nd</sup> language teaching. Later on, he proposed another term instead of C-R, Input enhancement (1993). He exclaims that the difference between Consciousness raising and Input Enhancement is related to input/intake dichotomy. C-R implies that the learners' mental state is altered by the input and all the input becomes intake, but in IE specific features in input can be made salient to learners and it makes no further assumptions about the consequences of such salience (Sharwood Smith, 1993).

Rutherford and Sharwood Smith (1985) characterize Consciousness-Raising or input enhancement as being highly "complex and variegated" (p.275), and not being limited to formal grammar instruction techniques such as metalinguistic explanations.

3.1. **How to Maintain Input Enhancement in the Classroom**
In IE method L1 plays a vital role in determining L2 language problems stemming from L1 interference (Sharwood Smith, 1994). In IE instead of explicit teaching of grammar, the instructor highlights the relevant features by the use of extra stress, exaggerated intonation or colored presentation of the target structure (Sharwood Smith, 1994).

Input Enhancement can be divided to two forms: internally generated enhancement and externally generated enhancement. In the first one the learners' acquisition is based on format features of principals but they are not consciously dictated while in the second one the teacher deliberately tries to manipulate the learners' environment to direct their attention to specific structures (Sharwood Smith, 1993).

In discussing the learners’ attention to input, Sharwood Smith (1991, 1993) maintains that input enhancement is just about the salience of a particular form in a text in order to increase the chances of learners' attention to it and it does not guarantee that, that particular form becomes intake. This idea is against Corder's (1967) assertion that the learner him/herself controls what becomes intake.

As Stern (1990) states, in the activities which are designed in the C-R or input enhancement classes the following characteristics should be taken into consideration by the teachers:

- IE is an inductive approach which does not usually present learners with rules.
- IE observes the principals of UG
- IE rejects PPP (presentation, product and practice) in favor of activities that promote understanding of grammar.
- IE is learner directed.
- IE teaches learners how to learn.
- IE is process and not product oriented.
- IE presents learners with data and invites them to make conclusions based on data.
- IE is a means to an end not an end in itself.

3.1.1. Input Enhancement Ways and Techniques

- Textual Input Enhancement which involves bolding, italicizing, or coloring a specific form to draw the attention of the learners (Doughty, 1991; Overstreet, 1998).
- Increase in the frequency of the target form (White, 2000).
- Explicit or implicit error correction (Spada & Lightbown, 1993).
Oral and written simplification of texts (Leow, 1997)
Pattern drills or dialogues (White, 2000)
Typographically enhancement (enlarged, bolded or underlined) (Sharwood Smith, 1993).
Enhancement via intonation and gestures (Sahrwood Smith, 1993).

Other Input Enhancement techniques include providing non linguistic signals such as: teachers' gasping, making funny faces on hearing an error (Lightbown & Spada, 1990).

3.1.1.1. Textual Input Enhancement

One of the popular forms of input enhancement is textual enhancement in the literature; it draws the learners' attention to the linguistic form and makes it more salient. The visual input enhancement takes place through boldface, italics, color, or increase in size (Overstreet, 1998).

As Sharwood Smith (1993), states there are two types of input enhancement: positive and negative. In the positive the correct structure is highlighted or bolded and in the negative the errors are highlighted or bolded. In the text the bolded, underlined or highlighted words are presented to draw the attention of the learners. For Sharwood Smith (1993) the salience of the correct structure can be internally derived (input that becomes noticeable because of internal cognitive changes) or externally (input that becomes noticeable because of the manner of exposure of the input).

4. Input Flooding

Input flooding refers to the artificially increased frequency of certain target forms in the input. With this technique, the target form is made salient by its frequent recurrence in context (Han, Park, & Combs, 2008). The underlying assumption is that, when an item appears more frequently in the input, the likelihood that it will be noticed and integrated into the interlanguage system is increased (Schmidt, 1990).

5. Previous Studies of Input Enhancement

The pioneering study in this line of research is Doughty (1991). There have been three groups in Doughty's research. The focus of the study was to find out the effect of input enhancement and input flooding on acquisition of relative clauses. There have been three different stories each of them had three or four episodes. Each episode contained five or six relative clauses of the oblique type “with whom” as in the example “This is the girl with whom I spoke last
week at the party.” This is the only kind of information that the control group received. The other two groups received input flooding and metalinguistic explanation or typographical enhancement (capitalization or highlighting) on the relative portions of the sentences.

The results were that the two experimental groups had the same degree of improvement in their grammaticality judgment tests and in the production of relative clauses, but the group with exposure to typographical enhancement as part of the treatment showed an added superiority when it came to reading comprehension in relation to the group which was treated with metalinguistic explanation alone.

Shook (1994) studied the effect of textual input enhancement on the intake of Spanish present perfect and relative pronouns. He had three groups: a control and two experimental. The control group received an unenhanced text with no specific instruction. In his experimental group the students have been given a text with six tokens of grammar bolded and uppercased but no other explanation. And the third group had the grammatical features bolded and uppercased, and also they have been told to pay attention to the bolded and uppercased items. The result showed the beneficence of the textual input on the targeted grammatical features.

Alanen (1995) conducted a study on the effect of textual enhancement and explicit teaching on the acquisition of the alternation of consonants among 36 English-speaking adults studying Finnish locative suffixes. There were four different experimental groups: in the first group they used italics as textual enhancement, in the second group he had only explicit teaching of the linguistic forms under investigation, without a text; in the third group he had a combination of italics and explicit teaching; and finally in the fourth group he had the presentation of the text without textual enhancement.

Alanen used a short-term treatment with rather limited exposure to input: the treatment lasted 2 sessions, each of which had duration of 15 minutes. In the treatment, the subjects had to read two passages 87 and 98 words long that contained 12-13 locative suffixes and 5-8 consonant changes, which is very limited exposure to the target forms. There was no pre-treatment task. There were seven post-treatment tasks: one think-aloud protocol analysis and written measurement tasks that included sentences to complete, grammaticality judgments, and rule formulation. The results of the study demonstrated that the effect of textual enhancement was limited and it was not strong enough to support any claims that the use of visual enhancement is unequivocally effective in improving grammatical knowledge.

Jourdenais, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, & Doughty (1995) studied the effect of input enhancement on the preterit and imperfect Spanish verbs. He had two groups; the control
group received unenhanced text and the experimental enhanced text. The texts have been enhanced by boling, shadowing, underlying and changing the font. The result showed the effectiveness of textual enhancement on teaching grammar.

Williams (1995, cited in Ellis, 1997, p.89) carried out a study to compare the effect of input enhancement and explicit grammar instruction on the acquisition of participle adjective and present passive. The result showed that input enhancement can be effective by itself for the teaching of complex structure like passive, but it works better in conjunction with the explicit grammar for easier structures.

Leow (1997) investigated the effect of text length and input enhancement on the intake and comprehension of Spanish impersonal imperative. Four texts have been chosen for this purpose. The first text had about 631 words and it was unenhanced, the second text had the same length and the grammatical features were underlined and bolded. The third text had about 384 words and it was unenhanced, the fourth text was of the same length but the targeted forms once again have been bolded and underlined. The result showed no significant effect of input enhancement either on intake or on comprehension, but the text's length had effect on the readers' comprehension.

Overstreet (1998) looked at the effect of input enhancement on the Spanish preterit and imperfect tenses and content familiarity on second language production. Four groups have been chosen, the first group received an enhanced and familiar text, and group two received an enhanced but unfamiliar text. Group three read a familiar but unenhanced text and the fourth group read both unenhanced and unfamiliar text. All the imperfect and preterit verbs in the enhanced texts were underlined; the imperfect verbs have been bolded while the preterit verbs have been shadowed. The researcher not only found no positive effect of either enhancement or familiarity but also he recognized the negative effect of enhancement on the learners' comprehension.

White (1998) investigated the effect of input enhancement on the acquisition of third person possessive determiner. There have been three groups in this research; group one received typographically enhanced texts in addition to extensive reading and listening. Group two received a typographically enhanced text and group three received an unenhanced text. The visual enhancement happened through bolding, italicizing, and underlying. White found no significant effect of input enhancement on the acquisition of the targeted forms.

Williams and Evan (1998) studied the effect of input enhancement (in the form of input flooding and explicit instruction) on the acquisition of participial adjectives and passive voice among thirty three university students of Illinois. For the participial adjectives the input
flooding helped students notice the forms but explicit instruction lead to greater gains. For the passive voice both treatments had similar effects and produced similar performances.

Schmidt (2001) analyzed his own acquisition of Portuguese during his stay in Brazil, and found strong evidence for a close connection between noticing and emergence in production.

Muranoi (2000) investigated the effect of input enhancement on the learning of English articles among three groups: IE plus formal debriefing group (IEF), IE plus meaning-focused debriefing group (IEM) and a non-enhanced group. Two major outcomes were found (1). IE had positive effects on the learning of English articles, and (2). The IEF treatment had a greater impact than IEM treatment.

The other study is done by Shinichi Izumi (2001), she has used visual input enhancement for promoting noticing in learning of relative clauses. The result was the failure of the visual enhancement by itself for teaching a complex structure like relative clause.

Leow (2001) explored the effect of textual enhancement and noticing on the Spanish formal imperatives and intake. There have been two groups, both have been given the same 241 word texts, and only the experimental group's texts have been enhanced. In the enhanced texts all the verbs have been underlined and only the formal imperative morphemes were bolded. The participants in both were taught to think aloud. The researcher found no significant effect of the enhanced texts over the unenhanced for noticing of the targeted form, comprehension, and intake.

In a critical review by Lynch (2001) "seeing what they meant" he describes a reflective noticing activity in which learners transcribed their performance in a speaking task. The result showed that noticing has a real impact in learning the input. Learners internalize a lot, intake takes place and the teacher in not an obsolete since feedback is a necessary stage in the process.

Overstreet (2002) considered the effect of textual enhancement on the comprehension and form recognition of Spanish verbs in the present progressive and imperfect subjunctive. There were five conditions for the 588-word text. Group one consisted of no enhancement. Group two received the text with the verb morphology enhanced of the imperfect subjunctive. Group three read the text with the whole word enhanced of the progressive tense. Group four received the morphology-enhanced version of the imperfect subjunctive, and group five received the whole word enhanced of the imperfect subjunctive. The targeted items were enhanced by bolding, underlining, and capitalizing either the morphology or whole word. Overstreet found that the textual enhancement of a form of lower communicative value does

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impede the processing of both form and meaning, but that the enhancement of an item of greater communicative value does not.

Park (2003) in his experimental study investigated if, and how, externally created salience might lead to learners' internally generated salience. The findings showed that increasing the perceptual salience of target forms did not lead to learners' noticing of forms. It was found that noticing was affected by several factors as: learner readiness, knowledge of first language and second language learning experience.

Hislope (2003) did a research in a Spanish class in Purdue University in America. The research has been done on heritage students (whose native language is Spanish) four page magazine articles in Spanish which were flooded by 47 tokens of present subjunctives were given to the readers. The texts were followed by some comprehension questions and questions for recognition of present subjunctives. The result suggested more explicit focus on form activities and activation of background knowledge even for familiar topics.

Dasse (2004) did a study on the French structure passé compose. She exposed the learners to three different types of 'focus on form' instruction through consciousness-raising tasks for the acquisition of the verbs "etre" and "avoir". The result showed the positive effect of the tasks and facilitation in the learning of the structure. The other study done by Fotos and Ellis (1991) showed the positivity of the effect of consciousness-raising tasks in teaching dative alternation, adverb placement and relative clauses. In another study done by Flor Mellado de Bromley (2005), he applied two types of tasks; the first one is the input flooding and consciousness-raising task of the salience type to reflect and draw generalization of SVC target form, and the other one is the input enhancement task in which the students have been given sentences to compare between the structure learned in the previous lesson SVC and the new structure SVO, to draw generalization of this target form.

The result showed that the tasks cause the development of the learners' critical thinking and autonomous learning. Three advantages have been found for the tasks, first they make the learners reflect, infer, analyze and explore new content based on previous knowledge. Second they allow them to exchange information with peers to find answers to reflective questions developing socio-effective strategies, and the third one is that they encourage learners to generalize concepts and rules, which is the essential and main purpose of noticing.

Another research has been done by Francisco Ramon Lluna –Mateu at the University of Valencia in 2006. In the research the researcher examined the effect of recast on
grammatical knowledge, grammatical performance and communicative language use. There have been three groups two experimental and one control. In the experimental group one they had feedback without input enhancement, in the second experimental group the recast was enhanced and in the control group there was no feedback.

The type of input enhancement was underlining, in which the teacher gave feedback by underlining the correct forms. The result showed that in the grammatical knowledge the control group was better, however, in the three specific grammatical features: adverbial subordinate clauses of time, subordinate noun clauses, and conditional sentences, there were some specific findings. In the first feature, the enhanced group had loss, in the second and third one the enhanced group outperformed the two other groups.

Lee (2007) did a research investigating the effect of textual enhancement. The result showed that it has been influential for the teaching of form but not fruitful for meaning comprehension.

Combs (2008) had a research on 36 lower intermediate students in a grammar class in a collage in Manhattan, investigating the effect of Input Enhancement (IE) and topic familiarity (TF) on 4 groups. The group one received the texts which had both topic familiarity and enhanced forms. The second group received the texts which had enhanced forms but no topic familiarity. The third group received the texts which had topic familiarity but no enhanced forms. And the last group (control) received the texts with no topic familiarity and enhanced forms. The result showed that neither TF nor IE had significant effects on the learners learning of the form.

Abbasi and Farokhi (2011) did a research on Iranian EFL learners at the intermediate level to check out the effect of Input Enhancement in learning grammar and vocabulary. The result showed the effectiveness of Input Enhancement in learning of both grammar and vocabulary, but it was more successful in vocabulary.

6. Conclusion
Many of the previous studies involved short-term treatment and limited exposure (both time and quantity) to the input (Alanen, 1995; Jourdenais, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, & Doughty, 1995; Leow, 1997, 2001; Overstreet, 1998; Shook, 1994). However a few of other studies have involved greater treatment length with greater amount input exposure (Doughty, 1991; White, 1998).
As noted by Han, Park and Combs (2008), it is unrealistic to expect instant learning by one-time treatment because it does not give the learners sufficient time for deeper processing of the input. On the other hand, Han, Park, Combs (2008) suggests that if one-time treatments are just measured by their effects on noticing not as a catalyst for acquisition, the results can be more fruitful.


All the participants were adults except (White, 1996) that involved children.

Some studies have found improvements (Doughty, 1991 Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Shook, 1994; Dasse, 2004; Ozkan, 2005; Flor Mellado de Bromley, 2005; Abbasi, 2010). Jourdenais, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, and Doughty (1995) found out that: (1) the subjects received input enhancement could recall the targeted form easier in the think aloud protocols and (2). Textual enhancement increases the capacity to detect the target linguistic elements.

Norris and Ortega (2000) conducted a research in which they compared the effect of 49 studies published between 1980 and 1998 and concluded raising learners' awareness of specific form facilitates acquisition. The vast majorities of studies include flood treatments (Scott, 1989), garden path techniques (Herron & Tomasello, 1992), or Input Possessing (Van Patten & Cadierno, 1993; Sanz, 2000) all proved its effectiveness.

Some studies found no positive effect of input enhancement (Leow, 1997, 2001; Combs, 2008) and some studies (White, 1998; Alanen, 1995; Overstreet, 1998; Lluna-Mateu, 2006; Lee, 2007) showed limited effects. Izumi (2002)'s study showed no effect of VE on learning but it had impact on the noticing of the target form items in the input.

The studies show that the number of the targeted forms is not very effective on the result. for example both Shook (1994) that has six enhanced forms of present perfect and relative pronoun and Jourdaïs, Ota, Stauffer, Boyson, & Doughty (1995) who used 18 preterit and 10 imperfect visually enhanced forms in the text has positive effects, but most of the studies that have been very different in number of targeted enhanced forms had limited or no effect ( Alanen, 1995, used 12-13 Finish locative suffixes, and consonantal changes, 5-8 instances; Leow, 1997, 15 and 24 imperatives and 2001 , 17 imperatives; Overstreet, 1998,
18 forms of Spanish preterit and 10 imperfect, also Leow, 2003’s study 10 examples in each case of Spanish present perfect and present subjunctive).

References


Title
The Relationship between Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, Reading Anxiety and Reading Achievement among Iranian High School EFL Students

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Abstract
This study aimed at measuring the relationship between Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) and foreign language reading anxiety (FLRA) and the possible relationship of foreign language reading anxiety and reading performance. This study surveyed 142 students from three high schools in Shahreza, Iran. Before conducting the main study a pilot study was done to measure the validity and reliability of the translated versions of the questionnaires (FLCA, FLRA) and revealed that both questionnaires were reliable and valid with alpha level coefficient of .87 and .81 respectively. The results of the main study revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between FLCA and FLRA and there was a significant negative relationship between FLRA and reading performance.

Keywords: FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale), FLRAS (Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale), Reading Achievement

1. Introduction
English learning is affected by several factors such as cognitive ability, learning interest, motivation, language learners’ attitude and foreign language anxiety (Pan, 2002). In the past few years, different studies were carried out in the realm of anxiety during the process of learning a foreign language (especially English) that is more prevalent among Iranian students who are interested in learning English as a foreign language. According to Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), foreign language anxiety has a negative effect on language acquisition. Learners with low foreign language anxiety have better language
acquisition and are more receptive to the input they receive. On the other hand, learners with high foreign language anxiety can’t perform more “open” to the input nor get better language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1998).

Hilgard, Atkinson, and Atkinson (1971) define anxiety as follows: “Anxiety is commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object” (cited in Scovel, 1978, p.135). Anxiety is usually measured in one of three ways: 1) self-report such as surveys and questionnaires; 2) physiological indications such as blood pressure, blushing, and sweaty palms; and 3) general behavior as in pacing and/or the inability to relax (Gaudry & Spielberger, 1971).

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) identified three distinct approaches to the study of anxiety: trait anxiety refers to general personality traits; state anxiety is an emotional state; and Situation specific anxiety refers to forms of anxiety within a given situation (p. 87). Trait anxiety is conceptualized as a relatively stable personality characteristic while state anxiety is seen as a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus such as an important test (Spielberger, 1983). More recently the term situation-specific anxiety has been used to emphasize the persistent and multi-faceted nature of some anxieties (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a). Second language anxiety is a distinct form of anxiety independent of other forms such as trait, state, or test anxiety (Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; 1994), and it has a consistent negative correlation with L2 students’ learning and performance as measured by final course grades and other outcome measures across different instructional levels and with different target languages (e.g., Horwitz, 1986; Aida, 1994; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Coulombe, 2000; Trylong, 1987; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). For this anxiety, six possible sources have been discussed by Young (1991): personal and interpersonal issues, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, language testing, instructor beliefs about language teaching, and learner beliefs about language learning.

Anxiety has been regarded as one of the most important affective factors that influence second language acquisition. Much research (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Young, 1991), especially in western countries, has been conducted to find the relationship between anxiety and achievement in the learning of different foreign languages. Most studies (e.g., Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994) arrived at a conclusion that anxiety and achievement are negatively correlated. Most of them, however, were college students. High school students, who are still at a comparatively low level of English proficiency and thus more easily experience a feeling of uneasy suspense (Rachman, 1998), are overlooked by most researchers. Regardless of target language, most
studies using specific measures of language anxiety have received a consistent negative correlation between anxiety and language achievement. Speaking is the most anxiety-provoking aspect of language learning and a lot of studies were conducted to investigate this aspect of foreign language learning. Little attention is paid to elaborate the effects of foreign language anxiety on language skills such as reading, writing, and listening. Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) have pioneered in proposing the new approach of reading anxiety and they have proved that the reading anxiety is distinguishable from what we have discussed about foreign language classroom anxiety earlier. They have designed an instrument (20 items questionnaire) called the foreign language reading anxiety scale (FLRAS) to measure the amount of reading anxiety among the learners.

1.1. Purpose and scope of the study
An investigation of anxiety among such Students to learn EFL in different high schools in different parts of the city may be representative of anxiety of such students in high schools in general in the City of Shahreza, and might be indicative of such students in high schools in Iran at large. And so, the purpose of the study is to find out about the anxiety of Iranian high school students, hopefully to contribute to filling the gap in the picture of EFL learning theory. Specifically this will involve investigating the nature of the students' anxiety, its characteristics and features. Then it will be important to determine whether the students' anxiety in these age groups has features that are different from those of other age groups of Iranian students. These issues will be addressed in the research questions which will guide the study.

1.1.1. Research questions
1- Is there any significant relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and reading anxiety among Iranian high school EFL students?
2- Do students with high or low level of reading anxiety differ in their reading performance?

Based on the research questions, two null hypotheses were made as follows:

1.1.2. Null hypotheses
1-There is no significant relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and reading anxiety among Iranian high school EFL Students.
2- Students with high or low level of reading anxiety do not significantly differ in their reading performance.

2. Method and research procedures
2.1. Participants
The participants of the study were 142 high school students (grade 2) from three different high schools in Shahreza, in the middle part of Iran. All the participants were male students in the same grade with approximately the same age whose high schools were among the most prestigious in the city. They were selected on the basis of convenient sampling method because the researcher had no access to female participants. Their linguistic homogeneity was determined through an OPT (Oxford Placement Test). To determine the homogeneity of the subjects, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) test consisting of the vocabulary and structure parts was administered. Then 142 students with intermediate level of proficiency, according to OPT chart, were selected.

2.2. Instruments
Three instruments were employed in this study, including (1) the Persian version of foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS), (2) the Persian version of foreign language reading anxiety scale (FLRAS), and a reading achievement test.

2.2.1. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)
The foreign language classroom anxiety scale is a “self report measure that assesses the degree of anxiety, as evidenced by negative performance experiences and social comparisons, psycho-physiological symptoms, and avoidance behaviours” (Horwitz, 1986, p. 559). This questionnaire consists of 33 statements, of which 8 items were for communication anxiety (1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, and 32), 9 items for fear of negative evaluation (3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, and 33) and 5 items for test anxiety (2, 8, 10, 19, and 21). As for the remaining 11 items, they were put in a group which was named anxiety of English classes. The respondents were asked to rate each item on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (“strongly disagree”) to 1 (“strongly agree”). The total score of the scale range from 33 to 165, in which high scores indicated high levels of foreign language anxiety but in the present study the scores range from 1 to 5 with the range of 4.

The authors of the scale have conducted numerous reliability studies that have shown the scale to be both reliable and valid, with an alpha coefficient of .93 and test-retest reliability over eight weeks was .83 (n=78, p=.001) (Horwitz et al. 1986).

2.2.2. Foreign language reading anxiety scale (FLRAS)
The FLRAS, developed by Saito, Garza, and Horwitz (1999) as a modified version of the FLCAS aimed specially at reading, “elicits students’ self-reports of anxiety over various aspects of reading, their perceptions of reading difficulties in their target language, and their perceptions of the relative difficulty of reading as compared to the difficulty of other
language skills” (p. 204). The FLRAS consists of 20 items scored by a 5-point Likert scale similar to the one found in the FLCAS. In the present study score ranges for the FLRAS were from 1 to 5, with lower scores indicating lower anxiety and higher scores indicating higher anxiety. This scale was translated into Persian by the researcher. For face validity four English as second Language (ESL) professors at the Department of English in the Islamic Azad University of Shahreza branch and two graduate students checked the translated version items for verification of translation. This panel of experts provided extremely useful suggestions that improved the research instrument prior to the pilot study. The original form of FLRAS, as reported by saito, et. al., (1999) has an overall coefficient of \( r=0.64 \) (\( p<0.01 \)). The reported Cronbach alpha of the FLRAS was 0.86.

2.2.3. Achievement test

For answering the second research question, the students were given a reading performance test at the end of the semester and their scores were obtained from the instructor. For confidentiality reasons, the students’ scores were only recorded by the instructor and reported to them directly by the instructor.

2.3. Procedures

2.3.1. Pilot study

Prior to the administration of translated version of the questionnaires to students a pilot study was carried out to establish the validity and reliability and also the time required for filling out the questionnaires. It was utilized to check the appropriateness of the Persian version of the questionnaires for implementing in this particular context. The above mentioned study was done in November 2010 and the sample of the study including 30 male high school students that were randomly selected from three high schools (Rajaei, Zamani, and Emam Khomeyne) in Shahreza. The two instruments (Persian version of FLCAS and FLRAS) were used in the pilot study. The students answered the questionnaires within 20 minutes. Investigation of the returned questionnaires showed that some of the items were a little bit ambiguous and not easy to understand and needed to be revised. The wordings of these items were changed by the researcher and modified by experts. The reliability of FLCAS was calculated as .84 and the reliability of FLRAS was calculated as .86 according to Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Therefore it was found valid and reliable.

2.3.2. Data collection

The raw data of the present study were collected through three instruments. The FLCAS, FLRAS, and the achievement test. It is mentioning that the FLCAS was translated into
The FLRAS is a 20-item questionnaire that was designed by Saito (1999) for the first time. It was translated by this researcher into Persian and checked by four professors and two MA students in the field of TEFL to ensure its comprehensibility. All of them compared the original form with the translated version and they judged that the translated version was compatible with the original form and there were no areas of translation discrepancy. Before the administration of the questionnaires to students, they were informed by their instructor that they should answer the questionnaires carefully and sincerely for the reason that it would help the researcher to gain more accurate data. The teacher also explained to them that the results would not affect their grades in anyway. Meanwhile, for answering the second research question, the students were given a reading performance test and their scores were obtained from the instructor.

2.3.3. Data analysis

To address the research questions and hypotheses, the researcher utilized the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to calculate the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) of the students’ scores of FLCAS and FLRAS. To answer the first question, that is: Is there any significant relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and reading Anxiety among Iranian high School EFL Students? Pearson product-moment correlation was obtained to determine the correlation among foreign language classroom anxiety and reading anxiety. To answer the second question, that is: Do students with high or low levels of reading anxiety differ in their reading performance? The relationship between the reading anxiety and reading performance was investigated by computing the correlation coefficient of the raw score of the reading exam and the reading anxiety score.

3. Data analysis and results

3.1. Reliability of the FLCAS and the FLRAS

Before the descriptive statistics were reported, the internal consistency of the two instruments, the FLRAS and the FLCAS, were examined and reported. Table 4.1 gives the Cronbach’s alpha and number of items in each of the instruments and internal consistency was computed for each of the Persian versions of the FLCAS and the FLRAS. Cronbach’s alpha for the FLCAS was 0.87 (N=142, M=2.68, and S.D. =.63) and Cronbach’s alpha for the FLRAS was 0.81 (N=142, M=2.92, and S.D. =.45).

Table 3.1. Cronbach’s alpha of the two instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruments</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FLCAS</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLRAS</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3.2. Descriptive analyses of the FLCAS

The FLCAS was administered as part of the study to obtain the levels of anxiety from 142 participants of this study. The FLCAS contains 33 items yielding a composite score with a possible range from 33 to 165. It was answered by using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1) “strongly disagree” to 5) “strongly agree”. Items 1,3,4,6,7,9,10,12,13,15,16,17,19,20,21,23,24,25,26,27,29,30,31, and 33 represent high anxiety, and are scored from 1 point (strongly disagree) to 5 points (strongly agree). A higher score indicated a higher level of foreign language anxiety. In the present study, the total FLCAS scores of the students ranged from 1 to 5 with a mean of 2.68 and standard deviation of .63.

Table 3.2. Descriptive statistics of FLCAS (N=142).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FLCAS</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>.634</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In describing every items of FLCAS, 35.3% (50 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the first statement “I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class”, showing their lack of confidence in speaking, while 33.8% (48 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement which reveal the ratio of advocates and opponents of this statements are the same (item 1), 50% (71 out of 142) were not worried about making mistakes in English classes while 40.9 (58 out of 142) were worried about making mistakes in English classes (item2), 42.2% (60 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed and also the same percentage (42.2%) disagreed with the statement that “I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called in English class” (item 3), 47.2% (67 out of 142) were frightened when unable to understands their teachers (item 4), 58.5 (83 out of 142) had no problem in taking more English classes (item5), 16.9% (24 out of 142) agreed with the statement “During English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course”, while 58.5 (83 out of 142) disagreed with this statement, showing that students were eager to concentrate on the subject course and they did not like to think about irrelevant subjects in English classes (item 6), 37.3% (53 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am” and on the other hand 42.3% (60 out of 142) were disagreed with this statement (item7), 59.2% (84 out of 142) were usually at ease
during tests whereas only 23.9% (34 out of 142) feeling uneasiness during tests (item 8), 47.9% (68 out of 142) experience panic while forced to speak without preparation in English classes (item 9), 61.3% (87 out of 142) disagreed with the statement “I am worried about the consequences of failing my English class” while 22.6% (32 out of 142) are worried about the consequences of failing (item 10), 38% (54 out of 142) agreed with the statement “I don't understand why some people get so upset over English classes” and at the opposite 33.1% (47 out of 142) disagreed with this statement (item11), 15.5% (22 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know” whereas 72.5% (103 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, indicating that forgetting a little or large bit of information during the English class did not lead to embarrassment or losing of control (item 12), 62.7% (89 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class” (item 13), 63.4% (90 out of 142) were eager and felt relaxed speaking English with native speakers (item 14), 47.1% (67 out of 142) disagreed with the statement “I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting” (item 15), 58.5% (83 out of 142) rejected the statement “Even If I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it” (item 16), 67.6% (96 out of 142) were eager to attend their English classes (item 17), 44.4% (63 out of 142) were confident while speaking English (item 18), 55.6% (79 out of 142) were agreed with the statement “I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make” (item 19), 47.9% (68 out of 142) vs. 32.4% supported (46 out of 142) disagreed with the statement that “I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class” (item 20), 69% (98 out of 142) disagreed with the statement “The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get” (item 21), 61.9% (88 out of 142) agreed with the statement “I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class” and only 16.2% (23 out of 142) of the students feel pressure to prepare very well for English classes (item 22), 26.7% (38 out of 142) disagreed with the statement “I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do”, on the contrary, 38.8% (55 out of 142) agreed with this statement (item 23), 49.1% (70 out of 142) did not feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students (item 24), students agreed and disagreed the statement “English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind” with approximately the same level (36.7%, 52 out of 142 agreed and 37.4%, 53 out of 142 disagreed) indicating that about half of the students were worried about getting left behind in English classes while half of the students did not worry about it (item 25). 66.2% (94 out of 142) did not feel tenser and nervous in their English classes in comparison with other classes.
which indicates English class in essence did not make an uneasy and troublesome atmosphere than other classes (item 26). 61.4% (91 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class” which applies to the certain fact that they didn’t assume the speaking skill harder and bewildering than other skills (item 27). 51.4% (73 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed”, implying that more than half of the students felt confident and devoid of any uneasiness taking part in their English classes (item 28). 44.4% (63 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says” and 31.6% (45 out of 142) disagreed with this statement (item 29). 45.8% (65 out of 142) did not feel overwhelmed by the number of rules they had to learn (item 30). 41.5% (59 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English” and 39.5% (56 out of 142) were disagreed with this statement (item 31). 50% (71 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English” and just 21.8% (31 out of 142) did not feel comfortable in the presence of native speakers of English (item 32). 56.3% (80 out of 142) were agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance”, indicates that most of the students are reluctant to respond the teachers’ questions when they are not well prepared in advance (item 33).

3.3. Descriptive analyses of FLRAS

The FLRAS is 20-item inventory using a 5-point Likert-type response format; it yields a composite score with a possible range from 20 to 100. After responses to positively-worded statements were recorded, a descriptive analysis was conducted. A higher score indicated a higher level of reading anxiety. In the present study, the total FLRAS scores of the total sample ranged from 1 to 5, with a mean of 2.92 and a standard deviation of .45, tables 4.4. Presents the FLRAS scores for the participants. The FLRAS contained 20 Likert-type items pertaining to respondents’ feelings and attitudes towards reading a foreign language.

Considering the first item, 55.7% (79 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I get upset when I’m not sure whether I understand what I’m reading in English”, while just 19.7% (28 out of 142) disagreed with this statement, 44.4% (63 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “When reading English, I often understand the words but still can’t understand what the author is saying” which means almost half of the students have problems in comprehension of reading materials (item 2), 43% (61 out of 142) have
confused when they cannot remember what they were reading in English (item 3), almost one third of the students (33.1%, 46 out of 142) felt intimidated when they face a whole page of English and the same percent did not felt intimidated facing a whole page of English (item 4), 38% (54 out of 142) felt nervous when they are reading a passage with unfamiliar topic and for 36.7% (52 out of 142) of the students the unfamiliar topic did not make any difference (item 5), 38.1% (54 out of 142) agreed with the statement that encountering an unknown grammar when reading English may frustrated them (item 6), 53.5% (76 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “When reading English, I get nervous and confused when I don’t understand every word” indicates that lack of word knowledge which leads to weak comprehension are among the most anxiety-provoking factors (item 7), 47.9% (68 out of 142) feel anxious, or confused when they can not pronounce words while reading (item 8), 50% (71 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I usually end up translating word by word when I’m reading English in front of me”, have the meaning that most of the Iranian students prefer to translate word by word while reading English and it may be referred to the prevalence of Grammar-Translation Method in Iran (item 9). The percentage of agreeing and disagreeing students with regard to the statement “By the time you get past the funny letters and symbols in English, it’s hard to remember what you’re reading about” are the same but the eye-catching point was that 36.6% (52 out of 142) of students did not take a stand and respond to the neutral part of the above mentioned statement (item 10). 44.4% (63 out of 142) did not assume necessary to learn new symbols in order to read English (item 11). 69.8% (99 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I enjoy reading English”, implying that reading English in general are pleasurable among Iranian students (item 12). 57% (81 out of 142) felt confident when they are reading in English and just 12.6% (18 out of 142) of participants have the claim that they did not feel confident during the English reading process (item 13). 68.3% (97 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Once you get used to it, reading English is not so difficult”, while 11.3% (16 out of 142) disagreed with this statement (item 14). 38.1% (54 out of 142) did not take learning to read as the hardest part of learning English (item 15). 38.7% (55 out of 142) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I would be happy just to learn to speak English rather than having to learn to read as well” and the disagreeing participants are a little less than the agreeing ones, indicating that the majority of students believed they are learning English so that they can speak English rather than reading English (item 16). 38.8% (55 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I don’t mind reading to myself, but I feel very uncomfortable when I have to read English aloud”,
implying a considerable percent of students did not take reading aloud in public as problematic as reading by themselves (item 17). 64.8% (92 out of 142) are very satisfied toward the level of reading that they have achieved so far (item 18). 33.8% (48 out of 142) vs. 25.3% (36 out of 142) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “English culture and ideas seem very foreign to me” (item 19). 55.6 % (79 out of 142) of students believed reading English requires knowing a vast knowledge of English history and culture (item 20).

3.4. Relationship between reading anxiety and foreign language classroom anxiety

To answer the research question one “Is there any significant relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and reading anxiety among Iranian high school EFL students?” the Pearson Product-moment correlation coefficients was used and the results of them are illustrated in Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FLCAS(M=2.687)</th>
<th>FLRAS(M=2.926)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation(FLCAS)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.759♦♦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson correlation(FLRAS)</td>
<td>.759♦♦</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

For all the participants (N=142), Table 4.6 showed that foreign language classroom anxiety significantly and positively correlated with foreign language reading anxiety (r=.759, p<.01). The mean and standard deviation of FLCAS were M=2.68, and SD=.634, whereas the mean and standard deviation of FLRAS were M=2.92, and SD=.451. Although the mean and standard deviation of the FLCAS were similar to those of previous studies (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986) but the mean and standard deviation of FLRAS in the present study were a little bit different. The mean response of FLRAS as reported by students was more than what they have recorded on the FLCAS (M= 2.92, vs. M=2.68). According to the finding, on average, students reported more reading anxiety per item than general foreign language anxiety. Therefore, the hypothesis put forth in research question 1 was not supported by our results. In other words, the result failed to support the Null hypothesis that there is no correlation among reading anxiety and foreign language classroom anxiety of Iranian EFL high school students.

3.5. Foreign Language Reading Anxiety and Foreign Language Reading Performance
To answer the research question 2 the Pearson Product-Moment correlation between the foreign language reading anxiety and foreign language reading performance was carried out and the results indicate a significantly negative relationship between foreign language reading anxiety and foreign language reading performance scores, \( r(142) = -.710, p<0.001 \). Students with higher foreign language reading anxiety tended to score lower in the foreign language reading performance.

4. Conclusions

In this study the related literature of FLA has been reviewed. In the previous studies we have seen the researchers have reached to conflicting results. So many studies showed the significant negative relationship between the FLA and language achievement, but in some of them they were claiming there is no relationship in between and some others have claimed the positive relationship between FLA and language achievement. This study showed a significant negative relationship between FLCA and FLRA with English language achievement. Moreover, FLCA with the mean of 2.68 and FLRA with the mean of 2.92 certifying the fact that they are not the same and the fluctuation of means indicated that they are different from each other.

FL reading anxiety is an important phenomenon that should be investigated since anxiety may interfere in learning and can serve as a strong indicator of success while reading in the target language. However, anxiety students feel may be related to general language learning anxiety or it may be due to skill specific anxiety. Therefore, it is important to determine whether the anxiety language students experience is a general FL anxiety or a skill specific type. This study has concluded that anxiety, as one of the affective variables, is an important factor that influences students in a negative way while they are reading in the target language and FL.

Reading anxiety is a specific type of anxiety that is different from the general FL classroom learning anxiety. As creating a low-anxiety learning environment is important to reduce anxiety and tension that inhibits language performance, the implications of this study might be helpful for teachers and language educators in recognizing and dealing with the anxiety manifestations of learners in order to encourage them to be more effective readers. Since there were differences among students from different proficiency levels in terms of reading anxiety, a further research may focus on identifying the possible reasons of this difference. Moreover, a new study can be designed to train students in order to lower their
anxiety levels and at the end of the training, whether the anxiety levels of the students while they are reading in the target language is diminished can be investigated. In such a study, students can be made aware of their reading anxieties and some strategies can be taught to students to decrease their anxieties. Then, the effect of these strategies on diminishing their anxiety levels can be investigated. Finally, another research looking at the correlation between FL reading anxiety and other affective variables, such as motivation and self-esteem that can affect reading can be suggested since anxiety is not the only factor influencing FL reading.

The results showed that reading in a FL is indeed anxiety provoking to some extent among high school students in Iran’s context. Furthermore, it appears that FL reading anxiety is a specific Anxiety type distinguishable from the more general types of Foreign Language Classroom anxiety that have been linked to oral performance. Whereas general FL anxiety has been found, both here and in previous studies, to be independent of target language, levels of reading anxiety were found to vary by target language and seem to be related to the specific writing systems. This study also found that students' reading anxiety levels increased with their perceptions of the difficulty of reading in their FL, and that their grades decreased in conjunction with their levels of reading anxiety (and general FL anxiety). Although we believe that this study provides strong evidence for the existence of FL reading anxiety, as is the case in all considerations of anxiety, it is difficult to be sure whether anxiety is the cause or effect of the difficulties observed. In the present study, it must be considered that the participants experienced anxiety as a result of actual difficulties in text processing rather than the reading difficulties stemming from anxiety reactions, It is probable that both alternatives are true, but the large number of students in this study who reported anxiety over reading causes us to believe that many of the anxious readers have normal language processing abilities.

Language teachers have generally assumed that reading is the least anxiety-provoking Part of the curriculum, these findings argue for the recognition of FL reading anxiety. As Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest there are two basic options for the language teacher in dealing with FL anxiety: (a) help students cope with the anxiety-producing situation, and (b) make the learning context less stressful. These two approaches would seem to apply in the case of reading anxiety, as well. With respect to the first option, teachers could prepare their students for the possibility of reading difficulties and possible anxiety when introducing reading assignments. Some pedagogical implications would be beneficial in the real teaching context. First, as Scovel (1978) had pointed out, language anxiety is actually helpful or facilitating.
Some certain levels of discomfort and unpleasant feelings would weep students alert. Such pressure can make students take on challenges or difficult tasks that are usually avoided by others. Therefore, using the facilitative effect of anxiety to help L2 learning is crucial. The optimal amount of anxiety gives students enough challenges and yet makes learners believe that they can handle the tasks. Hence, instructors should try to detect the acquisition difficulties of each learner, and approach different learner with different kinds of tasks that are slightly challenging and bring up facilitative anxiety. In this way, teachers learn how to be able to cater the students’ individual needs.

Despite the facilitative effect of anxiety, most studies showed that students with higher anxiety levels seem to perform lower compared to their lower anxious peers. This study showed that there is a negative correlation between reading anxiety and reading achievement. This is what Cassady & Johnson (2002) had pointed out as debilitating effect of anxiety.

The other implication is that students have often unrealistically high expectations of their performance. If so, the feeling of anxiety would inevitably rise. Sometimes, it is the parents who tend to develop unrealistic expectations of their children’s performance and negatively react to failure (McDonald, 2001). Such condition would, of course, be anxiety provoking and surely cause more negative self-appraisal. Owing to this, to reduce students’ over-anxious feeling, developing a more realistic expectation would be desirable.

The other point worth mentioning is to let anxious students understand where their feelings of uneasiness come from. Knowing what circumstances make them anxious would help them to be prepared in advance.

Learners might not experience the same amount of anxiety in all four skills. Therefore, it would be difficult for students to find out what skills were more threatening than the others. Instructors should encourage students to discuss their source of anxiety, whether their language skills would be.

The findings in this study demonstrate that foreign language anxiety does exist in the EFL learning classroom. Being qualified and responsible English instructors, teachers have to try to help EFL learners minimize learners’ anxiety by building a relaxing and easy classroom atmosphere.

In order to make reading itself less stressful, reading strategy instruction is indicated both to help learners overcome their unrealistic expectations for understanding everything they read and to develop reading practices that are more effective than translation. In addition, teachers should pay careful attention to the selection of texts—especially when
This study aims to discuss the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety, reading anxiety, and reading achievement. However, this study does produce some limitations and disadvantages. One of the limitations of this study is choosing male high school students as the subjects. Future studies can conduct research on university EFL learners and also including the female students before generalizing the results to other Iranian students.

In the present study the reading anxiety of the Iranian students was investigated. Future studies can investigate the existing anxiety of other skills as writing, listening, and speaking during the English learning process.

The FLCAS and FLRAS as the instruments just measure the quantitative amount of anxiety and might not equally explain the real levels of anxiety students experienced. To gain the qualitative data, using other instruments such as interviews and class observations could present a different perspective and shed more lights on the topic.

All the participants in this study came from the same City, which makes the findings less generalizable and in other places it might be different curriculums, different textbooks, different reading test formats, and there might be different teacher student interaction patterns or different peer interaction patterns. All these above-mentioned differences might have an influence on the level of students’ foreign language reading. Future research is suggested to recruit students from more than one city and examine if the findings of this study will be in line with the later findings and how level of foreign language reading anxiety is related to reading test formats and teacher students interaction patterns.

References


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Title

Language Engagement in Task-Based Interaction: Focus on Intonation

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Abstract

Focus on form has a long and distinguished history but this history is exclusively devoted to segmental features rather than suprasegmental features. This research aimed at examining the potentials of four task types in developing a medium for engagement on the part of students on intonation. To this end, 80 participants were assigned to four task type groups and their performance was analyzed using ANOVA to evaluate the potentials of each task type in creating opportunities for attention on intonation. It is established that text-reconstruction was the most potential task in creating opportunities for language engagement at the level of intonation. Since listening skill is the Cinderella skill (neglected by discourse community in comparison with other skills) especially at Asian context, and since task-based instruction has been scientifically proved to have significant effects on language learning, the findings of this research can provide insights for language teachers and learners by helping them to notice how the knowledge and ability to use intonation in communication can be helpful in meaning making.

Keywords: Intonation patterns, Dictogloss, Text reconstruction, Translation task, Jigsaw
1. Introduction

By reviewing the literature on applied linguistics one would see that there is a growing consensus on the efficiency of instruction on both form and meaning. As a result, the most engaging question in L2 pedagogy is no longer about whether any English teaching program should include form focused instruction (FFI) but rather how and when it is most effective. By the introduction of sociolinguistic approaches to learning and the role of scaffolding and collaboration provided in task performance, there has been a new trend of research investigating how students make the joint ownership of a task and how they are involved in task engagement. Most of the studies on focus on form have exclusively focused on segmental elements such as syntax as a language form and have almost neglected suprasegmental elements such as intonation (Mackey, 2006; Nita & Gardener, 2005; Nassaji & Fotos, 2004; Mirzaee et al., 2010; Pica, 1994).

There are controversies over how these features could be incorporated in second and foreign language acquisition. One approach is the traditional Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP) approach. The second approach is integrating intonation practice into a communicative framework of language learning. Here, intonation is incorporated into skill practices such as speaking activities (to practice production of appropriate intonation), and related listening activities (to practice perception of appropriate intonation (Ellis, 1996). This model takes into account the focus-on-form (FonF) which is increasingly being adopted. It has to be said that its emphasis is almost exclusively on grammar, rather than other aspects of form (Doughty and Williams, 1998). This strategic model is a broadly communicative framework. That is, it involves those types of language use (e.g. reading a text for meaning, or participating in a role play) that occur in real-world situations. It is important to note that the second model is only broadly communicative, not exclusively. It means the second model is like the first one; the communicative practice only takes place at the production stage rather than presentation and practice stage. These activities that are not truly communicative involve the meaningful use of language. This allows a type of drilling of language which occurs in meaningful reference and context at production stage. The third approach is a broader level of the integration of these skills with each other, and indeed with other aspects of language to be acquired and exercised such as genre-appropriacy, discourse-grammar features, and vocabulary. That is, the integration occurs in terms of language practice using a body of ideational information which may be a story’s sequence of events, or a descriptive set
of points of information, or a sequence of steps in a procedure or a process in a form of problem solving (Doughty and William, 1998). This research follows the second approach.

To date, the amount of research on how students are engaged with language at suprasegmental levels like intonation in meaning-based context is very much limited not only in number but also in scope (William, 2010). The metatalk opportunities created by each language learning tasks can provide a fruitful medium for attention on intonation. The tasks that the literature of focus on syntax considers as the tasks that provide a context for noticing to take place are text reconstruction, dictogloss, jigsaw and translation. Analyzing the potentiality of these task types in creating the same metatalk opportunities and focus on intonation can be a sound piece of research. In this study, the aim is to see how participants use intonational devices to make their meaning understood and to investigate which task creates more opportunity for participants to use intonational devices to get their meaning communicated.

2. The Research Question
Considering the points mentioned in the preceding section about the metatalk opportunity on intonation and task typology and their role in learner production, the following question is set to find the answer:
1. Is there a difference between the targeted intonation devices used in each group with regard to the types of tasks and metatalk opportunity?

3. Method
3.1 Participants
Eighty non-native male Persian students at intermediate level were selected to take part in this study on the basis of their score on an interview. An interview was designed according to the programs that they went through in their process of English language learning and rated according to FSI (Foreign Service Institute) rating scale (Fulcher and Davidson, 2007). Intermediate participants were selected since for less than advanced learners there were strong competition for attention between form and meaning (Hu, 2002). By manipulation of task conditions (task type and metatalk opportunities), it is possible to influence L2 learners’ priorities in attention allocation.
3.2 Interview
To ensure homogeneity of the groups in terms of language proficiency FSI rating was used. Participants with the score of one standard deviation above the mean and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the target participants. To this end, two experienced raters were asked to attend the interview session and evaluate participants’ performances at the interview session. The inter-rater reliability was calculated. The interview was designed on the basis of the content of the materials that students covered during their education in order to increase its content validity.

3.3 Task Evaluation and Selection

To ensure that participants were familiar with the form and meaning episodes as they encounter in their course book and to ensure that they had the required explicit knowledge to run metatalk, the researchers asked committed teachers to evaluate tasks according to a questionnaire as a checklist (Appendix 2) taken from Nunan (1989) to evaluate the tasks’ appropriateness and efficiency. This was done so that any difference in participants’ performance could be attributed to task conditions rather than participants’ language background. The tasks that the teachers agreed on as being the appropriate and efficient on the basis of the questionnaire were selected for further analysis which were establishing the complexity and content consistency of the tasks.

3.3.1 Evaluating Task Complexity to Ensure Comparability across Tasks

The following check list, i.e. Table 1(taken form Geldenbuys, 2011) was used by the researchers to ensure that the tasks were of the same complexity and to ensure comparability of performances across task types. Five teachers were asked to rate the tasks on the basis of their qualitative judgment guided by the mentioned checklist on a 5 level scale from the simplest (1) to the very complex one (5). The inter-rater reliability was taken as an index of reliability in qualitative evaluation of task complexity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fairly simple (1)</th>
<th>simple (2)</th>
<th>fairly complex (3)</th>
<th>complex (4)</th>
<th>very complex (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The world
3.3.2 Task Content Consistency

Four tasks were designed with a common content which was established on the basis of participants’ answers to the topic familiarity questionnaire (Appendix 1) to make the comparability across tasks possible. First, the dictogloss task was designed and its input’s difficulty level was calculated to ensure comprehensibility of the input for the participants and its appropriateness to participants’ level of proficiency. To design text-reconstruction, this input was deprived of the most frequent linguistic devices occurred in LREs according to Mayo's study (2002) which participants were supposed to reconstruct collaboratively. The input for dictogloss was translated to Farsi to construct the translation task. For the jigsaw, the content of the text was transferred to pictures or ideograms which were designed to elicit the same content as the other three activities.

3.4 Tape Recorder

Tape recorders were used to record participants’ interactions. The teacher was asked to run a warm up to reduce any stress that might have been caused by the presence of tape recorders.
3.5 Procedure
The topic familiarity questionnaire was administered for three reasons: 1) to determine participants’ background knowledge, 2) to ensure the absence of preexisting differences and 3) to determine the tasks that the participants were more confident at. The sample tasks were taken from the materials that the participants studied on the basis of their answers to the mentioned questionnaire. The sample tasks were evaluated according to the checklist provided to determine the appropriateness of the tasks for the intended participants (Appendix 2). The final tasks were once again evaluated by five teachers to establish their complexity level according to Geldenbuys' checklist (2011).

The participants were assigned into four groups. Two homogeneity criteria were noticed in assigning them into four groups, i.e. the linguistic knowledge and their proficiency level. Each group was given a different task (dictogloss, text construction, translation task, or jigsaw). To avoid any misunderstanding in the task procedure, researchers instructed the participants in L1 to perform the tasks. Since participants had limited ability to carry out metatalk, they were allowed to use their L1 during task performance. No time restriction was imposed, as long as the task was completed in a fifty-minute class period. To make their meaning as clear, coherent and precise as possible, learners discussed the language form (morphosyntax through to discourse and pragmatics) and lexical choice and suprasegmental language features including intonational devices. Their performances were audio recorded for further analysis of intonational devices they used in their interaction.

3.6 Design
The performances in each group were audio-taped for data analysis. Then, each recorded interaction was transcribed. The researchers analyzed the data for measuring the frequency with which different intonation devices were used by participants in each group. Descriptive statistics on the intonational devices on four groups’ performances were provided. ANOVA was used to find statistically significant differences in intonation devices participants used in each group so the differences could be attributed to task type and their potentials in creating opportunities for metatalk. The data were analyzed quantitatively in order to examine the different metatalk opportunities each task type created on intonational devices. The quantitative analysis involved examining the frequency by which different intonation patterns were used by learners in each of the four groups.

3.7 The Intonational Devices
According to William (2010), participants in an interaction use intonational devices for turn and conversation management. They use questioning intonation to ask for more clarification.
or they use exclamatory intonation that acts as an either clarification request or confirmation check. They may have sound stretching for either turn keeping or as a sign of misunderstanding and appeal for more help. They also have louder than surrounding sounds to emphasize a point.

**Table 2 Intonational Devises and Their Functions in Interaction (William, 2010)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intonation patterns</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question intonation</td>
<td>Clarification request</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loader than the surrounding talk</td>
<td>Emphatic</td>
<td>CAPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclamatory intonation</td>
<td>Interest to continue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiration, inhalations and falling intonation</td>
<td>Hesitations/ appeal for help</td>
<td>hhh/ .hhh/ ↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These intonational resources were used as units of measuring the difference in production in each group. ANOVA was used to answer the research question by comparing the mean score of the intonational devices used by each group. William’s (2010) coding system, Table 2, was used to determine intonational devises and their functions in interaction in each group.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Descriptive Statistics on Interview

An interview was administered for the selection of intermediate participants to enter in this study by two trained raters using FSI rating scale. The analysis related to this part is displayed in Table 3 and the related histogram is displayed in Figure 1.

**Table 3 Descriptive Statistics on the Interview Assessment for the Selection of Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview scores</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>66.11</td>
<td>5.34401</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid N (list wise) 100
4.2 Inter-Rater Reliability in the Interview Assessment

The analysis related to raters’ rating the participants in the interview is depicted in Table 4 which displays the related descriptive statistics and Table 5 which displays the correlation coefficient related to raters.

**Table 4 Descriptive Statistics on Raters’ Rating on the Interview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rater 1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>41.00</td>
<td>83.00</td>
<td>65.9900</td>
<td>5.46706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater 2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>83.00</td>
<td>66.2300</td>
<td>5.32358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid N (list wise) 100

To calculate the inter-rater reliability, raters’ scores on participants’ oral proficiency were entered into SPSS. Table 5 gives the correlation coefficient between each of the two possible pairings of ratings.

**Table 5 Correlations for Calculating Inter-Rater Reliability on the Interview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rater 1</th>
<th>Rater 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rater 1</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1  .962**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)       .000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N                   100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater 2</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation  .962** 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)       .000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N                   100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5  Correlations for Calculating Inter-Rater Reliability on the Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rater 1</th>
<th>Rater 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.962**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater 2</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula was used to calculate inter rater reliability (Brown, 1996). The adjustment can be applied to any one of the coefficients reported in Table 5 but a careful approach to all statistics is to use the lowest estimate. So the Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula was applied as follows:

\[ r_{xx} = \frac{n \times r}{(n-1)r + 1} \]

\[ r_{xx} = \frac{2 \times 0.962}{(2 - 1)0.962 + 1} = 0.98 \]

Since the reliability estimate was close to one as the ideal estimate, it could be concluded that the interview and the rating procedure adapted by the trained raters could be a sound source for participant selection and homogeneity concerns.

Since the mean score in the interview was 66.11 and the standard deviation was 5.34 in descriptive statistics (Table 3), the scores of one standard deviation above the mean and one standard deviation below the mean were selected as the scores representative of intermediate level in the following way:

\[ X + 1SD \rightarrow 66.11 + 5.34 = 71.45 \]
\[ X - 1SD \rightarrow 66.11 - 5.34 = 60.77 \]

Thus, the participants who were scored within the range of 60.77 to 71.45 were selected for the purpose of this study.

4.3 Task Complexity Evaluation

To ensure comparability across tasks, the teachers were asked to rate the complexity of each task on the basis of their own qualitative judgment guided by the checklist taken form Geldenbuys (2011). Since this evaluation is based on the correlation between the raters, inter-rater reliability was calculated using Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula, (Brown, 1996).
\[ r_{xx} = \frac{n \times r}{(n - 1)r + 1} \]

\[ r_{xx} = \frac{5 \times 0.632}{(5 - 1)0.632 + 1} = 0.89 \]

The 0.89 degree of correlation between the five raters displayed a close to 1 reliability index in the decisions made by the raters over the complexity of the tasks presented to students.

**4.4 Intonational Devices across Four Task Types**

The intonational resources reported in Table 2 were used as units of measuring the difference in production in each group. The following episodes taken from the data of the present research are represented to make clear how William’s (2010) framework was used by the researchers.

**Example 1, Jigsaw Task:**

S1: so they divorce
S2: yes
S1: It cause many problems
S2: it causes (*louder than surrounding talk*) (*emphatic; CAPS*)
S1: yes because of it….causes is true

**Example 2, Dictogloss Task:**

S1: Divorce can has many effects
S2: divorce can have harmful effects on both children and spouses
S1: yes children as well as their spouses
S2: The next….. (*Exclamatory intonation; interest to continue*)
S1: the next. Ok the next one ….. (interruption from the S2)
S2: The next social issue is ……( interruption from the S1)
S1: we used social issue a lot

**Example 3, Dictogloss Task:**

S1: It causes problems psychologically
S2: (*hesitations, aspiration which act as an appeal for help from the partner; hhh*)
S1: S1 (repeats her contribution)
S2 : (*again hesitations and aspirations on the part of S2*)
S1: look it causes mentally and physically and psychologically
S2: like ………
S1: like depression
S1 OK *(rising intonation to check if S2 understood)*

S2: yes yes

Example 4, Translation Task:

S1: Addiction affect people who connect

S2: It not only effect addicted people but also who connected also

S1: but also who connected also *(question intonation which act ad request for clarification)*

S2: it not only have effects on addicted people but also ….. but also people who connected too

S1: why too?

S2: why too ….why too *(falling intonation; hhh)*

S1: but also people who are *(louder than surrounding talk) connected*

S2; yes are is ok

Each occurrence of the intonation functions reported in Table 2 was treated as a test score. One-way ANOVA was used to answer the research question by comparing the mean score of the intonational devices used in each group. The following tables show the results of the statistical analysis.

**Table 6 Descriptive Statistics on Intonational Devices across Four Task Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intonation devices</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation task</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.6000</td>
<td>.99472</td>
<td>.22243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictogloss</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.8000</td>
<td>.89443</td>
<td>.20000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3000</td>
<td>1.41793</td>
<td>.31706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text reconstruction</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.9000</td>
<td>1.16529</td>
<td>.26057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1.4000</td>
<td>1.18642</td>
<td>.13265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7 One Way ANOVA on Intonational Devices across Four Tasks Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intonation devices</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>13.200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.412</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1.289</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>111.200</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By reviewing the p-value of the test, the researchers found that there was a significant difference between the task types in terms of intonational devices participants have used in different task types. That is, different task types had different potentiality in creating a
medium for language related engagements in terms of intonational devices used. Since the p-value was 0.022 and it was less than confidence level (0.05), the hypothesis claiming that there was a statistically significant difference between task types in terms of language engagement they create at intonational level, was confirmed. But to find the exact locations of the differences, the researchers ran a post hoc comparison. By reviewing the results of post hoc comparison on intonational devices across four task types, one would see that the p value in all comparisons was not significant (greater than 0.05) except for the p value in comparison between text-reconstruction and dictogloss. So, the researchers found that only the mean difference between text reconstruction and dictogloss was significant. As a result, differences on performances on other tasks types were not significant.

Table 8

Post hoc Comparison on Intonational Devices across Four Tasks Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intonation devices</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation task</td>
<td>Dictogloss</td>
<td>.80000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>-.1433 1.7433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
<td>.30000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>-.6433 1.2433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text reconstruction</td>
<td>-.30000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>-1.2433 .6433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictogloss</td>
<td>Translation task</td>
<td>-.80000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>-1.7433 .1433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
<td>-.50000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.508</td>
<td>-1.4433 .4433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text reconstruction</td>
<td>-1.10000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>-2.0433 -.1567</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jigsaw</td>
<td>Translation task</td>
<td>-.30000</td>
<td>.35909</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>-1.2433 .6433</td>
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Iranian EFL Journal
To analyze which task led to the use of more intonational devices than the other; text reconstruction or dictogloss, Table 6 was recalled. By comparing the mean differences in descriptive statistics, it is perfectly clear that text reconstruction with the mean of 1.90 had more potentiality in creation of a medium for language engagement at the level of intonation than dictogloss with the mean of 0.80. Although the mean difference between other task types was not significant, a glance at Table 6 shows that after text-reconstruction, translation best led to more use of intonational devices (with the mean of 1.60) and then jigsaw task (with the mean of 1.30) and the final rank is for dictogloss (with the mean of 0.80). Since the mean differences between the tasks were not significant except for text reconstruction and dictogloss, the researchers cannot confidently make claims about other task types.

5. Discussion
Dictogloss has been thought to provide a medium for language engagement on the part of learners did not lend itself for the occurrence of intonation devices whereas text-reconstruction did. One possible reason is that in dictogloss group, participants listened to the input so they had established a common ground on what the content means. This causes the level of misunderstanding to be at its minimum level whereas in text reconstruction participants received a distorted text for which they were supposed to first analyze the content and its prepositional meaning and then its higher ideational level. After working on its meaning at the mentioned two levels, they were supposed to fill the missing parts and correct the ungrammatical points so that the distorted text became meaningful. To this end, they needed to extend their resources more to whatever they had at their disposal to fulfill the requirement of constructing the text. So, they used intonational devices for turn and conversation management to come along with a meaningful text. To this end, they used rising intonation which acted as a request for more clarification when there was an incomplete

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.
understanding or the case of misunderstanding (see examples taken from the data on page 14 and 15). They also used louder than the surrounding voice to emphasize a point when they could not come to an agreement over a point (see examples taken from the data on page 14 and 15). By evaluating the types of intonational devices operationally defined, the most frequently occurred intonational device was rising intonation which acted as a request for clarification and more information.

Although the results with other task types were not significant in comparison with the dictogloss and text reconstruction to make a claim in favor of the other task types in creating a medium for attention on intonation, the researchers cannot ignore the fact that other task types also provided some level of attention allocation on intonation devices for making themselves understood and understanding others. The mean number of these cases is displayed in Table 6 (translation task: 1.60, jigsaw: 1.30). One possible reason why participants were not very much engaged in using intonation as a linguistic device to communicate across these task types is that the participants and in general Iranian students are exposed to written materials and very little to oral ones. So, they are very much confident at making their meaning understandable through content words and grammar rather than suprasegmental features. Moreover, they are not familiar with the functions of these features. The other problem is that they don’t know how these features could be used in negotiation of meaning. Since Iranian students are exposed to segmental features including vocabulary and grammar, it can be a sound piece of research to expose students to suprasegmental features and their functions and then study the ways by which this exposure (either through explicit or implicit instruction) could be used to promote zone of proximal development (ZPD). Then, a step can be taken ahead and the degree of potentiality of each task in creating more metatalk opportunity and attention on intonation or other suprasegmental features can be evaluated.

6. Conclusion
As we have seen throughout the present research, it is obvious that potentiality of each task in creating language learning environment is different. Language engagement at the level of syntax has been established in language learning literature but language engagement at the level of suprasegmental features is open to research. This research can open up a window for further analysis of potentiality of language instruments in creating different mediums for noticing to take place for different language elements including segmental as well as suprasegmental features.
References


Appendix 1 Topic Familiarity Questionnaire

Which activities are you confident at?
Choose from the highest confidence to the lowest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. positive thinking and negative thinking</td>
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<td>2. child labor</td>
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<td>3. Iran's educational system and its problems</td>
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<td>4. living alone</td>
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<td>5. social problems</td>
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<td>6. Describing people</td>
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<td>7. Telling stories</td>
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<td>8. movies</td>
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<td>9. travel</td>
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<td>10. men and woman differences</td>
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Appendix 2 Task Evaluation Questionnaire

1. To what extent is the goal or goals of the task obvious a) to you b) to your students?
2. Is the task appropriate to the learners’ proficiency level?
3. To what extent does the task reflect a real-world or pedagogic rational? Is this appropriate?
4. Is the task likely to be interesting and motivating to the students?
5. Is there an information gap or problem which might promote a negotiation of meaning?
6. Are the activities designed in a way which will allow learners to communicate and cooperate with others?
7. To what extent are learners encouraged to negotiate meaning?
8. Is the task at the appropriate level of difficulty for students?
9. If not, is there any way in which the task might be modified in order to make it either easier or more challenging?
10. Is the task realistic in terms of the resources and teacher-expertise it demands?

Appendix 3 Task types

1. Dictogloss
1.1 Instructions
Try to reconstruct the text you are going to listen to with the help of your partner. You must reproduce the original text as faithfully as possible and in a grammatically accurate form. The text will be read twice at normal speed. The first time you listen to the text try to understand the meaning and do not write anything down. The second time you may take notes, writing down either key words or expressions that will help to reconstruct the
text. Working together you will have to write a final version that is as correct as possible grammatically speaking. Revise carefully what you have written attempting to correct anything that doesn’t look right.

1.2. Input
There are many countries in the world which are experiencing a variety of problems. Poverty, for example is bad conditions in which people are unable to have their basic needs. Poor people do not have the necessary resources and capacity to have basic needs like food, shelter, health and education. They live under difficult conditions which do not help them to develop their human potential. The other social issue is unemployment. Unemployment and poverty can be harmful for social relations. They can destroy harmony and unity of the family and they can create a feeling of dependence on others. Such effects stop the development of responsibility and self-dependence. Similarly important issue is gender discrimination. Women and men are equally important for the growth and development of individual and social lives. Unfortunately men are thought to have major roles in the society. This discrimination can be seen in work places by giving highly prestigious jobs and higher salary to men. The other important issue is divorce. Much of society has accepted divorce as the solution for a bad marriage. Children of divorce experience psychological harm, health problems, depression and loss of motivation for future life. Crime is one of major social problems presently. Criminal acts of violence may arise within families, within friends or within the whole society. Crime has an impact on the quality of life of the people in society including human injury, destruction, and dehumanization. Banishing criminals to prisons have also become the ground for future violence. Addiction is also one of the important social issues. It can be the cause or the effect of the problems we talked about. This not only affects the people whom it directly touches but its effect spread along the society in the form of various diseases like HIV or criminal acts.

2. Text reconstruction
2.1 Instructions
Try to reconstruct the text with the help of your partner. You will have to add the words that are missing so that the text is meaningful. Linkers (i.e. prepositions, conjunctions … etc) have been omitted. Verb endings and articles have also been eliminated. Some words are written in an incorrect form. Discuss with your partner the most accurate way of completing the text and provide the missing words and correct form of the incorrectly written words. You can also make changes if you consider them necessary. You may wish to add some words to connect the different sentences to improve cohesion. Write a grammatically correct final version of the text.

2.2. Input
There are many country in the world ……. are experiencing a various of problems. Poverty, for example is bad conditions in………. people is unable to look after their basic needs. Poor people does not have thenecessity resources and capacity to have basic needs like food, shelter,healthy and education. They live under difficulty conditions ……. do not help them to develop their human potential. ……… Social issue is unemployment. Unemployment …….. poverty can be harmful for social relations and they can destroy harmony and unity of the family and they can create a feeling of dependence on others. Such effects stopped the development of responsible and self-dependence. Similarly important issue is gender discrimination. Women and men are equal
important for growth and development of individual and social lives. Unfortunately, men are thought to have major roles in the society. This discrimination seen in work places by giving high prestigious jobs and higher salary to men. .......important issue is divorce. Much of society has accept divorce as the solution for a bad marriage. Children of divorce .......... psychological harm, health problems, depression and loss of motivation for future life. Crime...... one of major social problems presently. Criminal acts of violence may arise within families, within friends or within the whole society. Crime have an ...... on the quality of life of the people in society including human injury, destruction, and dehumanization. Banishing criminals to prisons have also become the ground for future violence. Addiction is ...... one of the importance social issues. It can be the cause or the effect of the problems we talked about. This does not only affect the people ...... it directly touches but its effect spread along the society in the form of variety..... diseases like HIV or criminal acts.

3. Translation
3.1 Instruction
Read the following passage and try to provide the English equivalent with the help of your partner. Write a grammatically correct English version of the text.

3.2 Input

3.1 Instruction
Read the following passage and try to provide the English equivalent with the help of your partner. Write a grammatically correct English version of the text.

3.2 Input

4. Jigsaw
4.1 Instruction
Try to convey to your partner in English the meaning of the pictures you are holding. Study them carefully so that you know exactly what they mean. One of you will have series 1, 3 and 5; and the other, series 2, 4 and 6. You cannot look at each other’s pictures. Beginning with picture number 1 you will have to convey the information contained in your respective series (in order). Once the information is complete, you should write the information in a coherent and grammatically correct paragraph. Please, revise your text carefully.
4.1. Visual stimulus

Series 1

Series 2

Series 3

Series 4
Title

On the Relationship between Recasts and Learner's uptake: Evidence from a Young Adult EFL Class

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Biodata

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Abstract

Over the past few years, the controversial issue of recasts as an error correction technique has long been raised and searched. Research on recasts has produced mixed findings, hence raising concerns about its effectiveness in relation to learner's uptake, particularly, in meaning-oriented classrooms. A number of studies on corrective feedback persistently indicate that although teachers use a variety of implicit negative feedback of which recasts are the most frequent type, the efficiency of recasts in triggering learner's immediate repair has been questioned (Lyster & Ranta,1997). In contrast, other studies, conducted in communicative-oriented contexts, have concluded findings which show a positive effect for recasts (Ayoun, 2001; Braidi, 2002; Doughty & Valera, 1998; Han, 2002; Havranek, 2002; Iwashita, 2003; Leeman, 2003; Macky & Philip, 1998; Oliver & Macky, 2003). To shed more light on this issue, the current study makes an attempt to investigate whether the respective findings hold true when teachers use recasts in young adult EFL contexts. Accordingly, in the present study, 16 hours of naturally-occurring interaction between a teacher and students including different patterns of feedback and their relationship to uptake and immediate
repair of errors were all audiotaped, transcribed, and analyzed based on the
categories identified in Lyster and Ranta's model of discourse corrective feedback
(1997). Of the total turns involving 306 student turns as well as 259 teacher turns,
177 episodes containing a trigger, a feedback move, and a subsequent uptake in
response to the feedback were counted. The findings which are on the basis of the
frequency and distribution of recasts in comparison to those of other types of
feedback in addition to the relationship of recasts with learner's uptake indicate:
1) recasts were found to be the most frequently preferred corrective technique
used by the teacher, even though this CF technique yields the least uptake; 2)
learner's repair in response to recasts is frequently accompanied by repetition; 3)
in those cases that recasts lead to needs repair, acknowledgment is seen as the
frequent type of uptake applied by the learner; 4) when combined with other
feedback techniques such as elicitation or clarification request, recasts can
successfully elicit learner's immediate repair and uptake.

Key words: recasts, uptake, self-repair, repetition, acknowledgment.

1. Introduction

In the second language acquisition context, two types of feedback to which second language
learners are exposed include positive evidence as well as negative evidence (Long, 1996).
Positive evidence is concerned with the provision of what is acceptable for learners in the
context of language learning either in the form of authentic native speaker discourse or of
modified language which simplifies or elaborates the input to enhance learner
comprehension. In contrast, negative evidence involves the provision of information for
learners as to what is unacceptable in L2.

In SLA literature, the term negative evidence is often utilized interchangeably with two
other terms as negative feedback and corrective feedback to any indications of learners' use of
non-target language features in L2 (Gass, 199; Schacter, 1991). One of the ways language
teachers attempt to guide learners is by providing them with feedback concerning their use of
language. The term corrective feedback (CF) needs to be defined as the teacher reaction that
transforms, disapproves or demands improvement of the learner utterance (Chaudron, 1977).
Actually, CF tells the students that they have mentioned something incorrect allowing them
to absorb changes and make progress to use more native-like and comprehensible utterances.
In this regard, another term which is closely related to CF is uptake that refers to different
types of student responses pursuing the feedback, including responses with repair of the non-
target items as well as utterances which are still in need of repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). The provision of correction may come from the student, a peer or the teacher.

To deal with error treatment, teachers can provide learners with many different types of corrective feedback, for instance, through the use of recasts which are implicit and can be defined as the reformulations of the erroneous sentences minus the error(s) or through other techniques which are more explicit such as elicitations, clarification requests, metalinguistic clues and repetitions (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Sheen, 2004).

While many researchers have fully investigated the interactional patterns of different types of CF and their effectiveness in yielding learner's uptake and repair, much less has been reported on the effectiveness of recasts as a CF type in young adult EFL contexts. Accordingly, this study has a focus on recasts, a frequently, yet ambiguous CF type in an Iranian context of young adults.

2. Review of Related Literature

In recent years, due to the nature of recasts, a substantial body of research concentrates on the controversial issue of recasts as a CF type frequently utilized by the teachers in the communicative-based contexts. Slimani's observational study (1992) whose findings were relevant to the issue of feedback and recasts, allowed him to conclude that students failed to claim 36% of the language items focused on during the lessons. Slimani also found that unnoticed instances of error correction had occurred when teachers reformulated erroneous utterances implicitly (i.e., recasts). In contrast to the respective finding, the noticed items were the ones that had arisen incidentally during classroom interaction, targeted by more elicitive feedback types. Actually, learners noticed those forms that they were pushed to self-repair more than those forms which were implicitly reformulated by the teacher.

With respect to Lyster and Ranta's study (1997) conducted in French immersion classes, the most widely used type of classroom feedback were recasts which might also be the least successful feedback type leading to the learners' uptake, that is to say, not being noticed by students. Recasts, based on their study, were the teacher's reformulations of all or part of learner's erroneous utterance. In fact, 55% of the total CF types or over half of the time were in the form of recasts.

Lyster's further analysis (1998b) concerning the function and the distribution of recasts in comparison to the distribution of teacher's non-corrective repetitions of well-formed utterances suggested that the corrective nature of recasts might not be the primary one,
especially when directed at the content of the erroneous utterances. Based on this argument, they concluded that recasts had more in common with non-corrective repetition and topic continuation than with other kinds of corrective feedback. In sum, recasts could be perceived by learners as positive evidence and confirmation of meaning rather than negative evidence and feedback on form.

In another study, Lyster (2004) compared recasts to prompts including elicitations, metalinguistic cues, clarification requests and repetitions for the acquisition of grammatical gender in French. Based on this study, Lyster found that when combined with form-focused instruction, prompts were more effective than recasts for learners’ acquisition of rule-based representations of grammatical gender. Correspondingly, in Panova and Lyster (2002), repair moves pursued recasts only 13% of the time and in total resulted in 40% of uptake of any sort. Accordingly, it was concluded that students who received prompts achieved accuracy in subsequent language processing than those who received recasts.

With regard to the effectiveness of recasts, in their own research, Mackey and Philip (1998) also concluded that recasts might be effective for motivated adult learners despite the absence of any immediate response. Furthermore, Lyster and Mori (2006) investigated two immersion settings, and found that recasts generated learner uptake more often in the Japanese immersion classrooms (61%) than in the immersion French setting. Actually, these findings led to the confusion concerning the effectiveness of recasts that different factors such as instructional context, age, and motivation among other possible factors could perhaps trigger different findings. One of the criticisms toward Lyster’s findings was that his studies took place in immersion classrooms, and that his results have not been obtained in other instructional settings.

In spite of the previously mentioned findings regarding the ineffectiveness of recasts, several researchers found that recasts are beneficial for short term language learning (Ayoun, 2001; Braidi, 2002; Doughty & Valera, 1998; Han, 2002; Havranek, 2002; Iwashita, 2003; Leeman, 2003; Macky & Philip, 1998; Oliver & Mackey, 2003). Other researchers (Long et al., 1998) carried out studies to investigate the relative utility of recasts in Japanese and Spanish as L2. They suggested that recasts, although communicatively oriented and focused on meaning rather than form, provided learners with relevant morpho-syntactic information and so they were more useful than positive input on achieving short term improvement on previously unknown L2 structures.

In another study taking place in a laboratory, Han (2002) found that recasting increases learner’s noticing and development of morphosyntactic features. In this regard, some other
researchers (Long & Robinson, 1998; Iwashita, 2003) advocate the beneficial and facilitative role of recasts so that they were significant in indicating learners how their interlanguage was different from target language. Indeed, the degree of benefit achieved depended on many factors like the way recasts were presented, the learning level of the student, the context in which recasts were presented, the type of errors, etc.

On the effectiveness of recasts and its relatedness to the instructional contexts, Oliver and Mackey (2003) and Sheen (2004) confirmed Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) findings that recasts are the most common form of error correction used by language teachers. However, they interestingly found that the discourse context of foreign language classroom plays an important role in whether or not a recast results in the learner’s uptake of correction. Accordingly, Sheen (2004) also claims that the instructional setting can be regarded as a factor that contributes to whether or not recasts results in learner uptake. This researcher concluded that the rates for uptake and repair were greater in some contexts than others. In line with these researchers, Long (2006) asserts that foreign and second language teachers should not reject the use of recasts in their classrooms simply because they have not been found to be useful in some immersion classroom settings.

Despite lots of studies on the issue of recasts, Russell (2009) believes that Oral error correction is an area where research can inform and improve practice. Thus, in order to assist practicing foreign and second language teachers in a meaningful way, SLA research through a combination of qualitative and quantitative studies should attempt to contribute to the teachers’ informed understanding on this controversial issue.

To shed more light on this issue, the current study intends to investigate whether the respective findings hold true when recasts are used in young adult EFL contexts. Thus, to achieve this end, this study addresses the following questions:
1. What are the frequency and distribution of recasts in comparison to other types of feedback?
2. What is the relationship between recasts and learner’s uptake?

3. Methodology

To appropriately address these questions, teacher-student interaction was meticulously audiotaped, transcribed, coded and examined in terms of a comparison between the frequency of the different types of corrective feedback and recasts used by the teacher as well as their contribution to learners’ uptake.
3.1. Participants
3.1.1 Teacher
A 28 year-old female teacher who had been teaching English in different language institutes in Yazd and Shiraz participated in this study. She received her M.A degree in TEFL from Yazd University 2 years ago, in advance of this study. Based on observations, due to the occurrence of a great amount of interaction between the teacher and learners, this teacher and her class were selected for the present study.

3.2.2. Learners
15 female students aged between 13 to15 took part in the study. They were all native speakers of Persian studying English at level 8 of New Parade series, book 4 by Jack.C. Richards held at Navid Language Institute in Yazd, Iran. The participants have been studying English for 2 years.

3.2. Data Collection
Over a three-week period, the researcher collected the whole data for this study which came from an Iranian EFL class, at level 8 based on English New Parade, book four. The textbook which is entirely communicatively and interactionally oriented, features meaning-focused activities and tasks, pair work, group work, discussion, cooperative learning, rhythm, songs and chants. All interactions and conversations occurring between the teacher and learners were audiotaped during 8 sessions. In deed, in the process of data analysis, some irrelevant parts of transcription related to each session which belonged to greeting, the provision of input, giving instruction, checking learners' homework and assigning homework for the next session were ignored. Since this research study was meant to be observational and descriptive, there was no control over the way the teacher handled her class. Thus, neither the teacher nor the learners were informed of the purpose of tape-recording.

The amount of negative feedback including recasts and other feedback types the teacher provided to learners as well as the patterns of uptake, self repair and topic continuation being in learners' utterances were measured by coding for analysis. The audiotaped teacher-student interaction was precisely transcribed and coded by the researcher assisted by a colleague. The researcher previously provided the colleague with the definitions of the coding categories to make sure the elimination of any incompatibility. Actually, the main purpose of involving an assistant was to entertain the inter-rater reliability. After the establishment of inter-rater reliability, the researcher and the coder separately coded the entire set of data.

3.3 Data Analysis
The coding definitions for this research study to analyze the different types of feedback applied by the teacher were totally based on the model of corrective feedback developed by Lyster and Ranta (1997). With respect to this model, the error treatment sequence is described as learner error, teacher feedback and learner uptake. In this regard, the present study makes an attempt to follow the respective descriptions and categories. In the pursuing sections, each component of this model is meticulously taken into account:

3.3.1 Learner Error
The different types of errors are categorized as phonological, lexical, grammatical and multiple. Lyster and Ranta (1997) also introduced another category of L1 unsolicited error for those cases where learners utilized their L1 interactional move. In the current study, although learner's background was homogeneous, this error type was not seen at all. In general, all different types of errors comprised in this study were labeled as error.

3.3.2 Feedback
There are six different sorts of corrective feedback used by the teacher in response to learners' errors which are labeled as (note that the examples proceeding each section were taken from the recorded data of a communicative young adult Iranian context, which were concisely transcribed and coded based on categories and descriptions identified in Lyster and Ranta's model of discourse):

1. Explicit Correction: The teacher explicitly provides the correct form of the erroneous form generated by the student. As the teacher corrects the erroneous form, he or she clearly indicates that what the student has said is incorrect. Occasionally, the wrong form is identified along with the provision of a correct form in teacher's turn.
   S: But Mary didn't go and the Mary came.
   T: Mary came not the Mary.
   S: Mary came and they saw Mary.

2. Recasts: A type of feedback in which the teacher reformulates all or parts of the student's utterance and provides as implicitly as possible the correct form of the erroneous one made by the student. This feedback type is implicit in that they are not introduced by phrases such as you mean, and you should say. It means that the teacher would not show that the learner committed an error, but merely supplies a correct form.
   S: He cleans the kitchen and cook supper.
   T: And he cooks supper.
   S: He wash the dishes.
3. **Clarification Request**: The teacher gets the learner to understand that his utterance is either misunderstood or incorrect and thus asks him or her to clarify it. These are either in the form of question such as *pardon?* and *sorry?* or attempts to reveal the intended form of the error with the rising tone. This kind of corrective feedback is generated when there are linguistic problems in the learner's turn or when the learner's utterance is not comprehensible.

S: He understand.
T: Sorry?
S: He understands.
S: He does his homework and play.
T: What?
S: Plays football.

4. **Metalinguistic Feedback**: This includes either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form. Actually, it points to the nature of error to elicit the information from the student. Metalinguistic comments make the learner analyze his or her utterance linguistically, not quite in a meaning-oriented manner.

S: Give beautiful plates, glasses and rugs but not one the presents was special.
T: Are you talking about *present* or *past*? so for *past* you should say gave them some special presents, ok?
S: I think she say they lives many years ago.

5. **Elicitation**: This is a CF technique used by the teacher to directly elicit the correct form from the student. One way is that teachers try to elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to fill in the blank as it were. The other technique is that teachers resort to the use of questions to elicit corret forms. In each case, teachers do not provide correct forms in their turn.

S: She has a long black eye lashes.
T: She has...
S: She has long black eye lashes.

6. **Repetition**: The teacher simply repeats the student's erroneous form to draw learner's attention to it. In most cases, teachers adjust their intonation to emphasize the error.

S: He oftened watch.
T: He oftened?
S: Yes, he often watched the birds.

3.3.3 Uptake Types
In this study, uptake is also defined on the basis of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model. This term refers "to a learner's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance"(Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Uptake, then, shows the learner's attempt to work on the feedback received. With respect to Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model, uptake moves are categorized into repair when the uptake move leads to repair of an error and needs-repair when an error is not repaired in the uptake move. No uptake, as the third category, refers to the case where teacher feedback is not responded to nor reacted to by the student. Instances of no uptake are worth analyzing, since it would reveal what kind of feedback is unlikely to lead to uptake. Four kinds of repair identified in Lyster and Ranta's model are used in this study: repetition, self-repair, peer-repair and incorporation. The pursuing examples vividly illustrate these kinds of repairs.

1. **Repetition**: A student repeats the correct form given in the teacher's feedback when the feedback includes the correct form.

S: I'm sweat. (error, grammatical)
T: I sweet not I'm sweat. (feedback, explicit correction)
S: I sweat. (repair, repetition)

2. **Self-repair**: This refers to a self-correction, made by the student who committed the initial error, in response to the teacher's feedback when the corrective feedback does not contain the correct form.

S: I going shopping. (error, grammatical)
T: I going? (feedback, repetition)
S: shopping, I go shopping. (repair, self-repair)

3. **Peer-repair**: This refers to peer-correction provided by a student, other than the one who committed the initial error, in response to the teacher's feedback.

S1: I'm talking of cousins. He is a boy. (error, lexical)
T. Sorry, I'm talking of cousins? (feedback, clarification request)
S2. Thinking of. (repair, peer-repair)
T. I'm thinking of cousins not talking.

4. **Incorporation**: It refers to "a student's repetition of the correct form provided by the teacher, which is then incorporated into a longer utterance produced by the student" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p.50)

S: And the youngest brother was, had. (error, grammatical)
T. had (feedback, recast)
S: had short black hair.
The other type of uptake is needs-repair when the learner responds to the corrective feedback but the learner's utterance does not result in repairing original erroneous utterance. Six types of needs-repair are identified in Lyster and Ranta's model which include: acknowledgment, same error, different error, off-target, hesitation and partial repair.

1. **Acknowledgment**: This refers to the situation where the learner positively recognizes teacher's feedback, generally responding *yes* or *yeah*, as if to say, yes, that is what I meant to say.

S: Mother or father cook the meal. (error, grammatical)
T: Mother or father cooks the meal. (feedback, recast)
S: Yes. (needs-repair, acknowledgment)

2. **Same error**: The learner provides uptake in response to teacher's feedback, but repeats the same error in his or her turn.

S: They decided go. (error, grammatical)
T: Sorry? (feedback, clarification request)
S: decided go. (needs-repair, same error)

3. **Different error**: The learner neither corrects nor repeats the error after the feedback but makes a different error.

S: What does it come from? (lexical error)
T: What or where?
S: Oh, where do it come from? (needs-repair, different error)

4. **Off-target**: The learner responds to teacher feedback but not to the targeted form in the feedback.

S: What does the older brother look like? (error, grammatical)
T: What did the oldest brother look like? (feedback, recast)
S: He had curly black hair. (needs-repair, off-target)

5. **Partial repair**: This refers to the learner's uptake which includes a correction of only part of the original error.

S: Man doesn't want…to come. (error, grammatical)
T: Didn't want him to come near. (feedback, recast)
S: Didn't want to come near and did take a plate of her. (needs-repair, partial error).

4. **Results**
Since the focus of this research is to indicate the comparison of the patterns of different corrective feedback with that of recasts as well as their effects on learner's uptake, we are not reporting the absolute number of errors generated by learners. Rather, the number of total turns, episodes including errors, which lead to learner's uptake and immediate repair, are taken into account. In this regard, we counted a total of 306 student turns as well as 259 teacher turns. Of the total turns, 177 episodes each containing a trigger (error) produced by the learner, a feedback move from the teacher and a subsequent uptake in response to the feedback were counted.

The number and the percentage of distribution of each feedback type were provided in table 1.

**Table 1: Distribution of Feedback Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Types</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit correction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recasts</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>51.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarification Request</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic feedback</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>21.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18.07%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 1, it is evident that recasts are the most frequently teacher-generated feedback type. Slightly over half (51.97%) of the total sorts of feedback used by the teacher is in the form of recasts. This shows that the teacher mostly prefers to apply recasts in response to learner errors. Two other types of feedback, which were frequently utilized in this context, are elicitation and repetition. In the case of other types of feedback, the low frequency of use is observed.

In table 2, the number and percentage of feedback moves that lead to uptake are demonstrated.

**Table 2: Number and Percentage of Distribution of Teacher's feedback and learner Uptake**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Uptake</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Topic continuation (No Uptake)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit correction (n=5)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recasts (n=92)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With respect to the data in table 2, the most common feedback technique in this study are recasts which are effective in producing 41.3% of successful student-generated repair; whereas 58.7% of such moves does not lead to uptake. In other words, students do not respond to 58.7% of recasts. As clearly indicated, metalinguistic feedback is the least occurred type of feedback which elicits the lowest rates of uptake (33.33%). 66.66% of metalinguistic moves is likely to promote topic continuation. Other feedback techniques such as clarification request, elicitation, repetition and explicit correction are successful at eliciting the highest occurrences of student immediate uptake, although the low frequency of use is examined in the case of clarification request and explicit correction. Since the focus of this study is on the utility of recasts as a feedback type, the different types of learner uptake in relation to recasts were also investigated. In order to analyze the data, the following episodes produced in the respective context are taken into consideration:

E1. S: Mother or father make tea... (grammatical error)
T: Mother or father makes tea. (recast)
S: Yes. (acknowledgment)

E2. S: He eats chocolate… (grammatical error)
T: He eats. (recast)
S: He eats. (repetition)

E3. S: A good day for play football… (grammatical error)
T: For playing football. (recast)
S: They wanted go (no uptake)

E4. S: But she said" they go to the party" (grammatical error)
T: I said, “they went". (recast)
S: My cousins come… (off target)

Table 3 shows the frequency and distribution of different types of uptake pursuing recasts. Table3: Frequency and Distribution of Different Uptake Types Pursuing Recasts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Uptake Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarification Request (n=7)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metalinguistic feedback (n=3)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitation (n=38)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition (n=32)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>96.87%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table3: Frequency and Distribution of Different Uptake Types Pursuing Recasts:
As indicated in table 3, more than half of recasts (58.7%) leads to no student-generated repair. It is also clear that learner's repair in response to recasts is frequently accompanied by repetition. Furthermore, in those cases that recasts lead to needs repair, acknowledgment is seen as the frequent type of uptake applied by the learner. It means that the learner might not understand them as corrective feedback at all; rather it is used as confirmation of teacher's statement not a type of CF directed at the ungrammatical form.

One more interesting finding in this study was the combination of recasts with other types of CF which is indicated in the following episodes:

E1. S: My father want buy it. (grammatical error)
T: My father? wanted to buy it. (elicitation & recast)
S: My father wanted kill it. (partial repair)

E2. S: I don't like go. (grammatical error)
T: I don't like to go. So, what? (recast & clarification request)
S: I don't like to go and study. (self-repair)

Table 4: Frequency and Distribution of Recasts in Combination with Other CF Types and their Relationships to Learner's Uptake

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repair</th>
<th>Needs Repair</th>
<th>No Uptake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Self repair n=6</td>
<td>a) Acknowledgment n=6</td>
<td>N=54 → 58.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Peer-repair n=1</td>
<td>b) Same error n=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Incorporation n=3</td>
<td>c) Different error n=0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Repetition n=7</td>
<td>d) Off target n=4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Partial repair n=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the respective table, when combined with other feedback techniques such as elicitation, clarification request or explicit correction, recasts can successfully elicit learner's immediate repair and uptake.

5. Discussion and Conclusion
The purpose of this study was to reveal the effectiveness of recasts through an investigation of the frequency and distribution of different sorts of corrective feedback as well as those of recasts comprising learner uptake moves in error treatment sequences taking place in a young adult EFL class. The researcher also investigated the frequency and distribution of recasts in relation to different types of learner uptake.

In the respective context, the teacher made use of a varied range of feedback types rather than being reliance on one form of corrective feedback. Actually, this study in line with other researches indicates that recasts are considered as a type of corrective feedback mostly used by the teacher, though they are not so effective to elicit high rates of repair. In other words, teachers more often prefer to apply this feedback type consciously or subconsciously.

Through examining the relationship of recasts with learner uptake including repair and needs repair, it is understood that repetition and acknowledgment are two preferred techniques used by learners. A possible account for this finding could be the lack of realizing recasts as a sort of CF by learners. In this regard, Lyster and Ranta (1995) suggested that the inefficiency of recasts be related to the recognition that students assumed the teacher was responding to the content rather than the form of their speech. Thus, the student when hearing the teacher's reformulation did not figure out whether it was confirmation of his or her statement or a recast so the feedback was then of no use in such a situation. The combination of recasts with other feedback types shows the positive effect of this CF type in order to lead to successful student repair. Thus, this study suggests that teachers be aware of the nature of recasts and other CF techniques in order to appropriately exploit them at the service of helping learners improve their inaccuracies in communicative based contexts. However, the findings of this study which is based on a young adult context where learners are yet cognitively immature can not be generalized to adult EFL contexts. Therefore, to gain more fruitful insights concerning the respective issue, further studies are necessarily required to be conducted in different contexts including a wide range of variables.

References


Title

Gender Differences in Motivation to Learn a Second or Foreign Language
A Review of Thirty Research Articles (2001-2012)

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Abstract

Ignoring the role of motivation in acquiring a second/foreign language will be a pernicious fallacy. Two major orientations have been proposed by scholars, namely, integrative/instrumental and the role of gender variable is widely accepted and intensively investigated; however, it is observed that researchers approach this issue from different, often opposing and seemingly incompatible perspectives with each bringing new insights. A large number of studies are dominantly centered on the influential model proposed by Gardner. This study aims at providing a comprehensive, detailed review of thirty research articles from 2001 to 2012 on the role of the gender variable in motivation to acquire a second/foreign language. The overall result of this review has revealed that females are more integratively oriented while males are more instrumentally motivated to learn a second/foreign language.

Keywords: Motivation, Gender, Integrative orientation, Instrumental motivation

1. Introduction
For the past three decades, motivation has been under investigation within the context of second/foreign language learning. It is considered as one the most appealing, complex variables used to explain individual differences in language learning. A plethora of definitions come under the rubric of the term motivation. Brown (1987) defines motivation as: “an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that moves one towards a particular action.” It is also reported to influence the use of language learning strategies, frequency of interaction with speakers of the target language and general language proficiency (Oxford and Shearin, 1994). Pertrides (2006) has viewed motivation from the teacher perspective and maintains that students are motivated if they actively get involved in a task.

A possible limitation in determining the role of motivation in learning a foreign language derives from the existence of different definitions of the terms. In 1972 Gardner defined motivation as a combination of efforts plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language. He hypothesized that an individual learning a L2 (second language) must adopt certain behavior patterns characteristic of another cultural group (Gardner, 1985). Much of the researches on L2 motivation have been built upon the work of Gardner (1968, 1975, 1985, 1996, 200). In his socio-educational model of L2 motivation he categorizes students as either integratively or instrumentally oriented. Integratively oriented learners choose to study a language primarily for conversational purposes or to better understand the L2 culture and integrate with the target community. On the other hand, instrumentally oriented students pursue learning a second or foreign language for practical reasons such as to get a better job or to continue education in a foreign country.

Besides integrative and instrumental motivation there are other types of motivation referred to as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which could be commonly observed in the classroom setting. Extrinsicly motivated behaviors are performed to receive some tangible reward while intrinsically motivated activities are those for which there would be no anticipated reward except the activity itself. In most of the researches conducted to investigate motivational variables in second or foreign language learning, the main focus is on the integrative and instrumental concepts. It was argued that while both types of motivation are considered to be the essential elements of success, it is the integrative motivation which has been found to sustain long term success and a native-like pronunciation when learning a language (Taylor, Meyhard, Rheault, 1997). It is noteworthy that idea regarding the theories concerning motivational types and their effect on the learning process has always been under continual revision. In his most recent version of socio-educational
model, Gardner (2001) has down played the significance of integrative motivation. In this latest model he has emphasized the role of motivation, not integrative motivation.

Given the importance of motivation, there is a growing concern amongst L2 researchers as whether gender differences influence the dichotomy of integrative and instrumental motivation. Gender is a social variable which has been extensively studied in relation to the learners’ motivational orientation. One’s gender is developed during adolescence period and adolescents are sensitive to sex stereotypes. In some research studies male students have been reported to be less motivated than female students in language learning and some researchers have considered them to be more instrumentally oriented rather than integratively oriented. During the past years numerous studies are conducted to investigate whether there is a segmentation of motivation based on sex and which type of motivation is dominant. Most of these studies have chosen their theoretical frameworks based on the Gardener’s socio-educational model of L2 motivation. Here it must be mentioned that while the model proposed by Gardener is still prominent, it was criticized by a number scholars for its failure to provide more comprehensive theory of L2 motivation in other words the model does not account for other variables rather than the social ones that influence a learner’s motivational orientation. As a result, researchers have started to employ a more comprehensive, extended model of L2 motivation (e.g. Kissau, 2006) and there appears to be a shift from the societal (macro-level) factors such as social milieu i.e. the environment in which an individual is situated, or the learners’ perception of language learning to toward an approach that emphasizes the influence of the L2 classroom setting (micro level factors) in genders’ motivational orientation. In addition to micro and macro level factors, there has been debate over other factors such as the choice of language, goal setting, self efficiency and EFL proficiency which influence the learning motivation. Several studies are also conducted to highlight the extent of Iranian students' motivation in learning English as a foreign language and their differences in instrumental and integrative orientation (Moiinvaezí, 2007; Vaezi, 2008; Ganea et. al., 2011; Ahmadi, 2011 etc.).

This paper aims at providing an accurate and comprehensive review of thirty research articles which are published from 2001 to 2012, to investigate the underlying trends towards motivation and second/ foreign language learning. The major focus of these articles is on the investigation of the gender differences in motivational orientation influenced by instrumental/integrative dichotomy. These studies are conducted in different countries around the world to investigate different types of learners including Iranian FL learners’ motivation.
Motivation is of particular importance for both teachers and researchers because of the crucial role it plays in second or foreign language learning. Over the years various research studies have been conducted to investigate the learners’ attitudes and motivation to second language learning. In fact the research on motivation dates back to 1945, when Arsenian raised a number of questions regarding possible affective factors two of them directly involved attitudinal and motivational variables. Even prior to this Jordan (1941) had investigated the correlation of grades in various subjects. The most influential and the first multivariate investigation of the relation among indices of language aptitude, attitudes, motivation and second language proficiency was conducted by Gardner and Lambert (1959).

Much of the L₂ (second language) motivation research over the past years has been built upon the work of Gardner and his colleagues (1968, 1985, 2001). In 1972 he proposed social-educational model and defined motivation as a combination of efforts, desire to achieve the goal of learning and favorable attitudes towards learning the language. Gardner categorized the students as either integratively or instrumentally motivated. After proposing this integrative/instrumental dichotomy, it was found that there is a difference between gender in their motivational orientation towards second/foreign language learning, and researches on gender and motivation evolved. Some significant research articles were conducted from 2001 to 2012 to investigate the intriguing subject of gender differences in L₂ motivation.

Kissau is one of the most influential figures who has carried out several significant studies, directly involved in gender motivational orientation in second language learning situation. In 2006 he investigated gender difference in motivation to learn French. This large scale study was carried out in Canada as a bilingual country on 500 learners who were learning French as a second language. The significance of this study is derived from the use of a revised version of Gardner’s socio-educational model. In fact while the study is built upon the traditional model of L₂ motivation which emphasizes the Canadian learners’ stereotypical attitudes towards the reference group, the researcher has broadened the concept to include both societal and classroom related factors. This large scale study revealed that both classroom-related and societal factors influence gender differences on their motivation to learn French as a second language. In a similar study Kissau (2006) has tried to shift the focus of the study from learning French to learning a second language. In this study like the previous one, the influence of both micro and macro level factors is investigated and consequently the results suggests that while gender differences in motivation for second language learning is for the most part examined in relation to the micro level factors, a
considerable number of factors influencing L2 motivation were also macro level or societal in nature. Throughout the study it is noted that since language learning is considered to be feminine-dominated and girls take advantage of more parental encouragement, they are more motivated than boys to choose language learning as the subject to be learned. In fact Kissau (2006b) contends that a substantial contribution of this study is the realization that micro and macro level factors are mutually influential.

Kissau et al. (2010) carried out a study on perception of Gardner differences in high school students’ motivation to learn Spanish in United States to explore male students motivation to learn Spanish. This study was also built upon Gardner’s socio-educational model of second language motivation. The results of the study indicated that the boys perceived themselves to be less motivated than females, but it was suggested that the differences were less dramatic than in previous studies. Another seminal study was conducted by Ariane and Pascale (2012) to investigate the impact of age and gender on the learner’s motivation and attitudes towards French but in this study French is learned as foreign rather than a second language. The results of this study are consistent with the previous studies by Kissua. The results of the mentioned studies confirm the fact that there is a significant difference between males and females in motivation to learn a second or foreign language, in addition they reveal that female students have a higher integrative motivation in comparison with male students who have more instrumental motivation.

In 2006, Meece, Glienk and Burg have examined gender differences in motivation by taking advantage of the contemporary theories of achievement motivation. They came up with the conclusion that in general boys report stronger ability and interest beliefs in mathematics and science, whereas girls are more interested in language arts and writing. A similar study was conducted by Pajares and Valiante to investigate gender differences in writing motivation and achievement. To achieve this goal 497 students, 250 girls and 247 boys in grades 6 and 7 were selected from a public middle school. Consequently the girls reported stronger writing self-efficiency and received higher grades in language arts, while boys were reported to be more motivated performance approach goals. Applying Gardner’s socio-educational model and considering the impact of social milieu on second language acquisition, Norris-Holt (2001) posed the case of Japanese learners of English who are more instrumentally motivated to learn English to pass the university entrance exam which ultimately determine the institution to which a student gains acceptance. In this study Norris-Holt aims at emphasizing on the role of curriculum and educational programs on the learners’
motivational orientation. It is noteworthy that the same case could be observed in Iranian EFL context where the learners are learning English to be prepared for the university entrance exam.

An in-depth study of motivation in foreign language learning has examined the case of Filipino foreign language learners and in confirmation of the previously conducted researches, it was indicated that females are more integratively motivated than males towards communication and affiliation, but the intriguing point regarding this research study was that the choice of language is, to a great extent, influential in motivational orientation between gender (Gonzales, 2010). Wong (2008) also has postulated the effect of age on motivational orientation of the both sexes. It must also be mentioned that the level of the learners is determinant in their motivational orientation in a way that at the advanced stage getting inside the culture becomes important (Johnson, 2001).

Liu (2004) goes even further to assert the overall significant gender differences in strategy use, memory strategies and affective strategies including attitude and motivation, with females surpassing males in each case. In this regard, Rúa (2006) put forward the consideration that girls' achievement and success in foreign language learning is enhanced by the interaction of neurological, cognitive, affective, social and educational factors. It is also found that girls' internal (intrinsic) motivation in foreign language study. A similar research was conducted on Iranian postgraduate students with the results that Integratively- motivated students showed higher use of overall strategies than instrumentally- motivated ones while instrumentally motivated students employed memory strategy more frequently, it is while female students employed strategies more frequently than males which shows that they are integratively motivated.

There are several contradicting researches which are inconsistent with the mentioned studies in asserting that there is no significant difference between gender in their motivational orientation to learn a second or foreign language (Sugimoto et. al. 2006; Sullivan, 2008; Mun, 2011). The analysis of students' integrative and instrumental motivation in learning English by Idawati (2010) illustrates that both types of motivation are not exclusively gender-based orientation. Parker (2007) also has reviewed thirty papers and observed a strong relationship between motivation and learning alongside a small domain specific gender differences in motivation to learn.

Along with the advancement of technology and emergence of computer and internet in the context of second/foreign language learning and pedagogy, focus was shifted towards
globalization and ICT-based activities in the classroom and the learners reaction to mass education. As a result, an intriguing research article was conducted by Riberio et.al. (2011) seeking to discus young male learners’ reaction to ICT-based activities within language learning classroom. In this research article it is argued that there is gender difference in motivation to study language and young man find language learning uninteresting and a feminine-dominated subject; however by the implementation of ICT based activities in the classroom not only they can preserve masculinity in a field of study which is perceived to be feminine-dominated but also their motivation is enhanced since interactivity allow the students to participate and control their own learning activity and they are viewed by teachers as unique individuals.

Since 2007 several studies are conducted to investigate the gender motivational orientation in Iranian EFL context. Ahmadi (2001) in his prominent study based on Gardner’s socio-educational model has investigated the impact of integrative and instrumental motivation on Iranian EFL learner's language learning. The results of this study have indicated that female students have stronger integrative motivation than instrumental motivation whereas male students have stronger instrumental orientation. The study developed by Ghanea et. al. (2011) on the relationship between Iranian learners integrative or instrumental motivation and EFL proficiency, has revealed that there is a significant relationship between motivation and English proficiency among both female and male learners.

Moiinvaziri (2007) has examined Motivational Orientation in English Language Learning among Iranian undergraduate students 255 undergraduate students. The results of the Questionnaire based on Gardner’s attitude//motivation test battery (AMTB) have indicated that Iranian undergraduate students are highly motivated in both integrative and instrumental orientation; in contrary some researchers believe that one motivational orientation is dominant among the learners. Ziahosseini and Salehi (2007) for instance have studied the relationship between Motivation and language learning strategies and found no difference between males and females in terms of strategy choice and language use but maintained that Iranian learners are intrinsically rather than extrinsically motivated. Vaezi (2008) and Salehi (2008) have contended that the learners aim at studying language for practical reasons rather than integrating with the reference group or acculturation.

Finally it must be noted that current research developed on the new perspective of the effects of technological variables such as the Internet and ICT-based programs on motivation
for learning English as a foreign language among Iranian learners has revealed that the process of globalization influenced Iranian EFL learner’s motivation to learn English and that instrumental motivation is dominant between gender. Relating the result of this research to the study proposed by Kissua (2006) it could be mentioned that ICT activities are amongst the classroom related or micro level influences.

2. Conclusion

Countless research studies and experiments in the field of second or foreign language learning and pedagogy have indicated the fact that motivation is extensively accepted by teachers and researchers as one of the key aspects influencing the learners success in second language learning and one of the sources of individual difference. A distinction is commonly made in motivational studies between integrative and instrumental motivation. A number of studies found that integratively motivated learners often do succeed at language learning. Indeed they reported a high correlation between integrative motivation and language proficiency. Though some studies have found that integrative motivation is more effective than instrumental, there is also no shortage of research showing the importance of instrumental motivation (Johnson, 2001). Other findings have reported the gender differences in motivation and the question is asked about any differences between boys and girls as regards motivation for learning a foreign language at school.

Several studies have indicated that girls are more integratively motivated and more successful in second/foreign language learning, while boys are more instrumentally oriented. Some other research studies have reported both male and female students to be either integratively or instrumentally motivated. Findings from researches on the effect of Integrative and Instrumental motivation on Iranian EFL learners language learning have also provided us with varying or even in some cases contradictory prospects regarding the learners orientation. The results of the study conducted by Ahmadi (2011) indicated that female students have stronger integrative motive than instrumental and in turn, male students have stronger instrumental orientation. Another related study by vaezi (2008) has reported the students to be more instrumentally motivated regardless of their sex. In this regard, a contradictory claim is made that female and male students are highly motivated in both instrumental and integrative orientation in foreign language learning situation.

In general, from all the research studies aim at investigating the gender difference in motivational orientation, it is inferred that the motivational characteristics of individual pupils
appeared to be neither extensively integrative nor wholly instrumental. The motives of the students were often complex, and difficult to categorize completely in terms of the integrative/instrumental dichotomy. Even Brown (2000) has pointed out that learners rarely select one form of motivation when learning a second language, but rather a combination of both orientations. But as a matter of fact, one orientation is usually prominent between gender in language learning situation.

A review of the existing literature regarding gender differences in motivation reveals the fact that several factors are involved in genders’ instrumental or integrative orientation. Although Gardener’s influential socio-educational model emphasizes the role of societal factors, it became increasingly clear that classroom-related approaches also play crucial role in language learning motivation. As a result, the factors influencing gender’s motivation must be investigated at both micro and macro level. The results of thirty research articles published from 2001 to 2012 have identified factors at both micro and macro level to influence gender’s extent of motivation and their orientation.

Several factors are reported by research studies to influence motivation at macro-level or societal approach the most important of which are social pressures and the society’s perceptions of language learning. The studies have revealed that even if boys are good at language learning social pressures would hinder them to choose language as their subject of study. The researches have revealed that in most societies, boys are supposed to be good scientists or engineers while girls could be good language learners. Indeed, in societies where language learning is perceived as feminine, dominant male students prefer to preserve their masculinity rather than to choose a feminine dominant field of study as their subject. In these societies males are more instrumentally motivated to learn a second or foreign language i.e. they will learn a language for practical or utilitarian reasons. Another influencing factor is parental encouragement. It could be argued that since girls have more parental support comparing to boys, they are more integratively motivated to learn the language. The same as what was mentioned could be observed in Iranian EFL learners.

The results of the studies have also revealed that curriculum and educational program could have a significant effect on gender’s orientation. In Japanese EFL context where teaching English in junior and senior high school is directed toward preparing students for university entrance exam, the underlying motivation to study the language is largely instrumental in both males and females. Another influencing macro-level factor is related to Geographical setting and cultural stereotyping. In fact many studies of gender differences
emanate from bilingual Canada. In bilingual countries, cultural stereotyping is often very strong and students with prejudiced attitudes are less motivated to learn the language and if they learn it could be deduced that they would have a more instrumental orientation. It is noteworthy that there are situations where learners know very little indeed about the aspirational group. In this regard some researchers contend that instrumental motivation may be important for foreign language learning because students have limited experience with the target community; however with the emergence of Internet technology and mass education the learners are more committed to integrate with the target community. An intriguing issue is posed by the researchers regarding learning English as a second or foreign language which is referred to as globalization and is considered as a macro level factor. It is argued that since nowadays, English is possible through the media and technology and is widely recognized as a lingua franca of international communication, the learners are found to be more instrumentally oriented towards language learning i.e. since English is the language of scholarship they will learn it to cope with university classes in a foreign country.

In addition to the mentioned macro level influences, some micro level factors are found to be crucial in determining the gender’s motivational direction towards language learning. Amongst these classroom-related factors, teacher and classroom setting play important roles in determining the motivation type. There are debates over the use of ICT-based activities within the language classroom. A study was conducted by Riberio et. al. (2011) on 358 male students aged between 16-27and 5 foreign language teachers. Riberio in his article has asserted that male students could preserve their sense of masculinity in a female dominated area while involved in interactive language learning.

In general, it can be concluded that while both integrative and instrumental motivation are of utmost importance in second/foreign language learning and they are not mutually exclusive, but there exist a difference between gender in their integrative or instrumental orientation. The most important factors affect students’ motivation are social pressures, parental encouragement, the societies’ perception of language learning and globalization (macro-level or societal) and also, teachers, classroom settings, tasks and activities within the classroom such as ICT-based activities (micro level or classroom-based). Finally it must be mentioned that these factors are inclusive but not exhaustive, and all of them are deduced from the reviewed articles which were conducted in European as well as Asian contexts examining different types of learners from both sexes.
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Title

The Effect of Familiarity with Cultural Background of the Texts on Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition of the Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects that familiarity with the overall cultural background of a text may have on incidental vocabulary learning through reading. The participants were 40 male and 16 female Iranian intermediate TEFL university students studying in the first and fourth semester. These students were given an Iranian and an English story to read in two separate sessions. Then, they went through a vocabulary test designed to measure their knowledge of the difficult words they encountered during reading each text. The results of this study showed a profound facilitative influence of cultural familiarity on incidental vocabulary learning through reading. These findings encourage the L2 teachers to use culturally familiar texts for teaching reading comprehension courses or to devise suitable, effective pre-reading activities when they cannot use such texts.

Keywords: Cultural familiarity, Incidental vocabulary acquisition, Intermediate EFL learners

1. Introduction

Incidental exposure to language, particularly through reading, is one of the fundamental means for extending vocabulary knowledge for both L1 and L2 learners. This contributing effect of reading on vocabulary development has been advocated by a number of researchers who believe that a substantial amount of vocabulary growth occurs through extensive
exposure to language in print (Cunningham, 2005; Nagy, 2005; Krashen, 2004; Hedgecock & Ferris, 2009; Grabe, 2009). This kind of vocabulary acquisition which is known as incidental vocabulary learning (as in this process the readers' focus is on comprehension of the text rather than on learning specific words) has been endorsed by a lot of studies done by a number of scholars in the field (Krashen, 2004; Pulido, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007; Grabe, 2009; Cunningham, 2005; Nagy, 2005; Webb, 2008). These people take this stance because of such factors as the number of total words a typical language learner, either in L1 or L2, needs to know and the limited capacity of any explicit vocabulary instruction to accommodate all vocabulary items the language learners need.

In fact, an average L1 student is expected to know about 40000 words at the end of high school (Cunningham, 2005). Taking into account the 8000 words that they should know when they are six years old, the high school graduates need to learn about 32,000 words in 12 years. This number, 32,000 words through 12 years of schooling, means that a child learns approximately 7 words a day and 3,000 words a year. With regard to L2 learners, they need to know at least 10000 words to function successfully in an advanced academic setting (Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2001, 2006). The figures just stated imply the fact that this type of vocabulary development transcends the capacity of even the most intensive vocabulary instruction programs. Since explicit vocabulary teaching programs can only cover a few hundred words, even under the most intensive ones, it is unrealistic to expect the learners to learn 2,000 words a year and/or the 10,000 minimum words. Therefore, given this situation, we can conclude that a bulk of vocabulary growth and development occurs through incidental exposure to language, especially printed language (Grabe, 2009; Cunningham, 2005).

Overall, the researchers associate some benefits with the incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. First of all, novel or new words are embedded in their natural contexts helping readers draw inferences about subtle meanings. In addition, incidental vocabulary learning makes the reading process efficient since it occurs simultaneously with the reading. Moreover, due to the fact that readers consciously or unconsciously attend to unfamiliar words, such sort of learning is highly individualized (Hedgecock & Ferris, 2009).

Owing to the importance of this issue (i.e., vocabulary learning through linguistic input) a number of researchers have talked about the suitable conditions through which readers can develop their vocabulary knowledge through reading. Webb (2008) mentioned the quality of the context, being informative enough, as a prerequisite for gaining word knowledge through context. Sanchez and Schmitt (2010) consider numbers of encountering a word in a context as a main factor for incidental vocabulary learning. Pulido (2003, 2004a,
showed the importance of topic familiarity or background knowledge the readers possess of the content of the passage on the incidental vocabulary learning. She has found that the readers remember and retain more words from the passage they are more familiar with its content. Replicating the work of Pulido (ibid), this study tries to see which type of text is more conducive to incidental vocabulary development through reading: the culturally familiar or unfamiliar one. In other words, the current study is centered around the following research question: Does cultural familiarity of the texts have any effect on the vocabulary learning and retention through those texts? It is also can be considered as an attempt to see whether the findings obtained by Pulido can be gained in an Iranian context.

2. Review of Literature
Adams (1982) investigated the effects of schemata activation on the acquisition of unfamiliar vocabulary through reading. He gave a group of 298 American students six passages about such familiar topics as playing tennis, grocery shopping, flying a kite, doing a laundry, washing dishes, and a wedding. Each passage was divided into five sections. These sections were presented one at a time on the transparencies by means of an overhead projector. This apparatus was utilized in order to control for the reading time. Once a section is gone, the students were not permitted to look back at the proceeding section. In each section a target word was established which was a word closely associated with the activity or task being described in the text. The participants were required to correctly recognize these target words in each section they encountered. In addition, half of the students were randomly selected and given sentences acting as schemata activators informing them of what the passages were about while the other half was deprived of such statements. The analysis of the data in this study revealed that the students received script or schemata activating statements achieved significantly higher vocabulary scores than those who did not get such statements.

Pulido (2003) examined the impact of topic familiarity (background knowledge) on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. Ninety-nine adult learners of Spanish as an L2 across all levels of language proficiency (beginning, intermediate, and advanced) participated in this study. These students were asked to read four passages, two considered as familiar and two as unfamiliar. In these texts, thirty-two target words associated with the theme of each story were chosen and substituted with nonsense words. Before reading the passages, the participants first completed an L2 passage vocabulary test which was a combination of a self-report questionnaire and translation measure designed to check the
students' self-reported familiarity and previous knowledge of the meanings of the non-target words. After reading the stories, the participants completed a translation production task in which they were asked to provide L1 equivalents to the target words. Finally, at the end of the study, the students were asked to complete a translation recognition task. This task was a multiple choice test wherein the participants were required to choose the correct translation of the target word from 5 options (the correct option, three distractors, and "I don't know" option). The findings showed that familiarity with the overall topic of the text had no consistent effects on incidental vocabulary acquisition. First, there was no effect of topic familiarity obtained on the translation production test. Second, the impact of background knowledge obtained on the translation recognition task was short-lived and did not last for a longer period of time. That is, only at the short term intervals (i.e., 2 days after reading), the participants at all levels showed greater vocabulary gains after reading the reported familiar passage. So, this study provides partial support for the effect of background knowledge on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading.

In another and also similar study, Pulido (2004a) examined the effect of topic familiarity on the relationships which may exist between second language passage comprehension and various stages of L2 incidental vocabulary acquisition, namely intake (form recognition), gain (meaning recognition and production), and retention. Ninety nine adult American learners of Spanish as an L2 served as the participants of this study. These people came from all proficiency levels (i.e., beginning, intermediate, and advanced). They were supposed to read four narratives, two pertaining to more familiar topics and two pertaining to less familiar settings. A total of 32 words, eight words per story, which were more frequently related to the themes of each story were chosen and replaced by nonsense words served as target words. In this study, the participants first completed an intake task wherein they were required to determine whether or not the individual L2 words appearing in a list had actually appeared in the passage they had previously read. The students then went through two vocabulary measures: the translation production and translation recognition. In the former, the participants were asked to provide translation, definition, or explanation of the target words in their L1. The latter was a multiple choice test in which the students were required to choose the correct translation of a target word from three distractors and an "I don't know" option. The results revealed that passage comprehension had a strong effect on the incidental vocabulary gain and retention occurring through reading. In other words, increases in passage comprehension were accompanied by increases in gain and retention of
the words appeared in the passages. This contribution of passage comprehension was consistent regardless of whether the students read within the familiar or unfamiliar scenarios.

With regard to the effect of topic familiarity on the relationship between passage comprehension and various levels of incidental vocabulary acquisition such as gain, retention, and intake, the following findings were obtained. First, topic familiarity or the availability of relevant background knowledge facilitated reading comprehension and as a result positively affected the gain and retention of the target words. Second, in the case of the intake of the new words, it was found that participants recognized more words from less familiar passage than from more familiar one. This situation can be related to the confusion that may arise from the more familiar text. That is, when the participants were completing an intake test relating to the familiar story (i.e., when they were supposed to determine whether the words existed or not existed in the given passages) they mixed up the items actually presented in the text with those related to the theme of the passage. This problem was not there when they did a similar intake test related to an unfamiliar text. So, in this study, it was concluded that topic familiarity has a differential effect on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading.

Pulido (2004b) examined the effects of cultural background knowledge on incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading. Twenty three adult English speaking learners of Spanish at the high intermediate level were asked to read familiar and unfamiliar versions of the same story. Before reading the texts, the participants completed a background knowledge questionnaire to determine their level of familiarity with the content of the passages. After the students had finished reading their passages, they took a test called Vocabulary Knowledge Scale to determine the vocabulary gain occurred as a result of reading the texts. It is worth mentioning that this test is a kind of self-report task designed to tap the various self-perceived levels of learners’ vocabulary knowledge ranging from unfamiliarity through recognition and some idea of the meaning to the ability to use the words in a sentence. The results of this study showed significant effects of cultural familiarity. It was found that the participants demonstrated greater vocabulary gain scores after reading passages with which they were familiar. In other words, after reading the culturally familiar texts, learners demonstrated better memory for having seen the target words than after reading the unfamiliar passages.

Pulido (2007) examined the impact of topic familiarity and passage sight vocabulary on lexical inferencing and retention. 35 adult learners of Spanish took part as participants in this study. These students were recruited from five university courses: beginning, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced, and graduate. In this study, these students read
two contrived passages, one depicting a familiar course of activities and one depicting an unfamiliar scenario. In addition, 16 words, 8 ones per passage, representing the concepts frequently associated with each scenario and replaced by nonsense words. The participants completed a topic familiarity questionnaire before starting reading the two given texts. In the same time as they read the texts, the students completed the accompanying lexical inferencing (they wrote the meaning or translation of each underlined and boldfaced target word in their L1) and difficulty rating tasks (they revealed the level of the difficulty the participants faced in inferring the meaning of each target word). After reading the two stories, all participants completed a self-paced online target word verification task. In this part of the study, each target word sentence and its translation were presented on a computer screen. The participants were required to confirm or reject their guesses about each word and to encourage deeper processing of target words. Afterwards, at the end of the study, the students completed the lexical retention test in the following order: L2-L1 translation production and L2-L1 multiple choice translation recognition tasks. The results found in this study revealed a strong and robust effect of topic familiarity lexical inferencing.

As it was mentioned earlier, this study can be considered as an attempt to corroborate and replicate the findings of the previous studies investigating the effect of cultural knowledge on incidental vocabulary learning, particularly those conducted by Pulido (2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007). The difference that exists between the current study and the Pulido's ones, and even the other studies examining this issue, lies in the type of words used to assess the participants’ incidental vocabulary acquisition. In the previous studies, a number of words termed target words and relating to the theme of the text are selected and replaced with nonsense words to ensure that the students do not have any prior familiarity with them. However, here, we do not have any target words. As an alternative, a number of words, thought by the researcher as important, are chosen and incorporated in a vocabulary test to be given after reading the assigned passages.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study were 56 EFL Iranian university students (40 men & 16 women) in two intact classes. These students aged from 18 to 30 with the age average of 24. Since these students had enrolled in the university where this study was conducted to achieve an Associate degree in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and had intensively
received courses in all language skills which all were produced and prepared for the intermediate level learners of English, they were assumed to be at this level of language proficiency. Finally, the readers might wonder why females were far more than males in this study. The reason for such imbalance is that nowadays the women population is much higher than that of men in Iran and this has been reflected in the educational institutions where females outnumber males in a way that transcends any power of imagination.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. The Passages
The passages selected for this study were an English translation of an Iranian story titled “the little sugar beets vendor” and an English short narrative “the winepress”. The former was written by the great Iranian author Samad Behrang who happens in an Iranian village and depicts the hard life of an orphan Iranian boy and his struggle to protect his family. Since this story takes place in an Iranian context, has Iranian characters, and portrays the fight to save the honor of the family represented in a female character, a typically eastern and Iranian tradition, it was expected that the students would comprehend it easily. The other short tale was written by Josef Essberger and was about a retired French politician telling his friends strange stories about the different kinds of wines he drinks. This short story happens in France, has foreign characters, is full of French names and is also replete with the names of the different types of wine, a beverage forbidden in Iran because of this country’s Islamic nature. Therefore this passage has things in its stomach which are strange to a typical Iranian ear. This made us to anticipate that our participants will face difficulties understanding this story efficiently.

It is worth noting here that every essential step was taken to make these two passages as equal as possible. A mere look at the tables 1 and 2 which were obtained through using the Flesh Software of Readability Calculations shows that both passages are relatively easy to read and are relatively equal in terms of the readability (Flesh Reading Ease Score for the Iranian story was 79.26 and 75.61 for the English one). A comparison between the figures of these two tables shows that while the two passages differ in the number of words (1492 for the foreign story and 2182 in the Iranian text) and sentences (117 and 133 in the alien and Iranian texts respectively), their readability grades are nearly equal (Flesh Kincaid Grade Level: 5.88 and 6.28 and Flesh Reading Ease Score: 75.61 and 79.26 for the foreign and Iranian passages separately). Consequently, we can surely conclude that the two short stories
we have selected for this study are similar regarding the degree of reading difficulty. This readability formula was developed firstly by Rudolf Flesch (1948) and was modified by Farr, Jenkins, and Paterson (1951) and the U.S. Navy (1976) (as cited in DuBay, 2004). In this formula, as it is shown in the table 3 below, the scores ranging from 70 to 80 represent the fairly easy texts which are suitable for a 7th grade student. Therefore, due to the fact that the reading ease scores of the texts used in this study were within this range (the Iranian story: 79.26 and the foreign story: 75.61), we can conclude that these two texts are fairly easy to read by an intermediate second language reader.

**Table 1 The Winepress (the foreign story) readability scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Ease Score</th>
<th>Style Description</th>
<th>Estimated Reading Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 30</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td>College graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 40</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>13th to 16th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 60</td>
<td>Fairly Difficult</td>
<td>10th to 12th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 70</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>8th and 9th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 80</td>
<td>Fairly Easy</td>
<td>7th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 to 90</td>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>6th grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 to 100</td>
<td>Very Easy</td>
<td>5th grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2 The Little Sugar Beet Vendor (the Iranian story) readability scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Ease Score</th>
<th>Style Description</th>
<th>Estimated Reading Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3 Flesh Reading Ease Scores and their implications**

3.2.2. The vocabulary Tests

After reading each story, all participants went through a vocabulary test consisting of the difficult and key words of the texts they were supposed to read. In other words, a vocabulary test was designed to assess the participants’ knowledge of the difficult words of the Iranian story and a more or less similar test was also developed to measure those of the foreign story.
narrative. These words are determined by the researcher to be above the participants’ level of proficiency. Some expert TEFL university professors were also consulted on these words and they agreed with most of them. The aim of taking these tests by the participants after they had finished reading their passages was to see to what extent the subjects were able to remember the meaning of the difficult and important words of the texts or to see if familiarity with the cultural background of the texts had any effect on their vocabulary learning that may take place as a by-product of the reading task. Both vocabulary tests were in multiple-choice format. In addition, the vocabulary test of the foreign story consisted of 20 items and that of the Iranian passage consisted of 23 items.

With regard to the process of coding or scoring the vocabulary measurement instruments used in this study, every correct response received one point and the wrong choice was given a zero point. This scoring procedure led to 20 (in the case of the vocabulary test of the foreign story) and 23 points (in the case of the vocabulary test of the Iranian story) for those students who answered the all items correctly and 0 point for those who failed to provide the correct response of even one question item. Finally, the reliability of these two tests is found to be .68 and .65 for the vocabulary tests of Iranian and foreign stories respectively.

3.2.3. Text Familiarity Measures

Two measures were used to check the participants’ familiarity with the two passages they were assigned to read. The first one was given to the participants before they begin reading each passage. It was a 4-item questionnaire asking the participants if they were familiar with the author of the passage or his/her works and if they had read or heard anything about the story they were going to read. The students were instructed to provide "yes" or "no" as an answer to each item.

The post-test questionnaire was given to the students immediately after finishing reading each passage. It was a Likert Scale Questionnaire asking the students to identify their degree of familiarity with the content of the text they had just read. This questionnaire had five response options ranging from completely familiar to completely unfamiliar of which the students were supposed to choose only one alternative. The primary purpose of this test was to check if the students were precise enough in answering the pretest questionnaire and to see if the texts were truly familiar or unfamiliar.

4. Procedure
The study was conducted during the regular class time, in the middle of the second semester, and in the presence of the instructors of the classes. In addition, in all phases of the data collection, the researcher was present and provided any help the participants needed. The students were first told that they were going to be given a passage to read for comprehension and nothing was mentioned about any test that might follow.

The participants read the stories and completed the vocabulary tests accompanying them in two separate sessions. In each of these sessions, to mitigate the effects relating to ordering of passages, the presentation of the texts and their vocabulary tests was counterbalanced. That is, one half of the students received the Iranian narrative and answered its vocabulary test and the other half read the foreign story and completed the measurements following it.

In the just discussed sessions dedicated to the current study, the students were first given a pre-test questionnaire asking them about their prior familiarity with the given story, its author and his works. Then, they were asked to read the story. Immediately after they finished reading the text, the participants completed the post-test questionnaire inquiring about the degree to which they were familiar with the content of the story. Then, they were asked to answer the vocabulary tests designed and developed to measure their vocabulary knowledge gained through their reading the stories.

5. Results

5.1. The Assumed Familiarity/Unfamiliarity of the Texts used

In order to make sure that the texts used in this study are appropriately classified as familiar or unfamiliar and to check that they have not been previously read by the participants of this study, the participating students were asked to declare their acquaintance with the passages both before and after they read these texts. Prior to reading the stories, they answered four yes/no questions inquiring whether they knew the author of the text, had read his/her stories, had read the story they are about to read, and if they had heard anything about it. Immediately after they finished reading each passage, they were asked to reveal their degree of familiarity with the story they had just read through a one-item Likert scale questionnaire whose options ranged from completely unfamiliar to completely familiar. Tables 4 and 5 show the results of the pretest and posttest questionnaires of the Iranian story. As you can see nearly all the participants, precisely about 96.4 percent of them, indicated they had not known the author of the Iranian story or read his works. Nor had they read the story they were supposed to read or
even heard anything about it. Statistically speaking, 100 percent had not read the story and 98.2 percent had not heard anything about it. So, we can safely conclude that the students had not read this text before. However, although before reading the Iranian narrative, the students demonstrated that they had not read it or even known its writer, they found its content to be familiar after they finished reading it. About 78 percent of them found the story to be either completely or mostly familiar whereas only 21 percent said that the text was half familiar and half unfamiliar. As it can be seen from these figures, we can conclude that the Iranian story was familiar to our research population.

Table 4

The participants’ responses to the pre test questionnaires of the Iranian and foreign story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The items</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you know Samad Behrangi?</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever read his stories?</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever read his Little Sugar Beet Vendor?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever heard any thing about this story?</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know Josef Essberger?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever read his stories?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever read his The Winepress?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever heard anything about this story?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the results obtained through the pretest questionnaire of the foreign story and those gained from the set of questions given prior to the Iranian passage were almost similar, they went in a quite opposite direction with regard to the posttest questionnaire. As it can be noticed through Table 4, all the students stated that they had neither known the author of the foreign story nor read his other works. They also unanimously indicated that they had not read the chosen story and even had not heard anything about it leading to the conclusion that the participants had not had any prior experience with this story. After the participants had finished reading the foreign story, their responses to the question coming immediately after this text showed that this passage was unfamiliar to a high proportion of them. Table 5 shows that 83 percent of the population expressed that the story was either completely or mostly unfamiliar (completely unfamiliar: 48% and mostly unfamiliar: 35%). Moreover, finally, only 16.1 percent of the students served as the participants of the study indicated that the content
of the foreign story was half familiar and half unfamiliar to them. Therefore, our assumption that the foreign story was unfamiliar to the participants was actually confirmed through these percentages.

**Table 5**
The participants' responses to the posttest questionnaires of the Iranian and foreign stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The items</th>
<th>The options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The content of the Iranian story was?</td>
<td>Completely familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completely unfamiliar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The content of the foreign story was?</td>
<td>Mostly unfamiliar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Half familiar/unfamiliar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2. Does cultural familiarity of the texts have any effect on the vocabulary learning and retention through those texts?

A paired samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the effect that text familiarity might have on the participants’ performance on the vocabulary tests that they completed after reading each narrative. In this statistical method of analysis, the whole population of the study was taken as a single group and their scores on both the vocabulary tests were compared. The results indicated that the students performed higher in the vocabulary test of the Iranian story (M= 7.75, SD= 3.87) than in that of its alien equivalent (M= 4.66, SD= 3.05) (see Table 6). Table 7 also shows that this difference in the participants’ performance on the two vocabulary tests to be highly significant (t (55) = 12.35, p< .0005).

**Table 6** Paired Samples Statistics of the students’ scores on the vocabulary tests of the Iranian and foreign stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The vocabulary scores of the Iranian story</td>
<td>7.7500</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3.87650</td>
<td>.51802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vocabulary scores of the foreign story</td>
<td>4.6607</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3.05273</td>
<td>.40794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7
Paired Samples Test of the students’ performance on the vocabulary tests of the Iranian and foreign stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>The vocabulary scores of the Iranian story - The vocabulary scores of the foreign story</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.08929 - 1.87109</td>
<td>1.87109</td>
<td>.25003</td>
<td>2.58820</td>
<td>3.59037</td>
<td>12.355</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, the answer to the third question of this research study regarding the facilitative effect of text familiarity on incidental vocabulary learning will be positive. The participants learned and remembered more words from the Iranian story than from its foreign counterpart.

6. Discussion

Regarding the research question raised in the present study inquiring whether familiarity with the overall cultural context or background of the texts can lead to vocabulary learning and development through reading, the results demonstrated that this was the case. The intermediate students served as the participants in this study remembered and recognized significantly more words from the Iranian/familiar story than from its alien counterpart. This finding corroborates and replicates the results obtained by the studies conducted by Pulido (2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007) attributing a strong effect to cultural and/or topic familiarity on the process of the incidental vocabulary gain. This result also provides additional support for what has been known as “schema-theoretic and knowledge-based” views of learning and memory (Pulido, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2007; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Widdowson, 1983) according to which the possession of an appropriate background knowledge is assumed to facilitate the attentional allocation, the construction of mental representation, and the development of form-meaning connections between the new words and the contexts within which they occurred. Greater familiarity, as Pulido (ibid) asserts, the readers may have with a passage provides what she calls a “cognitive foothold” from which they can construct and
integrate information about the new words. In this study, when reading the familiar story, the students were in a much better position to interact with the text as a whole and to create a satisfactory mental representation of its events. In addition, the familiarity of the students with the overall cultural settings of the Iranian story helped them to more efficiently direct attention to input they were dealing with (Pulido, 2007). So, they were more able to recall or recognize words used in the story they identified more culturally familiar than the other one. In the foreign narrative, on the contrary, the story happened in a situation unaccustomed to a typical Iranian native speaker living in this country. Therefore, the students failed to interact efficiently with the passage in order to construct a mental representation based upon the original story. In fact, they comprehended the text in a way contradicted with what was originally intended by the text. This distortion of the intended message of the unfamiliar text appears to have negatively affected the participants’ ability to build accurate and sound form-meaning connections for the new words happened in this kind of context (Pulido, 2004a, 2004b).

7. Implications
The results of this study also revealed that incidental vocabulary learning did occur through reading and this was more evident in the familiar text. That is, the text judged as culturally familiar led to more vocabulary learning than its unfamiliar counterpart. Thus, one of the major implications drawn from this study is that the second language teachers and textbook developers should take the matter of text selection more seriously. They should choose for the reading comprehension courses they teach texts which are more or less related to the students’ cultural background. However, since it is not always possible to use culturally familiar materials and also due to the fact that any language should be learned through its own culture, the second language instructors should play the role of facilitator when they introduce to their students texts which are culturally distant to them. It means that they should facilitate their learners’ reading comprehension through familiarizing and providing them with the cultural information or schemata necessary to understand the foreign language texts. They can do so by designing and/or using pre-reading activities containing some culture instruction. These activities can take the form of explicitly teaching the words carrying more or less cultural connotations, explaining the cultural events, occasions, and traditions mentioned in the text, and discussing the cultural experiences mentioned in the passage and comparing them to those of the learners. Material developers should incorporate such
activities in the reading textbooks as well. It is also important to complement word learning happening through reading context with some explicit vocabulary instruction, such as providing L1 translation or L2 explanation, in order to strengthen such kind of vocabulary learning.

8. Suggestions for Further Research

Before any generalization is made about the results of this study, some points should be taken into account. First, in this study, just narrative texts were used to answer the research questions posed in the chapter one. Future researchers should also make use of the expository texts to see if the same results can be achieved with such texts. Second, for the purpose of the current study, only intermediate level adult students were hired. Any future attempt needs to include language learners across all proficiency and age levels to see if the same findings are to be repeated with the more or less proficient readers or with younger students. Third, to measure the amount of vocabulary items acquired through reading the two passages, a multiple-choice L2 vocabulary test was employed which was actually a recognition test. In any subsequent research endeavors investigating the issues raised in this study, production tasks should be utilized wherein the students are asked to provide L1 equivalents or L2 explanations of the lexical items extracted from the texts in addition to recognition tests. Finally, in the present study, no measures were taken to find out how the students interacted with the passages and how they dealt with the tasks to complete them. So, in any future research, introspective or retrospective procedures such as think aloud should be used in order to get a clear understanding of the strategies or steps taken by the students to comprehend the familiar or unfamiliar texts, to infer the meaning of the unknown words they encountered during reading the passages, and to complete the tasks designed to measure their reading comprehension.

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**Title**

**The Impact of Pre-Modified Input on Iranian EFL Learners’ Listening Comprehension**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the effect of English and Persian subtitles of DVD films on the listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. To conduct the study, 90 female subjects, aging 20-30, were selected randomly from among 135 intermediate students of EFL at Parsa Language School, Qom, Iran. They were randomly assigned to three groups of 30 students. The decision as to which group
to be experimental and control group was also made randomly. The two experimental groups received their treatments; one group watched 3 English movies with English subtitle, and the other group watched the same 3 English movies with Persian subtitle. The control group watched the same movies with no subtitle. ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean of the English subtitle group and those of the Persian subtitle group and control group. The Tukey *post-hoc* test on the one-way ANOVA suggested that there was significant difference between English subtitle group and Persian subtitle group (*p* = .000) as well as between Persian subtitle group and control group (*p* = .000). Moreover, there is a significant difference between English subtitle group and control group (*p* = 0.018); however, the *p* value is bigger than the *p* values between English subtitle group and Persian subtitle group (*p* = .000), Persian subtitle group and control group (*p* = .000). The results of the paired sample t-test also revealed that the change in listening comprehension of the subjects in Persian subtitle group was not significant after treatment.

Keywords: Listening comprehension, Input, Pre-modified input, DVD movies, Subtitle

1. Introduction

Listening has long been the neglected skill in second language acquisition (Nunan, 1998). However, over the past two decades, a great deal of attention has been paid to the teaching, learning, and testing of second language (L2) listening ability. This increased attention has been due, at least in part, to the appreciation of the importance of listening in language learning (Buck, 2001). Consequently, educators have realized they should underline this receptive language skill to guarantee the learners’ good oral language production. Among others, Harmer (2003, p.40) has indicated reasons for listening exercises as follows:

- Listening is an essential skill.
- The more a language is listened to, the better students become at listening to it.
- Listening to a language improves a student’s speaking ability. In particular, pronunciation is seen to improve.
- Pre-recorded material exposes students to a large variety of voices.
- All listening, if understood, gives students the chance to notice language and to acquire it.
• Listening material, especially pre-recorded material, gives students the opportunity to study aspects of spoken English.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1. Listening Input

Language input is an indispensable component in language acquisition. Ellis (1985) defined input as “the language that is addressed to the L2 learners either by a native speaker or by another L2 learner and his interlocutors” (p.125). Language learners may receive input in a variety of forms in the classroom from materials to teachers and students (Gass & Selinker, 2008; Oura, 2001), or in natural settings from around them (Yang, 2007). Even metalinguistic input, whether teacher-centered or student-centered, can be seen as a kind of language input (Bacon, 1989).

According to the Input Hypothesis (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, cited in Richards & Rogers, 2001), language learners do not have to be forced to produce early. That is, a certain amount of comprehensible input must be given before they start to produce their own utterances. Acquisition will happen when acquirers feel “ready” for it. For example, if an acquirer is at a stage “i”, then acquisition takes place when s/he is exposed to enough comprehensible input that belongs to the level “i+1”. “An acquirer can “move” from a stage i (where i is the acquirer’s level of competence) to a stage i+1 (where i + 1 is the stage immediately following i along some natural order) by understanding language containing i + 1” (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p.32, cited in Richards & Rogers, 2001).

Therefore, the best method is the one that supplies “comprehensible input” in low anxiety situations in which language development results from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production (Dong-lin, 2008). As asserted by Dong-lin (2008, p.54), comprehensible input has four characteristics: (1) comprehensible; (2) interesting and relevant; (3) not grammatically sequenced; (4) sufficient “i+1”.

2.2. Pre-modified Input

In second language teaching, teachers should consider how the listening skill will be affected by adjusting input the students receive (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Pica and her colleagues, cited in MacKay (1999), operationalized pre-modified input as a kind of input which is targeted at the level of the learner to facilitate language comprehension. Negotiation is generally not necessary when input is pre-modified. The linguistic structures ordered from
simplicity to difficulty and partially scripted role plays are examples pre-modified input found, sometimes termed “scripted” (Gass & Varonis, 1994, cited in MacKay, 1999). This kind of input is found many second language textbooks (MacKay, 1999).

2.2.1. DVD Movies: A Source of Pre-modified Input

DVDs (Digital Versatile Discs or Digital Video Discs) with subtitling and audio options include pre-modified input which can allow teachers to provide their learners with pre-modified input. The subtitle features on DVDs open up new techniques for teaching foreign languages. As an illustration, an effective self-access activity for vocabulary building is to watch a film in L2 with subtitles in the target language. (National Centre for Languages, 2008). Subtitles have a potential value in helping the learning acquisition process by providing learners with the key to massive quantities of authentic and comprehensible language input’ (Vanderplank, 1988).

There are different types of combinations between audio and subtitles. The main ones are known as standard subtitles (foreign language audio with mother tongue captions), bimodal subtitles (foreign language audio with foreign language subtitles), and reversed subtitles (mother tongue audio with foreign captions). A line of research has been conducted to investigate which combination of sound and subtitles in L1/L2 most effectively helps L2 learners understand the movies. However, there are mixed findings. Holobow, Lambert and Sayegh (1984) found bi-modal (L2 sound + L2 subtitles) better suits advanced learners. Danan (1992, cited in Hideyuki & Amanda, 2001) suggested bi-modal and reversed mode (L2 subtitles + L1 sound) enhance learners' comprehension more than the standard (L1 subtitles + L2 sound) mode.

Moreover, as an advance organizer, subtitles may help learners overcome their lack of essential schemata that would otherwise limit the amount of intake that could occur and enhance listening recall by activating prior knowledge or schema (Rocque, 2008). Indeed, texts in the form of subtitles help learners monitor a speech that would probably be lost otherwise. In fact, while TV programs and films that are not subtitled can create a high level of insecurity and anxiety in students, the incorporation of subtitles provides instant feedback and a positive reinforcement that contributes to create a feeling of confidence in learners that can help them feel ready and motivated to watch foreign television programs, films, etc., with or without the support of subtitles in the future.

Given the paucity of research into the impact of DVD subtitles as pre-modified language input on listening comprehension, the present study aimed to investigate the impact
of such kind of input on the Iranian EFL student’s listening comprehension. As such, the following research questions were formulated:

Q1: Is there any significant difference between the listening comprehension of the group that watches DVD movies with English subtitles on the measures before and after the study?
Q2: Is there any significant difference between the listening comprehension of the group that watches DVD movies with Persian subtitles on the measures before and after the study?
Q3: Is there any significant difference between the listening comprehension the group that watches DVD movies no subtitle on the measures before and after the study?
Q4: Is there any significant difference between the listening comprehension of English subtitle group, Persian subtitle group and no-subtitle group on the post-test?

Based on the above research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

H01: There is no significant difference between the listening comprehension of the group that watches DVD movies with English subtitles on the measures before and after the study.
H02: There is no significant difference between the listening comprehension of the group that watches DVD movies with Persian subtitles on the measures before and after the study.
H03: There is no significant difference between the listening comprehension of the group that watches DVD movies no subtitle on the measures before and after the study?
H04: There is no significant difference between the listening comprehension of English subtitle group, Persian subtitle group and no-subtitle group on the post-test.

3. Method

3.1. Population and Sampling

90 Female students participating in this research were selected randomly from among 135 intermediate students of EFL at Parsa Language School (P.L.S.), Qom, Iran. During the study, the subjects did not take any other English classes but this course. They were randomly assigned to three groups of 30 students. The decision as to which group to be experimental or control was also made randomly. To control the initial differences between and within groups an attempt was made to choose the sample groups from one sex (female), with age range of 20-30, and with the same proficiency level.

3.2. Instrumentation

First, the listening subtest of Oxford Place Test (OPT) was used as a placement test to homogenize the participants. The second set of instruments was two TOEFL listening subtests, used as the pretest and posttest. In addition, a TV set and a DVD player were used
as the audio-visual equipment. Moreover, three randomly chosen original American English DVD films, with the capacity of showing English subtitle, Persian subtitle, and no subtitle, were the instructional materials of the study.

3.3. Procedure
Because of the nature of the study, the most appropriate design was one of the subsets of true experimental design known as pre-test post-test control group design. Basic characteristics of the design i.e. control group, randomization and pre-test, allowed the researcher to avoid almost many of the problems associated with internal and external validities. In this design, there were three groups; two experimental groups and one control group. One experimental group watched three English movies with English subtitle (henceforth called English subtitle group and abbreviated as ESG). The other experimental group watched the same three English movies with Persian subtitle (henceforth called Persian subtitle group and abbreviated as PSG). The control group watched the movies with no subtitle (henceforth abbreviated as NSG).

The pretest was administered in order to measure the level of listening comprehension of the subjects one week before the study. The subjects were required to participate in the lab class for fifteen sessions as a requirement of Parsa Language School. Each session was to be held every other day, three days a week. Subjects of the study were required to watch each one of the three randomly selected movies in its entirety every five sessions. One week after the last session, the post-test of TOEFL, listening section (Part B) was administered to both experimental groups as well as control group.

4. Results and Discussion
To answer the four research questions and to decide whether to reject the null hypotheses or not, first the SPSS descriptive statistics was run for the scores of all three groups on the pre-test. Table 1 shows that the three groups have approximately equal means ($\bar{x}_{ESG}=23.36$, $\bar{x}_{PSG}=23.10$, $\bar{x}_{NSG}=22.80$) and standard deviations ($SD_{ESG}=3.09$, $SD_{PSG}=3.45$, $SD_{NSG}=3.02$).

Table 1: the descriptive statistics of the pre-test scores
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESG</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23.3667</td>
<td>3.09040</td>
<td>.56423</td>
<td>22.2127</td>
<td>24.5206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSG</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23.1000</td>
<td>3.45763</td>
<td>.63127</td>
<td>21.8089</td>
<td>24.3911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSG</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.8000</td>
<td>3.02176</td>
<td>.55170</td>
<td>21.6717</td>
<td>23.9283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>23.0889</td>
<td>3.16812</td>
<td>33395</td>
<td>22.4253</td>
<td>23.7524</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To check the homogeneity of the three groups before the study, the Test of Homogeneity of Variances (table 2) was also conducted. The table of Levene's Test of Homogeneity shows that $F$ Statistic has a significant value of 0.719. Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met as it is greater than the p<.05.

**Table 2: the test of Homogeneity of Variances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Statistic</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.719</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the treatment, one-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of the treatment at its two levels on the listening comprehension of the students (table 3). There was a significant statistical difference between the three conditions at the p<.05 level ($f_{(2,87)}$=40.85, p = 0.000).

**Table 3: post-test ANOVA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1527.489</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>763.744</td>
<td>40.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3154.456</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>18.701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1626.967</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Tukey *post-hoc* test is generally the preferred test for conducting post-hoc tests on one-way ANOVA. As the Multiple Comparisons table shows, there is a significant difference between ESG and PSG ($p = .000$) as well as between PSG and NSG ($p = .000$). Additionally, there is significant difference between ESG and NSG ($p = 0.018$); however, the $p$ value is bigger that the $p$ values between ESG and PSG ($p = .000$) and PSG and NSG ($p = .000$).

**Table 4: Tukey post-hoc test**
To check if there is any difference within each group on the two measures, the paired-samples t-test was conducted. As shown in the following table, there is a significant difference within the control group on the two measures of pre- and post-tests ($t_{(29)} = 16.20$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 5: NSG paired samples t-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NSG Posttest-Pretest</td>
<td>7.900</td>
<td>2.670</td>
<td>.487</td>
<td>6.903 - 8.897</td>
<td>16.208</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we see in the following table, there is no significant difference within the PSG on the two measures of the pre- and post-test (i.e. Persian subtitle group), ($t_{(29)} = 1.325$, $p = 0.196$).

Table 6: PSG paired samples t-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PSG Posttest-Pretest</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>3.445</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td>-.453 - 2.120</td>
<td>1.325</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the results, shown in table 8, indicate that there is significant within-group change in the English subtitles group ($t_{(29)} = 16.14$, $p = .000$).

Table 7: ESG paired samples t-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Experimental groups</th>
<th>(J) Experimental groups</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Lower Bound</th>
<th>Upper Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eg1</td>
<td>eg2</td>
<td>9.8667*</td>
<td>1.11657</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>7.2042</td>
<td>12.5291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eg2</td>
<td>cg</td>
<td>-9.8667*</td>
<td>1.11657</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-12.5291</td>
<td>-7.2042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cg</td>
<td>eg1</td>
<td>-3.10000*</td>
<td>1.11657</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.4376</td>
<td>5.7624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eg2</td>
<td>eg1</td>
<td>6.7667*</td>
<td>1.11657</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>4.1042</td>
<td>9.4291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.
To answer the research questions, the received scores were subjected to a number of analyses. Descriptive statistics was run to compute group means and standard deviation for the test scores. However, to compare more than two sample groups, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the post-test means of three groups. There was a significant effect of treatment on listening comprehension at the p<.05 level for the three conditions (f(2,87)=40.85, p = 0.000). Therefore, the third null hypothesis is rejected since there is a significant difference between the listening comprehension of those who watch DVD movies with English subtitles, and that of those who watch DVD movies with Persian subtitles, and that of those watch DVD movie with no subtitle. The results of the SPSS Tukey post hoc test suggest that there is a significant difference between ESG and PSG (p = .000) as well as between PSG and NSG (p = .000). Moreover, there is significant difference between ESG and NSG (p = 0.018); however, it is less significant than the p value between ESG and PSG (p = .000) as well as between PSG and NSG (p = .000).

The results of paired sample t-tests for ESG and NSG suggest that the students, who received the English-subtitled movies in ESG and those in no-subtitle group, have significantly improved their listening comprehension at the end of the study. On the contrary, the results of paired sample t-test for the Persian subtitle group suggest that \( p=0.196 \). This is much greater than the confidence level of .05. Therefore, there is no significant difference within the Persian subtitle group on the two measures of the pre and post-tests. In other words, this kind of instruction has no significant effect on the participants’ listening comprehension; therefore, the second null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

The results suggest that both English subtitle group and No-subtitle group performed better on the post test in comparison to the other group, i.e. Persian subtitle group. In other words, the participants who watched English-subtitled movie and movies with no subtitle gained higher mean scores on listening comprehension test than those who had Persian-subtitled movies. However, the English subtitle group outperformed the other two groups. Consequently, the first and third null hypotheses are rejected. Also, the English subtitle group (ESG) has outperformed the other groups, i.e. The Persian subtitle Group (PSG) and No-subtitle group (NSG). As a consequence, the fourth null hypothesis is rejected. The results of
the study show that using DVD movies with L2 subtitle was the most effective way to help students to improve their listening comprehension.

5. Conclusion
The main goal of listening is to prepare students to understand actual speech in order to communicate in English. L2 listeners must learn to cope with “genuine” speech and “authentic” listening situations. That is, listeners must be able to understand natural English speech to meet their own needs as members of the English-speaking community (Rocque, 2008). One of the best ways to achieve the above-mentioned goal is to take advantages of audiovisual aids, especially DVDs. A DVD (Digital Versatile Disc or Digital Video Disc) has many advantages over the traditional VHS format as it can store far more information with higher quality. Most DVDs come with a lot of extra information, for example, subtitles in several languages, sometimes two or more extra sound tracks and added video material, such as interviews with the actors. For language learners the added subtitles are of even greater interest because they allow the learner to read in English what the actors are saying and also to read in the L1 (first language). With special features, DVD films provide more pedagogical options and are a rich source of intrinsically motivating materials for learners (King, 2002).

We conclude that the role of subtitles, especially bimodal subtitling, in boosting listening comprehension is crucial and not to be neglected. It can also be concluded that DVDs with the technology of optional subtitles can be a very good source of instruction in the realm of EFL learning. However, it should be reminded that the effects of other types of subtitles on other areas of language learning should be investigated as well. Based on the results of the study, some implications can be suggested. We should maximize the utility of DVDs in language classes and make students acquainted with the privileges of L2 subtitles rather than L1 subtitles. Additionally, we need to encourage and train the English teachers to use DVDs more efficiently and effectively in their classes.

References


The Effects of Skimming and Scanning via a Multimedia CD on the Reading Comprehension of Iranian Female English Translation Students

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Abstract

Considering the importance of reading and the challenges of EFL learners in Iran, educators and curriculum developers are pressed to use efficient and innovative techniques in class instruction. Therefore, this research attempts to demonstrate if reading comprehension of female sophomore university students of English translation are positively influenced by supplementing skimming and scanning reading skills using multimedia software. The quasi-experimental approach was used in this study. The pre- and posttest test results of the experimental group (30 students) were tested against the scores of the control group (30 students) who underwent treatment using the traditional approach to reading. Findings indicate that the students in the experimental group performed better (29.5%) than those in the control. Additionally, the importance of language learning strategies and skills, reading comprehension and the use of innovative approaches (i.e. computer assisted language learning) in literature have been reviewed in order to underscore these issues for EFL educators and curriculum developers.
Keywords: Computer assisted language learning (CALL), language learning strategies, Iranian EFL undergraduate students, reading comprehension, skimming and scanning, multimedia teaching software

1. Introduction
Considering the challenge of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in Iran, rather than a second language (L2), many may question if it is possible for EFL students to have quality and sufficient exposure to language learning and acquisition. After all, English as a second language (ESL) students live in an environment in which they continuously receive firsthand exposure to authentic sources, language learning, acquisition and motivation; in contrast to EFL students who may rarely come across a native English speaker, or occasionally listen to, read, and watch authentic materials. In light of this challenge, EFL trainers find that they are required to not only teach within the set curriculum, but also provide their students effective input by teaching efficient language learning strategies (LLSs) and skills, suitable ancillary materials to reinforce what they have taught, and maintain student motivation.

Nowadays, in Iran, EFL learners go through seven years of mandatory English before receiving their high school diploma; although, in the end very few are fluent in English. Afterwards, at university, students are required to attend content-based English courses that require much higher levels of reading than what they are accustomed to. Considering the poor English background of students when entering university and the demands of university English courses, EFL educators at this level are under pressure to obtain positive results. Hence, this situation requires an innovative approach if we want EFL learners to be able to become competent at academia. One approach is to teach language learning strategies and skills (e.g. skimming and scanning) via a modern approach of computer-assisted language learning (CALL).

In this study, the researcher has focuses on reading skills since it is not only necessary for EFL reading courses, but also for enhancing students understanding of a variety of content areas at hand (i.e., engineering, psychology, mathematics, and so on); certainly if a student cannot read fluently then he will only experience minimal gains at academia. Therefore, efficient reading skills are the gateways to higher education and the catalyst for obtaining greater knowledge.

In addition, the researcher has also evaluated the use of CALL (i.e., ancillary software program) as an efficient and innovative aid for EFL learners, given the rapidly advancing
industry of computer software for this targeted group. Without a doubt, the software industry has greatly impacted the way EFL trainers and learners can make available and acquire supplementary forms of information and knowledge to improve foreign language skills. In fact, some countries have been using computer technology as a supplementary EFL tool for many years. As an example, Korean public schools, which are equipped with computers and software, have been using computers and software for nearly twenty years (Lim, 2007).

In China, a campaign called (College English Reform) began in 1996 after realizing that EFL students were not fluent in English even though they studied for six years in secondary school. The first step was to apply advanced information technology to college level English teaching and learning on a wide basis in order to further the computer-based College English reform (Liu, 2003).

In light of these facts, this research attempts to demonstrate how reading comprehension is positively influenced by supplementing skimming and scanning reading skills by the aid of a specially designed multimedia software program, while the control group only had traditional classroom instruction. By this, the researcher aims to discover useful implications for EFL educators, learners, and curriculum developers that can aid educators and curriculum developers in the development of efficient reading comprehension pedagogy within an Iranian and CALL context. Hence, this study addresses the following research question:

1. Does teaching supplementary skills of skimming and scanning via a multimedia CD influence the reading comprehension of Iranian female learners majoring in English translation?

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Skimming & Scanning Reading Skills

Nowadays, skimming and scanning are two reading skills taught to upper level language learners to enhance reading comprehension. Skimming is to look quickly over a text in order to have a general idea of its contents. For example, when you skim a text you are trying to gain its gist and not its complete understanding; thus, the quickness and speed. On the other hand, scanning is to review a text to find specific information; when you scan through a text you are searching for specific information (e.g., names, numbers, dates, and so on), without trying to understand the text.

Skimming in contrast to scanning requires the reader to have a greater degree of reading skills (e.g., phoneme awareness, phonics, fluency, word recognition, comprehension, and so on) as it entails a more detailed understanding of the text and requires locating topic
sentences in paragraphs and parts of speech. However, less advanced readers can handle scanning as it merely entails locating keywords and perhaps synonyms.

The aim of skimming and scanning are to help language learners realize that they do not necessarily need to read and understand every word of a text in order to be successful in reading comprehension.

2.2. Language Learning Technology

2.2.1. The background of CALL
According to Levy (as cited by Davies) CALL is defined as "the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning". Initially, with the advent of the microcomputer in developed countries in the 1980s, CALL began to receive notice in the teaching community for its possibilities of aiding language acquisition. According to DeVillar & Faltis (1991), over the years the role of the computer as a “transmitter of knowledge and skills” has been transformed into a “tool that supports and assists learners to complete tasks”; thus, turning away from the concept of the computer as a method for instruction and evolving into a tool for learning.

2.2.2. Language Learning Technology Application
As with any other innovative teaching approach, the effectiveness of CALL should be evaluated. Unfortunately, there has been limited research on participant interaction during CALL instruction according to Long (as cited in Chapelle, 1990), and on CALL’s effectiveness as a whole. In an article by Felix (2003), a detailed assessment was done that securitized what she calls “popular myths” given to online learning considering these three factors: administrators, teachers and students. This study concluded, “That costs can be saved in this ambitious enterprise is clearly a myth, as are expectations of saving time or replacing staff with machines" (Felix 2003).

In another study by Felix in 2008, she evaluated the effectiveness of using CALL to advance the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. She stated that there was "enough data in CALL to suggest positive effects on spelling, reading, and writing” (Felix 2008). She went on to state that students generally welcome CALL integration; however, Felix stated this is dependent on stable and sustainable conditions, and she pointed out that technical problems, such as slow to no connectivity, may prevent students from fully utilizing learning materials. Other aspects of CALL integration that Feliz (2008) has discovered is the sense of unease that older students may feel when working with computers and that younger
students may lack the required metaskills for effective management of this challenging and innovative learning concept.

Although computers have advanced from simple data processing and entry to a powerful high-tech tool that also enables communication and simulation, it can in no way replace the “live teacher,” particularly in language instruction, where the importance is “on mutual communication between people” (Dhaif, 1989). Technology is simply a tool of the human being, who programs how it should be used; therefore, in order to efficiently integrate the computer into the classroom the educator must direct it and the students must be willing to work with it.

**2.2.3. Pedagogy and Methodology of Integrating CALL in the classroom**

Salaberry (as cited by Rochid, 2009) “raised concerns about the implications of misusing technology in the language classroom, maintaining that the most important challenge posed by technology is identifying its educational objectives,” which tend to be forgotten because of the excitement that a hypermedia software may offer (“Effective CALL Pedagogy”, 2005). Wyatt (as cited by Rochid, 2009) concurs with this opinion and offers that it is important for educators “to distinguish between the medium and the approach.” He goes on to state that “in order to successfully use computers in the language classroom, it is vital to view the computer only as a tool and not to be associated with a particular pedagogical approach.” Therefore, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain the authenticity of the language learning class by not becoming sidelined by the “glitz and glitter” of software functions in order to achieve the main objectives of the established curriculum.

Although the computer is a “user-dependent” (Gunduz, 2005) tool without a mind of its own, educators must take a leadership role in curriculum planning and striking a harmony between in-class instruction and online and out-of-class activities. Moreover, according to Hardisty and Windeatt (as cited in Gunduz, 2005) in order for students to learn effectively from software programs, they “should have an opportunity to discuss with the teacher the activities they have done on the computer.” In this regard, there is no difference between the methodology used in traditional instruction and CALL instruction; however, a few noteworthy points should be mentioned that distinguish CALL classrooms from their predecessor. According to Gunduz (2005), the main characteristics of CALL methodology are as follows:

1. The use of a variety of interaction patterns in class.
2. Information-transfer and information-and opinion-gap tasks.
3. Fluency and accuracy practice.
4. Computer-work, pre-computer work and post-computer work.
5. The use of the four main types of software.
6. Recording what the student has done, followed by an evaluation.
7. To be available at any time and require no additional pay.
8. Teaching CALL and language skills.

2.2.5. CALL Research in Iran

In Iran, as is the case globally, not much research has been done on the effects of CALL in the classroom, although some research has been done on e-learning (a subgroup of CALL). In one study done on 354 Iranian secondary teachers randomly selected nationwide, only 19.5% of the study participants believed that the content of secondary level textbooks allowed for the use of educational technology at advanced levels, 6.5% believed that educational technology was possible at low levels, and 75% believed that at the intermediate level textbook content made it possible for them to use educational technology. This study concluded that secondary school textbooks have been designed in such a way that they do not allow educators to make use of technology in the class. The authors go on to state that this is a shortcoming of the Iranian educational system because it has not designed a curriculum that allows the educator to use technological teaching aids concurrently with their established curriculum (Mohammadnejat & Salehi, 2011).

In regards to learning foreign languages, especially English, private language institutes in Iran have been implementing CALL in the classroom for many years now. Perhaps it is because these institutes use authentic teaching materials that use the communicative approach and require the instructor and learner to use supplementary CDs and/or DVDs. Nowadays, some institutes even use the cellular phone to send educational materials in the form of voice, image, films and texts (Afzali & Bazargani, 2011) and refer students to particular websites for additional authentic learning materials, such as interactive dictionaries, practice and assessment tests, and so on.

In another study conducted on 72 university students of Islamic Azad University in Golestan, on whether CALL has any effect on vocabulary acquisition in Iranian university students, it was found that there was a significant difference between CALL users and non-CALL users, in favor of CALL users (Barani, 2011).

Moreover, another study on using CALL in EFL Reading Comprehension classes was conducted on 60 random university students, and similar to the above study, the author concluded “that the computer can improve the quality of reading comprehension” (Marzban, 2008).
In a study by Bordbar (2010) conducted on EFL educators of Iranian high schools, the findings of this study supported a previous research on technology teacher education (Egbert, et al., 2002) that showed that teachers who chose to use CALL in their classrooms were usually those who had a background in CALL instruction prior to teaching, and insufficient time, support, and resources prohibited the use of CALL activities in some classrooms. In support of this, Shelly has stated (as cited in Rochid, 2009), studies have indicated that although language teachers are usually “enthusiastic about using technology to enhance their teaching, a lack of teacher development programs and time dedicated to experimentation hinder instructors’ skills and knowledge”. Similar to Shelly and Egbert et al. also indicated that the majority of teachers were optimistic with CALL in the classroom.

3. Methods
3.1. Overview
In this quasi-experimental study the data analyzed were from pre- and posttests of the control and experimental group. The data were analyzed by the t-test and the instruments used were the tests papers.

3.2. Participants
The study consisted of 60 female sophomore students, who are currently studying English Language Translation at the Mashhad Elmi-Karbordi University. The students, whose native language is Persian, were from two different class periods, but had the same course title (Reading II) and instructor. The scores of the pre-test taken from both classes showed that they were at the same level (Table 1). One class of 30 students was randomly selected to serve as the control group and the other class of 30 served as the experimental group. For the purpose of homogeny, the researcher set the number of participants at 30; therefore, the extra number of students was eliminated (five females students in the control group and two in the experimental group. Moreover, since in the control group there were only 3 males and in the experimental group there were only 4 males they were also eliminated to maximize homogeny.

3.3. Instrumentation
The researcher administered a 45 minute paper pre-test that consisted of a 50-question cloze and multiple-choice test (Test 200 A) from the Nelson English Language Tests Book 2 - Intermediate level by W S Fowler and Norman Coe. This test was administered during the
second class session of the students’ first semester. The intent was to measure general language proficiency of both groups to determine if they were homogeneous.

At the end of the 8 sessions, the researcher administered a 45-minute paper posttest to the control and experimental groups. The researcher administered a 30-question reading comprehension test from the book Well Read 1, Chapter 8, text 2, Avoiding Plagiarism by Laurie Blass, Oxford Publication. The intent was to measure if there was any improvement in skimming and scanning skills.

The researcher designed a multimedia teaching CD that took reading passages and lessons from the Well Read series. These passages included authentic texts from a variety of genres and graphic representations; however, the researcher was careful to avoid selecting texts that would be difficult for students to understand due to a lack of cultural background knowledge. Lessons included key reading skills (e.g., skimming and scanning) and exercises reinforced the lessons. In addition, a software designer assisted in the technical aspects of the CD (i.e. graphic design, code writing and so on).

3.4. Procedures
In the treatment phase the control group participated in their regular class schedule with no special instruction in regards to skimming and scanning. As part of the normal class curriculum the students in the control group were taught from the book Active Reading 2 by Neil J. Anderson. Therefore, the control group did not receive any extra instruction in addition to its routine class material.

The experimental group received its first of eight 20-minute instructional sessions of skimming and scanning via specially designed multimedia software. These sessions were conducted during their regular classes after their actual instructor began teaching. The researcher conducted these sessions using a computer and an overhead projector.

Assignments from the CD were conducted in the form of a class activity, in which the researcher orally explained the particular lesson for that session and then the students were expected to read the passages silently and answer the questions that followed. Since this was a self-study process, the researcher was not required to explain everything; the learners were able to access the lesson visually and the necessary explanations, while watching the program.

Next, the students shared their answers, corrections were made, and further explanations were given, if necessary. None of the teaching sessions exceeded 20 minutes. The first four sessions were on scanning skills, which were followed subsequently by four more sessions on skimming.
Sessions 1-3 give definitions of scanning followed by some exercises for students to practice what they had learned. Session 4 was a review of sessions 1-3 followed by a cloze test. Considering scanning is pertinent to reading tables, sessions 1-4 focused on this task.

Next, sessions 5-7 were on skimming skills. Session 5 defined skimming followed by an exercise relevant to the lesson. Session 6 focused on using skimming as an effective method to understanding vocabulary in context and session 7 focused on skipping words to skim effectively. Lastly, session 8 was a review of sessions 5-7 followed by a cloze test.

3.5. Statistical Analysis

For the pre-test, which contained 50 intermediate level cloze and multiple-choice questions, each item was worth one point and wrong answers were given no scores. Thus, students could receive a total of 50 points. For the posttest, which contained 20 intermediate level multi-format questions, each item was worth one point and wrong answers were given no scores. Thus, students could receive a total of 20 points.

4. Results

4.1. Analysis of the results of the pretest (Nelson Proficiency Test)

The independent t-test was used to compare the results of the pretest (Nelson Proficiency Test) between the Experimental and Control Groups. The results in the two groups were equal in terms of proficiency (Table 1); hence, the observed t-value is not significant. The level of significance, which is the default level in humanities, was considered to be .05. Because this level overrides the default level, the researcher safely concluded that the difference between the two groups is not significant and they could be considered equal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Results of the pretest (Nelson Proficiency Test)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nels Exp-Con</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2. Analysis of the results of the Reading posttest

The independent t-test was used to compare the results of the posttest between the experimental and control Groups. The results clearly show that the two groups performed differently on the posttest (Table 2). The automatically considered level of significance by the software according to Table 2 is 0.002, which firmly rejects the equality of performance in the Reading test between the experimental and control groups.

Table 2. Results of the Reading posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Pos Ex Con</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Results of the Reading pre- and posttest in the experimental group

Paired t-test was used to compare the results of the pre- and posttest in the experimental group. The results show that the difference between the means of the experimental group in the pre- and posttest is significant (Table 3). The level of significance is 0.0, which is automatically chosen by the software, meaning that there is no chance involved.

Table 3 Paired samples test (the experimental group)
4.4. Results of the Reading pre- and posttest in the control group

The paired t-test was used to compare the results of the pre- and posttest in the control group. The results show that the difference between the performance of the students in the control group in the pre- and post-test is significant (Table 4). The level of significance automatically set by the software is 0.011, which exceeds the default level of 0.05.

Table 4. Paired Samples Test (the control group).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair 1</th>
<th>ReadExPre - ReadExPos</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Discussion

An independent t-test was conducted to compare results of this study. Statistics indicate that before the study began, in terms of proficiency, there was no significant difference between the experimental (M=29.2333, SD=6.97129) and control group (M=29.7667, SD=5.51914), \( t(58)= -.329 \). (Table 1) However, there was a significant difference in the scores after the posttest for the experimental (M=14.3167, SD=2.36528) and the control group (M=12.3500, SD=2.37860), \( t(58)= 3.211, p=.002 \) (Table 2). These results suggest that the use of multimedia tools can positively impact Iranian female EFL university students’ reading skills.
In the experimental group, reading proficiency significantly increased after eight sessions of skimming and scanning lessons via use of the multimedia CD; (pre-test: M=11.6933, SD=2.78852, posttest: M=14.3167, SD=2.36528) (Table 3). Although statistical analysis indicated there was also a significant difference within the control group (pre-test: S=11.9067, SD=2.20766, posttest: M=12.3500, SD=2.37860), compared to the experimental group, the control group only witnessed a slight increase in reading skills improvement. Therefore, we can conclude that although traditional teaching methods used for reading skills can positively impact Iranian female EFL university students, the use of multimedia tools can offer better results.

The main aim of this present study was to explore the effectiveness of teaching supplementary skills of skimming and scanning via a multimedia CD. As has been demonstrated, the experimental group outperformed the control group on the reading comprehension posttest. Explicit instruction in skimming and scanning skills and practice received by the experimental groups and the multimedia CD that used CALL instruction contributed to this improvement. It should be noted that both groups showed improvement on the posttest; however, the experimental group outperformed the control. Furthermore, the findings of this study support other empirical studies on the effect of LLSs on reading comprehension performance (e.g., Hismanoglu, 2000; Armbruster et al., 2001; Hashemi, 2002; Karimi et al., 2004; Ozek & Civelek, 2006; & Alyousef, 2006; Morales, 2010; John Flavell - Metacognition Theory, n. d. & National Reading Panel - Reports of the Subgroups, n. d.)

Moreover, this study also aimed to review the literature on LLSs and skills and CALL (in general) in order to underscore their possible positive effects in the EFL classroom. In a study by Marzban (2008), CALL can be an innovative yet useful technological tool in reading comprehension instruction in Iranian classes. Other studies (see Barani, 2011; Felix, 2003 & 2008) have shown that CALL, in general, can play a positive role in language learning. However, Bordbar (2010) stated that a lack of experience with CALL impeded its use by educators in the classroom, although they held positive opinions of its possibilities. This problem should be considered by those interested in teacher training.

In another study by Wisajorn (n. d.), although the study is in agreement with this study (e.g., LLSs can improve reading comprehension), an important point made is that cultural issues can impede reading efficiency. Therefore, this variable should be further studied in an Iranian context. In another study, Hashemi (1992) cautions educators of Iranian EFL students not to quickly take up trends in EFL teaching; rather to consider the motivational factors of
their Iranian students and their basic needs for learning English and their curriculum at hand in order to gain tangible and permanent results.

The findings of this study have implications for EFL educators and curriculum developers, particularly in the Iranian context. However, it is clear that there is not sufficient work done in this area within this context. Much more research on LLSs and skills and the use of CALL in EFL learning should be replicated in an Iranian context so more reliable information can become available for use and analysis by Iranian educators and curriculum developers (see Karimi, et al, 2004). Iranian EFL educators and curriculum developers need to be confident that research is pertinent to their work. Lastly, relevant training of educators in teaching LLSs and skills (see Schumaker, 2009) in order to empower them in the classrooms should be considered in conjunction with EFL curriculum development.

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Title

Multiple Theme and Cohesion: A Case of EFL Students Composition Writing

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Abstract

Multiple theme is particularly interesting from the cohesion viewpoint in that it may contain several cohesive elements at the same time as it signals the thematic perspective of the sentence (Hasselgård, 2000). This study made frequency and functional analysis of multiple theme and its subthemes used in students’ composition writings. Sixty students were selected from sophomore, junior, and senior students majoring in Teaching English as Foreign Language. They were asked to narrate three pictorial stories. The gathered data, 180 compositions, were analyzed in terms of multiple theme and its subthemes based on Halliday’s (1994) model of thematic organization. The results illustrated significant differences between the three groups regarding their use of multiple theme. The number of applied multiple theme by senior group was somehow quite more than the other two groups and on the other hand, most interestingly, the disposition of junior students to use multiple theme was greater than sophomore students as well. Such a tendency could be justifiable in light of having previous academic experience
that may be one of the factors which influence producing a more cohesive text applying such cohesive devices as multiple theme.

**Key words:** Cohesion, Multiple theme, Thematic organization

### 1. Introduction

Writing, to Gabrielatos (2002), is of two levels: language and organization. At the former level, the focus is on grammar and vocabulary used in the sentences and at the later, layout, punctuation, and method of organization are in concern. In EFL context, as far as teachers spend most of their time on the language level by checking the grammar and vocabulary errors in students’ writings, and putting the organizational level aside, students always face problems in producing cohesive texts.

In Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) mind, cohesion occurs where the interpretation of an element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. They also state that cohesion refers to the correct use of explicit linguistic or cohesive devices to link sentences in a text. One of these linguistic or cohesive devices is the Halliday’s (1994) notion of theme. As with Halliday and Hasan (1976), Belmont and McCabe (1998) assert that one way of achieving cohesion in text is through thematic patterning, which involves the relationship between clauses based on the information contained in their themes and rhemes.

Halliday (1985, p. 30) defines theme as an element which serves as the point of departure of the message and what the speaker has in mind to start with. It is the element in a particular structural configuration taken as whole, and it organizes the clause as a message. The remainder of the message is called the rheme. Therefore, a clause consists of a theme combined with a rheme and the structure is expressed by order. The order for this is theme followed by rheme.

The notion of thematicity has caught the eyes of many researchers during recent years. Most have addressed this issue across such different genres as different languages (Ventola, 1993; Jalilifar & Khedri, 2011); various disciplines (Whittaker, 1995; Ghadessy, 1999); within discipline (Jalilifar, 2010, Martinez, 2003; Lores, 2004); essay writing (North, 2005); and composition writing (Wang, 2007; Ebrahimi, 2008). Yet, despite a sustained interest in thematicity, little research has examined the use of theme in students’ composition writings and its possible influences on creating more cohesive texts. One notable exception is Wang’s (2007) study of the relationship between theme and rheme in the academic texts and in improving the textual cohesion in students’ writing. The other exception is North (2005),
which analyzed essays written by students from different backgrounds using systemic functional approach.

This scarcity is felt more when it comes to multiple theme in EFL academic contexts. Therefore, bearing the important essence of multiple; the crucial role that it plays in writing cohesive texts; and also extremely low done studies in this area of research in mind, this study aims to scrutinize the status of multiple theme in EFL students’ composition writings taking their previous academic experience into consideration.

The reasons behind putting multiple theme, as an important theme from the cohesion perspective, in focus are as follows: 1) it may contain several cohesive elements at the same time as it signals the thematic perspective of the sentence in producing cohesive text (Hasselgard, 2000), 2) it overlaps with thematic progression in so far as it frequently links a clause to the proceeding clause (Haves & Thomas, 1997) and 3) it is a useful guide to the rhetorical path that the writer is following (Bloor & Bloor, 1995).

2. Method
2.1. Corpus
This study was carried out on the corpus of 180 compositions written based on three pictorial stories by 60 EFL students (20 sophomore, 20 junior, and 20 senior) majoring in Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL). Sophomore students have received 128 hours instruction on English language grammar. Junior students beside the instruction on grammar, they have received 32 hours instruction on paragraph writing. Senior students beside the instructions on the grammar and paragraph writing, they have received 32 hours instruction on essay writing. To make sure about the homogeneity of the students within the three groups, they were given a test of homogeneity (Fowler & Coe 1976) and the average score of each group was above 70 percent.

2.2. Instruments and Materials
1) Three pictorial stories were used for data gathering. The rationale for selecting these pictorial stories was to control students' writing by giving the same ideas to them for writing composition. Three stories were assigned in order to check the use of multiple theme in more than one context and to minimize the influence of single context on students’ writing simultaneously; 2) To put the participants into appropriate levels, they were asked to take three homogeneity tests (Fowler & Coe, 1976). 3) And, in order to achieve a well-organized study, complete model is required for analyzing the data. To do this, Halliday’s (1994) model
of thematic organization was applied. The major rationale behind the selection of his model was twofold: 1) as Martinez (2003, p. 108) mentions, these models provide plausible and attestable mechanisms for determining the thematic structures of the texts correctly; 2) they are practical, reliable, and up-to-date models. Most of the studies that have been done in terms of thematic analysis have resorted to these models.

2.3. Procedure

At first, 90 students, (30 from each group), were selected and set for homogeneity test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) based on their academic experience. At the same time, their scores on English language grammar, paragraph writing, and essay writing were collected from the examination department. Students whose score in the homogeneity test and their average score on their courses was also above 70 percent were chosen for this study. To have equal number of students in each group, the top 20 students from each level were selected.

Second, after meeting the homogeneity in the groups, three pictorial stories were given to students to narrate. The stories only included some pictures without any caption or description given by the researcher and supposed to be narrated in three sessions of 45 minutes. Finally, the gathered data were analyzed based on Halliday’s (1994) model of thematic organization and in order to check the significance of the differences between the groups, Chi-square was run on the data.

One problem with text analysis is that there is always the danger of making mistakes in interpretation. To increase the reliability in the analysis, nine compositions from the corpus were also analyzed by an experienced researcher in applied linguistics and agreement was made on the method of analysis.

2.4 Unit of analysis

This study adopted t-unit as the basic unit of analysis. T-unit is defined by Fries (1994) as a clause complex which contains one main independent clause together with all the hypotactic clauses which are dependent on it. The rationale behind this selection was that: “Analyzing theme at the level of t-unit rather than the individual clause makes it easier to focus on patterns of thematic development in large amounts of text, and can also be justified on the grounds that the thematic structure of a dependent clause is often constrained by the independent clause. (Fries & Francis, 1992 as cited in North, 2005).”

3. Results and Discussion
Multiple theme consists of textual or interpersonal or both beside the topical theme (Halliday, 1994). Regarding the important role of these two themes in helping readers to understand sentence construction from thematic perspective, firstly, the results of frequency analysis and Chi-square of these two themes and their theme types, and then, those of frequency analysis as well as Chi-square of multiple theme and its theme types will be presented.

3.1. Textual and Interpersonal Themes

As shown in table 1, textual theme was applied, to a greater extent, more than interpersonal theme by students belonging to each group. This overuse may indicate their greater tendency to write more argumentative and factual texts using plenty of conjunctions, coordinators and subordinators functioning as textual theme to link each clause to the surrounding text and context (McCabe, 1999), to persuade reader to read the text (Ghadessy, 1999), to provide more explicit guidance to the reader on how to construct a coherent interpretation of the text, and to show their ability to take more authoritative stance in their writing or to reflect that writing is a “rhetorical” process, rather than a transparent medium for representing reality.

One more point concerning the use of textual theme is that composition writing is narrative in nature; this theme is used in narrative genre more than expository and argumentative genre.

In case of interpersonal theme, it was underestimated by students suggesting that when more than one interpersonal theme appears, only one attitude is emphasized; this is not the case with textual theme. Here, it is possible to find two textual themes; one internal, giving information about the organization or function of part of the text, and the other one as external, expressing logical relations which hold in the world.

The data analysis illustrated that students in all the three groups treated textual and interpersonal themes somehow identically. To Halliday and Hasan (1976), texts belonging to the same genre represent a similar contextual configuration, that is, they show common characteristics in terms of field, mode, and tenor of discourse. As far as composition writing patterns the same family of genre, this similarity is not surprising. Similarities in field, tenor, and mode engender similarities in textual choices and are reflected in the thematic choices preferred since the field, tenor, and mode can be realized in topical, interpersonal, and textual themes respectively. Therefore, theme as one of the textual choices provides interesting insight into establishing similarities within and between genre(s). This is inline with studies conducted by such researchers as Ghadessy (1995,1999), North (2005), and Whittakar (1995). In their own words, different types of theme can reveal crucial characteristics of the texts regarding genre.
Overall, the results of the frequency analysis of current research pertaining to textual theme were in agreement with North (2005), justifiable from genre perspective as far as both studies analyzed students’ writing, and in contrast to Whittaker (1995). Compared to Whittaker (1995), textual them, in this study, was found much more in students’ writings making it clear that students applied textual theme to equip the reader with more explicit guidance on how to construct a coherent interpretation of the text.

Interpersonal theme was utilized, to some extent, identically in all three groups’ compositions not more than (5.10%) meaning the underestimating of this theme type by students and their disposition towards the factual tone in writing. Such a result was compatible with that gained by Coffin and Hewings (2005). They worked on students’ writings and found only (4.25%) interpersonal theme. The reason could be that where the interpersonal stance is signaled by such pronouns as *I* and *we* in theme position it will be categorized as topical but interpersonal theme. On the other hand, the gained result was in contrast to North's (2005). Analyzing students' essays, she found (9.75%) interpersonal theme. This differential area may be due to the low degree of personality in the students' writings at least in the present research.

| Table 1: Textual and Interpersonal themes in the Students’ Compositions |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                    | Sophomore      | Junior         | Senior         |
| **Textual**        | F (%)          | F (%)          | F (%)          |
|                    | 322 (23.90)    | 378 (21.80)    | 473 (23.90)    |
| **Interpersonal**  | 67 (5.10)      | 69 (4.10)      | 79 (4.10)      |

Chi-square analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between the three groups considering textual theme. As indicated in table 2, the more the students’ academic experience, the more use of textual theme resulting in the better the reader’s interpretation of the intended message (Ventola & Mauranen 1991). Doing so, students want to provide more guidance to the reader to know where this information has come from and where it is going. With regards to the effect of previous academic experience on how students resort to applying textual theme, it should be argued that analyzing the texts written by senior students made it clear that there was a two way relationship between their academic background in writing and the amount of textual theme they used. As gained by data analysis, senior students, far from sophomores and juniors, applied the textual theme by the total of 473, while 323 and 378 by the other two groups respectively. Generally speaking, having the
academic experience in writing may allow students to develop the rhetorical skills required for composition writing to a greater degree.

Chi-square analysis indicated no significant difference between the three groups in terms of interpersonal theme. This result also showed that there is a reverse relationship between students’ previous academic experience and the amount of interpersonal theme they used. This means that the more previous academic experience they have, the less interpersonal theme they apply. This could be due to that interpersonal theme is not cohesive element.

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis of Textual Theme in the Students’ Writings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Chi-square value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>29.806</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>378</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>473</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Chi-Square Analysis of Interpersonal Theme in the Students’ Writings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Chi-square value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1.153</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Textual and Interpersonal Themes Types

Textual theme was analyzed in term of its theme types (structural, conjunctive adjunct and continuative) and the results of the frequency analysis are illustrated in table 4.

The data analysis illustrated that students of all the three groups used textual theme types somehow similarly. The most frequently used elements were structural and conjunctive adjuncts at the cost of continuatives. That is, students' writings were identified by the structural elements they extremely utilized. The result agreed with McCabe’s (1999), North’s (2005), and Whittaker's (1995) findings. McCabe (1999) found that the most frequent type of textual theme used in English history textbooks was structural element. Conjunctive adjunct was sporadically used by students while continuative was neglected. Halliday (1994) states that structural theme is an item which relates a clause to the preceding clause in the same sentence or the same clause complex while conjunctive adjunct is that which relates a clause to the preceding text. Structural theme is similar in meaning to conjunctive adjunct but they differ in that, while conjunctive adjunct sets up a semantic relationship with what precedes, structural theme sets up a relationship which is semantic and grammatical simultaneously. Structural theme constructs the two parts into a single unit. So, it seems that structural theme
is more important in comprehending and creating cohesive texts. Therefore, sophomore students’ writings appeared to be more cohesive because structural theme was used more frequent (99.06%) in their writing. Continuative was neglected in the composition of all the three groups. This can be explained and justified regarding Halliday's (1994) definition. He contends that "continuative is a discourse signaler that shows a new move is beginning in the dialogue or a move to the next point if the same speaker is continuing". Thus, continuative is generally signaler of spoken discourse rather than written discourse.

Table 5 presents the frequency analysis of different kinds of interpersonal theme used by students. The most frequent type of interpersonal theme was modal adjunct. Finite operator occurred in a very low proportion and Wh-interrogative and let's was more or less neglected. Halliday (1994) asserts that modal adjunct expresses the speaker's judgment regarding the relevance of the message. The modal adjunct’s high frequency in the corpus was in line with findings gained in Ghadessy's (1995) study on sport's reports. He found that the most common interpersonal theme was modal adjunct. As it is quite clear from the table 5, senior group tended to employ more modal adjunct compared to the other two groups making their writing more reader-friendly. In case of the other type of interpersonal theme, finite operator, junior group used more. Following Halliday (1994), finite operator makes the proposition finite and brings it down to earth as it is something that can be argued and make it arguable so it can be concluded that junior students’ writings is more argumentative in contrast to those of the others. Finally, using Wh-interrogative, as the third type of interpersonal theme, only in junior students’ writing revealed that only this group posed some questions in their writings.

To the results taken from the Chi-square analysis, there was no significant difference between the three groups in light of applying interpersonal theme types. This is justifiable regarding similarity in genre.

| Table 4, Textual Theme Types in the Students’ Compositions |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                               | Sophomore       | Junior          | Senior          |
|                                               | F (%)           | F (%)           | F (%)           |
| Structural                                    | 319 (99.06)     | 355 (93.91)     | 430 (90.90)     |
| Conjunctive Adjunct                           | 3 (0.94)        | 23 (6.09)       | 33 (9.10)       |
| Continuative                                  | –               | –               | –               |
### Table 5: Interpersonal Theme Types in the Students’ Compositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme Type</th>
<th>Sophomore F (%)</th>
<th>Junior F (%)</th>
<th>Senior F (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modal Adjunct</td>
<td>65 (97.02)</td>
<td>59 (85.50)</td>
<td>76 (96.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finite Operator</td>
<td>2 (2.98)</td>
<td>7 (10.14)</td>
<td>2 (2.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let’s</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>1 (1.45)</td>
<td>1 (1.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocative</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>1 (1.45)</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh- interrogative</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>1 (1.45)</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3. Multiple Theme

As shown in table 6, the percentage of multiple theme used by students was roughly the same (sophomore, 33.80%; junior, 36.90%; and senior, 39.50%) in line with Coffin and Hewings’s (2005) findings, and in contrast to Ghadessy’s(1995). In their study on students’ writing, Coffin and Hewings (2005) found (36.20%) multiple theme, and on the contrary, Ghadessy (1995) analyzing 37 reports from The Time newspaper found that 47% of the topical theme was multiple. It should be noted that the low proportion of multiple theme in students' writings may result in 1) reducing continuity in their writings; 2) getting failure to persuade the reader to read; and 3) not allowing writers to encode coherence markers.

Concerning the Chi-square analysis, it proposed a significant difference between the three groups dealing with multiple theme use. It also showed that as the student’s academic experience increases the number of multiple theme increases. This could result from that senior students wrote compositions with a greater rhetorical awareness and this is in contrast to the sophomore students who override the concern to establish knowledge about the subject, rather than synthesize arguments and analyses from different sources. The other reason behind this overuse of multiple theme among senior students may be that they wanted to create continuity and cohesion in the texts by adding textual theme and, to some extent, interpersonal theme to topical theme. However, the greater inclusion of textual theme might reflect the argumentative nature of such text types. Texts written in scientific/academic discourse, at least in the present research, tend to be more objective and factual. In such texts, the author does not need to rely on persuasive power of language to cajole readers into believing his idea. So, multiple theme is used to make several discourse relations at the same time. One can thus conclude that multiple theme generally contributes to cohesion.

### Table 6: Multiple Theme in the Students’ Compositions
### 3.4. Multiple Theme Types

While textual ^ interpersonal ^ topical and interpersonal ^ topical patterns were kept in low profile, the most frequent type of multiple theme was textual ^ topical. Such a result, the overuse of textual ^ topical multiple theme pattern, more than 80.92% in each group, was similar to Gomez's (1994). Gomez (1994) analyzed BBC news and found that the majority of multiple theme patterns were in textual ^ topical totaling 68%. In fact, there was a descending order of use from textual ^ topical to interpersonal ^ topical and to textual ^ interpersonal ^ topical. The tendency of students towards textual ^ topical pattern marked the structural dominance over the interpersonal features. This decision may also amount to the formality involved in students' writing. This pattern of multiple theme is very important in writing because, as mentioned earlier by Hawes and Thomas (1997), it overlaps with the thematic progression by linking one clause to the preceding clause, can be associated with the academic discourse, and also makes the writing be more factual.

Regarding the other pattern of multiple theme, interpersonal ^ topical theme, the results out of analyzing the data revealed that students used this pattern less than textual ^ topical. They used this pattern to give their writings a personal tone. The less inclination of students towards applying interpersonal ^ topical theme may be due to that interpersonal theme is not expected to play a part in cohesion, but rather to co-occur with cohesive textual or experiential theme. They may know that interpersonal theme is non-cohesive and it is concerned with the mode of the message rather than with how to link one clause to the context.

In relation to the last multiple theme pattern, textual ^ interpersonal ^ topical, even though it was utilized less than the other two patterns by students in all three groups, it deserves to point out that it was not quietly neglected and was found in their writings but in a lower proportion.

The frequency of different types of multiple theme was calculated and the results are presented in table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple</th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F (%)</td>
<td>F (%)</td>
<td>F (%)</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>456 (33.80)</td>
<td>636 (36.90)</td>
<td>769 (39.50)</td>
<td>79.558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7: Multiple Theme Types in the Students’ Compositions**
4. Conclusion and Implication

In EFL writing context, we often find that learners write compositions made of sentences and paragraphs which do not follow any systematic and cohesive procedure resulting in creating a fuzzy text and finally getting the reader into trouble. They may not be aware of such cohesive devices as theme/rheme structures to focus on. Consequently, they will succeed, to some extent, in displaying the unfolding of the global structure of the text.

Bearing such a problem in mind, this study was an attempt to investigate the status of multiple theme as a theme type in EFL students’ composition writing and how it is tackled by students with different academic experience. The main concluding remarks taken from the data analysis, both frequency and Chi-square, are as follows that may have some implications for writing courses:

1) Focus on theme and rheme structure in a clause and especially multiple theme can have startling and immediate results in teaching writing. Once a language teacher shows students how to properly arrange old and new information, the students have gained a powerful tool for managing the meanings of their writings. The learners can consciously and strategically draw on this knowledge to construct cohesive writing. The cohesion in the students' writings can be improved dramatically if attention is given to using multiple theme in texts.

2) Multiple theme is a highly effective and valuable feature in writing. It enhances connectivity between ideas in the text. The results suggested that our understanding of how texts are created and interpreted would be much poorer without the concept of multiple theme. In composition writing, multiple theme plays a key role in guiding the reader through the logical paths constructed by the writer. If little attention is paid to this theme, the writer's attempt to help readers to comprehend the text will be destroyed.

3) And finally, multiple theme can improve text coherence. Teachers need to look beyond the traditional grammar of the clause when teaching writing and teach students how to connect their sentences and produce a coherent and cohesive text.
References


Title

The Study of Gender Differences Regarding the Types and Amount of Learners’ Misbehaviors

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Abstract

This study investigated the difference regarding the types and amount of student misbehaviors between male and female EFL learners. Three Iranian male EFL classes and three female ones were observed during this study. Additionally, Forty Iranian EFL teachers, out of which twenty were practicing teaching in male classes and the other twenty in female ones, responded to a questionnaire investigating the intensity of different types of student misbehavior in their respective classes. The results indicated that while distracting, abusive and activity-related misbehaviors were more common in male EFL classes, distracting, rule-related and assessment-related misbehaviors were more prevalent in female classes. A significant difference was also found in the amount of discipline problems between male and female learners regarding the misbehavior types of talking out of turn, distracting noise, cheeky or impertinent remarks, and
forgetting learning materials in which male EFL classes outnumbered female classes. Meanwhile, female EFL classes significantly surpassed male ones regarding the misbehavior type of cheating in exams.

**Keywords:** Misbehavior, Gender differences, Classroom management, Classroom discipline, EFL classes.

1. Introduction

Student misbehavior has always been considered as one of the major challenges to the teaching profession and has never lost its importance in classroom settings. While this fact might have always been intuitionally acknowledged by most teachers and school administrators, the results of some authoritative investigations on the current educational issues have approved it. According to a highly-referenced Gallup Poll, discipline has been identified as the second major problem faced by American schools, after gang-related violence (Elam and Rose, 1995; Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1996). The Elton Report has also investigated the issue of student misbehavior in British schools and the results demonstrated that six out of ten teachers who participated in the study described one or more of their classes as difficult to deal with (DES, 1989).

The role of a “controlled classroom environment” is so significant that Walters and Frei (2007) consider it “essential for effective learning, good teacher-pupil relationships, and peer collaboration” (p.7). Despite the appreciation of the significance of dealing with student misbehavior by EFL teachers, it is quite surprising that EFL researchers are still reluctant to conduct studies on the issue. It seems that most of the current literature is too much concerned about studying the nature of language learning, and providing quantitative data to support the positive effects of some approaches that it has lost track of what EFL teachers are really facing in their classes on a daily basis. This mutual misunderstanding between theorists and language teachers has been addressed by some scholars in the realm of language teaching (Brown, 2000).

There is such a strong relationship between the two concepts of ‘classroom management’ and ‘classroom discipline’ that in many textbooks and related literature they are sometimes used interchangeably. According to Doyle (1986), classroom management refers to the actions and strategies which teachers use to maintain order in the classroom. While classroom management refers to how things are generally organized and carried out in the class, classroom discipline is the specific treatment of student behavior. Burden (1995) defines
classroom discipline as the procedure of responding to student misbehavior in order to restore classroom’s order. Buck (1992) describes discipline as a system made up of preventive and intervention strategies designed to manage rather than control student behavior.

There is also a variety of views with regard to student misbehavior. Chastain (1988) asserts “any study behavior that disrupts the learning process can be considered as a discipline problem” (p. 158). Burden (1995) argues that any student behavior which is recognized by teacher as a challenge or threat to the academic actions at a particular moment and involves disruption in the process of classroom activities can be categorized as misbehavior. He asserts that teachers must first identify all kinds of misbehaviors they are facing in their classroom before they build effective and sufficient classroom management plans and strategies. Doyle (1986) asserts that there is some inconsistency in the way teachers react to quite similar actions which are performed by different students at different times and contexts which reminds us of the fact that any student behavior, no matter it is desired or not, must be considered in context.

Gage and Berliner (1975) divide behavioral problems into two categories: too much undesirable behaviors and too little desirable behaviors. Too much undesirable behaviors include behaviors such as aggression, threatening teacher’s authority, and attention seeking. On the other hand, too little desirable behaviors including failure to do assignments on time, avoiding classroom activities, not following classroom or school rules, and refusing to be a part of the learning group may also pose a threat to classroom overall order and discipline.

This study attempts to provide a detailed picture of student misbehaviors in Iranian male and female EFL classes, and to help both practicing and prospective EFL teachers understand what kinds of behavioral problems they might face in their EFL classes, that in turn might help them to come up with a variety of effective measures to tackle such problems. The current study investigates these research questions: 1) Is there any difference in the types of misbehaviors between male and female EFL classes? 2) Is there any significant difference in the amount of misbehaviors between male and female EFL classes?

2. Literature Review

Today, educational institutes and policy makers are showing a greater interest in classroom discipline and misbehavior as student behavior becomes more erratic and complicated in schools. A growing number of studies prove the fact that discipline problems and student misbehaviors are counted as a serious challenge which our teachers face in their career, and
in many cases, it has contributed to the resignation of a significant proportion of teachers from their profession.

In a study conducted in England with 198 teachers from 32 elementary schools, Wheldall and Merrett (1988) found out that talking without permission and disturbing others were among the 10 most frequently observed misbehaviors. Another striking finding of this study was the fact that the rest of the ten misbehaviors were not even considered as misbehavior by 10% of the teachers.

A landmark research into student misbehavior was conducted by Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office to obtain a better picture of different kinds of classroom misbehaviors in England, and the findings were published in one of the most highly referenced works on discipline called ‘The Elton Report’ (DES, 1989). The study was done in two related ways. The first was to conduct a national survey in which questionnaires were sent to 3500 teachers in 220 primary schools and 250 elementary schools. In the questionnaires, teachers were asked to report on different student misbehaviors which they had observed in their classroom during the previous week. Meanwhile, 100 teachers in 10 secondary schools who had not participated in the questionnaire were interviewed. According to teachers’ reports, in the vast majority of primary and secondary classrooms, the flow of teaching was disrupted by minor discipline problems such as students ‘talking out of turn’, ‘hindering other pupils’, ‘idleness or work avoidance’, and ‘making unnecessary noise’.

In another study on classroom discipline, Lasley et al. (1989) observed six secondary school teachers, and investigated how much they were able to control student misbehavior. It was found out those teachers who were known as effective classroom managers encountered less discipline problems in their classrooms than poor classroom managers, and proved to be most successful at controlling misbehavior once it emerged in their classes.

Student’s perception of misbehavior has also been subject of some studies. Bru et al. (2002) conducted a study on the relationship between students’ self-reported misbehavior and their perceptions of classroom management. The results showed that student misbehavior seemed to be only fairly related to general differences in the perception of classroom management. Another striking finding of this study was that only low level misbehaviors were generally observed including talking without permission, bothering the other students, making noise, and other disruptive behaviors such as fighting, stealing, and destroying objects were rarely encountered.

Research on appropriate treatment of discipline problems has also been of interest for experts in recent decades. Although Wlodkowski (1982) and some other authorities give
serious warnings about inappropriate application of disciplinary techniques and the overreliance on punishment, research does not categorically reject the use of disciplinary techniques. On the contrary, the research strongly advocates a balanced approach to disciplinary intervention which employs various techniques of controlling student misbehavior. Scott Stage and David Quiroz (1997) conducted a meta-analysis including 99 studies, 200 experimental comparisons, and around 5,000 students. The results demonstrated that, generally speaking, disciplinary interventions caused a decline in disruptive behavior of around 80% of the participants in the analyzed studies.

In a study on student misbehavior in EFL classes, Altinel (2006) investigated English teachers’ and other teachers’ perceptions about misbehaviors, their types and causes in seventh grade classes. Moreover, the study tried to find out what is the students’ perception and interpretation about misbehaviors, their causes, and their teacher’s disciplinary intervention. According to the results, misbehaving students’ perceptions and interpretations of misbehavior were not quite different from teachers’ perceptions of the same topic. While teachers’ perceptions of student misbehaviors consisted of such behaviors as ‘disturbing the flow of lesson’, ‘dealing with other things’, and ‘talking to friends’, misbehaving students’ perceptions of misbehavior included such behaviors such as ‘fighting’, ‘talking to friends’, and ‘disturbing the flow of lesson’.

In another study on discipline problems in EFL settings, Rahimi and Hosseini (2012) investigated Iranian EFL teachers’ classroom discipline strategies from their students’ point of view. The participants were one thousand and four hundred ninety seven students. They responded to a classroom discipline strategy questionnaire which examined their perceptions of the strategies used by their EFL teachers in order to deal with student misbehaviors in their classrooms. According to the results of this study, Iranian EFL teachers turned out to use recognition/rewarding strategies more often than disciplining their classes. On the other hand, using aggression and punishment were the least common classroom discipline strategies. This study also showed that Iranian female EFL teachers applied strategies such as punishment, discussion, and aggression more frequently than their male counterparts, and public school English teachers were more aggressive than their private school colleagues.

3. Methodology

Based on the classification of the Elton Report (DES,1989), an initial list of different types of student misbehaviors was developed. Although most of these various types of disruptive
behaviors were extracted from the Elton Report, they were modified and redefined to accommodate the specific characteristics of Iranian high school students. For instance, misuse of cell-phones was intentionally selected as a separate category because of its supposed prevalence among Iranian high school students. Additionally, two school counselors one from a female high school and one from a male one in Rasht reviewed the initial list of misbehavior types and their comments were also taken into consideration.

3.1 Categories and Types of Discipline Problems in This Study
After all of the above procedures, sixteen types of discipline problems were defined with adequate examples as a basis for developing the instruments for the study, and they were organized in five general categories of EFL classroom misbehaviors. These categories of discipline problems accompanied with their respective types of student misbehavior are as follows:

A. Distracting misbehaviors
1. Talking out of turn: In class, EFL learners talk out of turn, interrupt teacher or other learners’ speaking. Examples: a) answering a question which was asked from another student without teacher’s permission. b) speaking in the middle of teachers’ talks.
2. Distracting noise: In class, EFL learners make noises either by talking to other learners or by using the objects around them which hinders lesson progress. Examples: a) talking to another learner about an irrelevant subject during classroom discussion b) dropping a book on the floor deliberately
3. Cheeky or impertinent remarks: In class, EFL learners make statements or raise topics which are either not appropriate to be discussed in the class or unrelated to the topic of lesson. Examples: a) asking a question about teacher’s personal life b) asking a question regarding sports while the class is discussing healthcare.
4. Silent distraction: In class, EFL learners silently distract teacher and other learners without making any noise and through facial expression or body language. Examples: a) showing a picture to another learner that is not related to the lesson b) making a rude gesture at another student.

B. Activity-related misbehaviors
1. Idleness or individual work avoidance: In class, EFL learners do not take part or show interest in individual activities. Examples: a) daydreaming while other learners are doing a true-false exercise. b) being quiet while teacher raises a question.
2. **Pair work or group work avoidance:** In class, EFL learners are not involved during pair work or group work. Examples: a) being quiet while other group members are discussing a topic b) frequently talking in mother tongue during a pair-work.

3. **Forgetting learning materials:** EFL Learners do not bring their textbooks, notebooks or other materials and objects they need to practice English in the class. Examples: a) A learner is sharing a textbook with another learner b) A learner borrows a pencil from another student during an exercise.

**C. Abusive misbehaviors**

1. **Verbal abuse of other students:** In class, EFL learners verbally abuse other learners. Examples: a) imitating a learner’s accent b) expressing a swearword at another student

2. **Verbal abuse of teacher:** In class, EFL learners verbally abuse the teacher. Examples: a) imitating teacher’s accent b) expressing a swearword at teacher

3. **Physical abuse of other students:** In class, EFL learners physically abuse other learners. Examples: a) mimicking a learner’s movements b) hitting another learner.

4. **Physical abuse of teacher:** In class, learners physically abuse the teacher. Examples: a) mimicking teacher’s movements b) hitting the teacher.

**D. Rule-related misbehaviors**

1. **Misuse of cell-phones:** In class, learners distract other learners and teacher by using their cell-phones. Examples: a) talking or texting on their cell-phone b) using the Bluetooth to send a picture to another learner during class time

2. **Unpunctuality:** EFL learners do not attend the classes on time, or do not hand in their assignments on time. Examples: a) arriving late at the class b) handing in a writing while it was due last week.

3. **Breaking class or school rules:** In class learners break classroom or school rules. Examples: a) breaking school's dress code b) drawing on the classroom’s wall or seats.

**E. Assessment-related misbehaviors**

1. **Being unprepared for classroom assessment:** EFL learners do not take their classroom assessment seriously or are not prepared for it. Examples: a) expressing an excuse for not being ready for a quiz and asking the teacher to postpone it until next class. b) answering an oral quiz in an amusing way.

2. **Cheating in exams:** Students cheat during their quizzes and exams. Examples: a) providing the answer to an oral quiz for another learner either orally or using body language. b) exchanging pieces of paper during a written exam.

**3.2 Participants**
For the observation part of the study, six Iranian English classes including three male classes and three female classes were selected and observed for one session. The total number of participants during the observations amounted to 151 EFL students, and all of them were studying in the first grade of six different high schools. These high schools were selected based on convenience sampling strategy from the first district of Rasht. All of the participants were high school 1\textsuperscript{st} graders within the age group of 15-16 years and came from a range of different social and language proficiency backgrounds. In order to minimize the effect of observers’ presence in the class, teachers were advised not to change their lesson plans during that session.

With regard to the questionnaire part of the study, participants were 40 Iranian English teachers from the first district of Rasht. Twenty out of these 40 teachers were male EFL teachers experienced in teaching male classes, and the other 20 teachers were female EFL teachers experienced at teaching female classes. All of these English teachers were teaching their respective classes of boys or girls at high schools in Rasht, and were selected based on convenience sampling strategy from high schools in the first district of Rasht. In order to obtain a more inclusive picture of discipline problems in EFL classes, teachers who participated in the questionnaire were selected from both private and public high schools.

\subsection*{3.3 Instruments}

Two major data collection instruments were applied in this study in order to investigate the types and amount of misbehaviors in male and female EFL classes:

1) Observation  
2) Questionnaire

\subsubsection*{3.3.1 Observation}

Based on the classification of different kinds of observations by Mackey and Gass (2005, p.175), a highly structured type of observation was chosen because of the highly diversified range of classroom misbehaviors and the comparative method of analysis aimed for this investigation. An initial checklist of student misbehaviors was prepared by the researchers after a thorough review of the related literature, especially based on the classification of student misbehaviors in the Elton Report. The primary observation checklist was then revised and modified by two high school student counselors, one for male classes and one for female classes, who had direct contact with the contemporary generation of Iranian high school students and therefore provided the checklist with some more up-to-date behavioral problems.

The final checklist for observation consisted of sixteen types of discipline problems as explained and defined in section 3.1 and can be found in appendix 1. The misbehavior types...
on both observation checklists were the same because of comparative nature of this study. Two observers both of whom were English language teaching majors were assigned for conducting the observations. One of the observers observed three males classes and the other observer just observed three female classes during the winter semester of 2012 in Rash high schools, and the observers held two orientation sessions beforehand in order to gain an insight of the different categories on the checklist and the purpose of the observations.

3.3.2 Questionnaire
After a preliminary review of the results of the observation part of this study, an initial questionnaire of the 16 types of discipline problems was prepared for piloting. The results of the pilot study, which involved 6 Iranian male teachers and 6 Iranian female teachers from Rasht, revealed that 15 types of misbehavior out of the initial 16 ones were appropriate to be included in the final questionnaire of this investigation. The misbehavior type labeled as ‘pair work or group work avoidance’, initially available on the checklist, was excluded from the questionnaire because according to the observations and the pilot study, there was almost no pair work or group work activities in the EFL high school classes and it was revealed that such activities are not supported by both EFL teachers and textbooks in Iranian high school classes.

According to classification of questionnaires by Brown and Rodgers (2002, p.142), and due to the comparative purposes of this investigation, 15 Likerts scale items corresponding to the 15 target student misbehaviors were written for both male and female classes. In order to find any other type of student misbehavior which might have been overlooked, one more item in the form of an open-response item was added to the questionnaire asking the participants to mention any other type of discipline problem which they might face in their EFL classes aside from the existing types on the questionnaire. The final questionnaire used for male classes is available in appendix 2 (The items on the questionnaire for female classes were the same as the ones used for male classes).

3.4 Data Analysis
With regard to the observation section of this study, which was meant to be analyzed through qualitative techniques, descriptive statistics in the form of tables and charts were applied to indicate the amount of discipline problems in each category on the observation checklist in male and female EFL classes, and to figure out the most common types of EFL learner misbehaviors. In addition, for the questionnaire section of this research, more quantitative techniques of inferential statistics were used to compare discipline problems in EFL male and female classes from EFL teachers’ perspective.
After collecting the results of the questionnaire, a Mann-Whitney U test was run to find out whether there is a significant difference between boys’ and girls’ discipline problems in each type of misbehavior. The reason for this choice of inferential statistics was that the data gathered through the questionnaire were of ordinal type, and the two groups of raters were independent. Therefore, non-parametric statistics were selected for data analysis. SPSS software was used for running the test for each of the fifteen types of discipline problems on the questionnaire in order to find any significant difference between male and female EFL learners with regard to that type of misbehavior. All of the data collected through questionnaires were precisely checked in terms of any irregularity or atypical behavior, and no single response was spotted as outlier within the 40 questionnaires rated by the participants.

4. Results
The results of this paper will be presented in two sections for observations and questionnaires separately.

4.1 Observation Results
4.1.1 Distracting Misbehaviors
As figure 4.1 shows, as far as distracting misbehaviors are concerned, male EFL classes were obviously more dominated by misbehavior types of ‘Talking out of turn’ and ‘Cheeky or impertinent remarks’ than female classes. However, with regard to two other misbehaviors of ‘Distracting noise’ and ‘Silent distraction’ in this category, the percentages of occurrence are very close to each other in both gender types.

![Figure 4.1 Percentage of ‘distracting misbehaviors’ in the observed classes](image)

4.1.2. Activity-related Misbehaviors
According to figure 4.2, forgetting learning materials comprises a higher proportion of misbehaviors in male classes compared to female ones. Due to the lack of any pair or group work during observations, the frequency of this misbehavior type was zero in both gender types and therefore, it can not be seen in the chart.
4.1.3 Abusive Misbehaviors

As we can see in figure 4.3, while ‘verbal abuse of teacher’ (8%) and ‘Physical abuse of other students’ (3.7%) form a higher proportion of misbehaviors in male classes, it is not the case for misbehavior types of ‘verbal abuse of other students’ and ‘Physical abuse of teacher’ where the higher percentages of these misbehaviors belong to female classes.

4.1.4. Rule-related Misbehaviors

From figure 4.4 we can discern the overwhelming superiority of female classes in terms of the breaking classroom or school rules during observations.

Figure 4.2 Percentage of ‘activity-related misbehaviors’ in the observed classes

Figure 4.3 Percentage of ‘abusive misbehaviors’ in the observed classes

Figure 4.4 Percentage of ‘rule-related misbehaviors’ in the observed classes
4.1.5 Assessment - related Misbehaviors

According to figure 4.5, being unprepared for classroom assessment comprises 9.2% of total observed misbehaviors in female classes which is much more than its counterpart in male classes (1.8%). Additionally, cheating in exams seems to be a more dominant misbehavior type in female EFL learners compared to male ones with a proportion of 6.6% to 1.8%.

![Figure 4.5 Percentage of ‘assessment - related misbehaviors’ in the observed classes](image)

4.2 Questionnaire Results

4.2.1 Distracting Misbehaviors

As Tables 4.1 demonstrates, while all types of distracting misbehaviors were ranked as being more common in male classes by EFL teachers, the only misbehavior type in which Mann-Whitney U test did not show a significant difference (Asymp. Sig. =0.815) was silent distraction where teachers experienced in both male and female classes seemed to demonstrate almost the same mean rank for the misbehavior type in their respective classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Talking out of turn</th>
<th>Distracting noise</th>
<th>Cheeky remarks</th>
<th>Silent distraction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>109.500</td>
<td>114.000</td>
<td>86.500</td>
<td>191.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-2.486</td>
<td>-2.362</td>
<td>-3.120</td>
<td>-2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.2 Activity-related Misbehaviors

Table 4.2 depicts the results of Mann-Whitney U test for activity-related misbehaviors for male and female classes as rated by teachers participating in the questionnaire part of the study. Regarding both misbehavior types of ‘idleness or individual work avoidance’ and ‘forgetting learning materials’ male classes were rated by teachers as demonstrating more such misbehaviors than their female counterparts. However, Mann-Whitney U test demonstrated that just for the second misbehavior type this dominance was significant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Being unprepared for classroom assessment</th>
<th>Cheating in exams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>boys(%)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girls(%)</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Mann-Whitney U statistics of activity-related misbehaviors
4.2.3 Abusive Misbehaviors

As table 4.3 displays, Mann-Whitney U test results for all misbehavior types within this category failed to indicate a significant difference between male and female classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Idleness or individual work avoidance</th>
<th>Forgetting learning materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>164.000</td>
<td>104.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-.988</td>
<td>-2.617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.323</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.4 Rule-related Misbehaviors

The following table shows the statistics for rule-related misbehaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Misuse of cell-phones</th>
<th>Unpunctuality</th>
<th>Breaking class or school rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>166.000</td>
<td>157.500</td>
<td>144.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-.948</td>
<td>-1.174</td>
<td>-1.540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>.124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although based on the questionnaires all rule-related misbehaviors turned out to be more common in female classes from teachers’ perspective, however, table 4.4 indicates that as far as rule-related misbehaviors are concerned, this dominance was not significant.

4.2.5 Assessment-related Misbehaviors

As table 4.5 indicates, the difference between male and female classes was only significant for the misbehavior type of ‘cheating in exams’ (Asymp. Sig. =0.033), and we can confidently discern from this piece of data that this misbehavior type is more common in female classes compared to male classes from teachers’ perspective.

Table 4.5 Mann-Whitney U statistics of assessment-related misbehaviors
In addition to the results of closed-response items on the questionnaire, the answers that participants provided for the only open-response item provided some helpful insights for the purpose of this study, and some teachers mentioned misbehaviors such as unreasonable excuses to avoid classroom assessments or activities, and the use of first language on purpose within the classroom.

5. Discussion

In the following sections, we will the results with regard to the initial research questions at which we aimed to find answers from the outset of this study.

5.1 Types of Discipline Problems in Male vs. female EFL Classes

The results show that the male EFL classes are dominated by distracting, abusive and activity-related misbehaviors more than any other category of discipline problems. Among all misbehavior types within this category, talking out of turn and cheeky or impertinent remarks were the most frequent misbehaviors based on both observation and questionnaire results. After that, the second most common discipline problem in male classes was abusive misbehavior. While observations showed that verbal abuse of teacher was the most frequent abusive misbehavior in this category, EFL teachers believed that physical abuse of other students is the predominant misbehavior in their male classes. Activity-related category of misbehaviors also seems to be quite prevalent in male EFL classes with eleven percentage points. Among the misbehavior types within this category, Idleness or individual work avoidance was identified to be more common in male classes during observations, but EFL teachers rated the misbehavior type of ‘forgetting learning materials’ as more dominant in their classes.

However, female classes seem to be more occupied with distracting, rule-related and assessment-related misbehaviors. Among distracting misbehaviors, distracting noise seems to be more prominent in female classes according to observations, but teachers believed that silent distraction was the number one misbehavior within this category. Meanwhile, breaking class or school rules proved to be the most frequent rule-related misbehavior in female classes based on both observation and questionnaire results. Regarding assessment-related
misbehaviors, again there was a disagreement between observations and teachers’ point of view. While observations revealed that being unprepared for classroom assessment was the most common discipline problem in this category, teachers rated cheating in exams as the most frequent one.

4.2 Amount of Discipline Problems in Male vs. Female EFL Classes

The results show that distracting misbehaviors were more common among male EFL learners than female ones. This higher frequency in male classes was the case for all four misbehavior types within this category, however, ‘talking out of turn’, ‘distracting noise’ and ‘cheeky or impertinent remarks’ were significantly more prominent inside male classes according to the results of the questionnaire. Therefore, we can be quite sure that male learners more frequently talk out of their speaking turn, and make more distracting noises and impertinent remarks than female learners do during class time.

According to the observations, activity-related misbehaviors are also more prevalent among male learners than their female counterparts. EFL teachers who participated in the questionnaire also approved this observation. Although, male learners turned out to be much more forgetful about their learning materials, as far as the activity-related misbehavior of ‘Idleness or individual work avoidance’ is concerned, this male superiority was not significant.

The results also indicate that abusive misbehaviors are more frequently observed in male EFL classes than female classes. However, when it comes to the misbehavior types classified in this category, the supremacy fluctuated between male and female classes in observation and questionnaire results. While female EFL learners more frequently abused other students verbally during observations, teachers believed that verbal abuse of other students was more common in male classes. Meanwhile, although observations show that physical abuse of teacher was more frequent in female classes, the questionnaire turned out to indicate that this abusive misbehavior is more prevalent in male EFL classes. The interesting fact is that despite the correspondence between observation and questionnaire results with regard to the other two abusive misbehaviors of ‘verbal abuse of teacher’ and ‘physical abuse of other students’, we can not be quite sure that these misbehavior types are more common in male classes due to insignificant figures gained by Mann-Whitney U test. In other terms, the difference between male and female learners is not significant enough in order to generalize any statement to male and female EFL learners regarding abusive misbehaviors. However, the high frequency of verbal abuses of the teacher and other students in some of the observed
EFL classes require a separate investigation of the possible causes behind these kinds of misbehaviors.

As far as rule-related misbehaviors are concerned; female learners demonstrated more instances of such misbehaviors than male ones. The results of observations and the questionnaire demonstrate that female EFL learners more frequently misuse their cell-phones during class time, they are not as punctual as male EFL learners, and they break classroom or school rules more frequently than their male counterparts, but the difference between male and female learners regarding these misbehavior types does not mount to significant for any generalization according to Mann-Whitney U test. Although, the effect of factors such as the nature and the mismatch of rules and regulations between Iranian male and female high schools, and the diversity of school policies regarding the issue of cell-phone usage must not be overlooked while we are interpreting the results. Another fact that we should especially take into account concerning rule-related misbehaviors, especially misuse of cell-phones, is that these misbehavior types usually remain concealed from teacher’s eyes, and therefore, it is fairly expectable to see some degree of disagreement between teacher’s perception of discipline problems and the extent to which these problems really exist in the EFL classes.

The results also reveal that assessment-related misbehaviors are by far more frequent in female classes than in male classes. According to the data gathered by direct observations and the questionnaire, female learners are less prepared for their classroom assessments than male ones, and they cheat more frequently during their exams. The difference between male and female learners was only significant regarding the misbehavior type of ‘cheating in exams’. But before rushing into any conclusions, we should bear in mind some cautions regarding assessment-related misbehaviors. First, cheating in exams is practiced hidden from the eyes of teachers by nature, and therefore it is quite normal to expect that teachers’ judgment about the intensity of this problem in their EFL classes become affected by their ignorance. Secondly, there is always a stereotypical tendency to associate some misbehavior types such as cheating in exams with a specific gender type, in this case with boys, which should not be allowed to affect our interpretation of the results in this study.

5. Conclusions
This study aimed at identifying the difference between male and female EFL classes regarding the types of discipline problems. Also, it investigated the difference between male and female EFL classes in terms of the amount of misbehaviors based on direct observations.
and teachers’ point of view through questionnaires. The findings showed that while male EFL classes were marked by distracting, abusive and activity-related discipline problems, female classes demonstrated more instances of distracting, rule-related and assessment-related misbehaviors. Additionally, a significant difference was found between the amount of discipline problems in male and female learners regarding the misbehavior types of ‘talking out of turn’, ‘distracting noise’, ‘cheeky or impertinent remarks’, and ‘forgetting learning materials’ in which male EFL classes outnumbered female classes. On the other hand, female EFL classes significantly surpassed male classes with regard to the misbehavior type of ‘cheating in exams’ according to both observations and teachers’ point of view.

Although identifying different kinds of student misbehaviors is essential, understanding EFL teachers’ management and procedures to tackle them requires more investigation because as Marzano et al. (2003) express it eloquently, “chaos becomes the norm” if there are no clear procedures that can guide student behavior in the class (p.1).

A striking feature that was revealed during this study was the lack of any pair or group activities in Iranian high school English classes during observations despite the initial expectations about observing misbehaviors associated with these activities. Therefore, we were not able to evaluate the intensity of the misbehavior type of ‘pair work or group work avoidance’ in male and female classes during this study, and further investigation on the issue remains to be done in other EFL learning settings.

Some other informative comments on discipline problems within EFL classes were provided by teachers during this study including unreasonable excuses by EFL learners to avoid classroom assessments, the frequent intentional use of learners’ first language during class time and lack of motivation and interest in language learning by both male and female EFL learners at Iranian high schools due to an intensive curriculum, outdated textbooks, and inappropriate teaching methods. Some of these quite unexplored grounds seem to be justified and need to be further investigated to verify their truthfulness. Additionally, since we investigated the issue of discipline problems in EFL classes just through direct observations and teachers’ perspective in this paper, studying the same issue through EFL learners’ point of view and its possible differences with teachers’ perspective remains to be conducted in further researches.

References


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APPENDIX 1: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of misbehavior</th>
<th>Tally marks</th>
<th>Total tallies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talking out of turn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distracting noise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheeky or impertinent remarks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent distraction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idleness or individual work avoidance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair work or group work avoidance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgetting homework, books, notebooks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse of other students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse of teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse of other students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse of teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of cell-phones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule related</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpunctuality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking class or school rules</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess. related</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being unprepared for assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating in exams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE (male classes)

How often does each of the following discipline problems happen in your male language classes? Circle the number that best represents the frequency of each problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. In class, learners talk out of turn, interrupt teacher or other learners' speaking.</th>
<th>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. In class, learners make noise which distracts the class (for example, by talking to each other, dropping books on the floor, moving their seats, making unusual sounds ...).</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In class, learners make cheeky or impertinent remarks during the lesson.</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In class, learners silently distract the class (by leaving their seats, showing something to another learner, facial expression, body language ...).</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. In class, learners are Idle or do not demonstrate interest in classroom activities.</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. During class activities, Learners do not have their textbooks, notebooks or pen.</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. In class, learners verbally abuse other learners (by mocking a learner's accent, insulting a learner, giving nicknames...).

8. In class, learners verbally abuse teacher (by mocking teacher's speaking, insulting the teacher...).

9. In class, learners physically abuse other learners (by mimicking a learner's movements, fighting other learners...).

10. In class, learners physically abuse the teacher (by mimicking teacher's movements, fighting the teacher...).

11. In class, learners misuse their cell phones (by talking or texting, sending Bluetooth, playing games...).

12. Learners do not attend the classes on time, or do not hand in their assignments on time.

13. In class learners break the classroom or school rules (by breaking school's dressing code...).

14. Students do not take their classroom assessment seriously or are not prepared for it.

15. Students cheat during their class exams which are held in teacher's presence.

16. Is there any other type of discipline problem which you might face in your classes but is not mentioned here? Please explain.
Title

Sympathy is Aroused for the Avenger

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Biodata

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Abstract

This article studies the dominant genre of revenge tragedy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The author of this article has presented a complete coverage of this genre in these periods. He has started his study from the earliest days of writing revenge plays; the writer also presented the characteristics of this genre and then moved into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In doing so, the author has covered the most important playwrights of these ages who wrote revenge plays including Thomas Kyd, William Shakespeare, John Marston, George Chapman, Tourneur and John Webster.

Keywords: Revenge plays, Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, dramatic literature

1. Introduction

1.1 History and Definition: A revenge play or a revenge tragedy is a tragedy, and as its name implies, the tragedy is brought about by the pursuit and accomplishment of revenge. It is blood asking for blood. The revenge tragedy was very popular during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, and it owed its popularity largely to the influence of Senecan the ancient Roman dramatist.

In his definition of tragedy, Abrams (1999) writes that “Senecan tragedy was written to be recited rather than acted; but to the English playwrights, who thought that these tragedies had been intended for the stage, they provided the model for an organized five-act play with a complex plot and elaborately formal style of dialogue (p.323). He then adds that: “Senecan
drama in the Elizabethan Age had two main lines of development. One of these consisted of academic tragedies written in close imitation of the Senecan model, including the use of a chorus, and usually constructed according to the rules of the Three Unities, which had been elaborated by Italian critics of the sixteenth century; the earlier English example was Thomas Sackville and Thomas Nortons *Gorboduc* (1562)” (p.323).

Abrams (1999) continues and explains that: “the other and much more important development was written for the popular stage, and is called the revenge tragedy, or (in its most sensational form) the tragedy of blood. This type of play derived from Seneca’s favorite materials of murder, revenge, ghosts, mutilation and carnage, but while Seneca had relegated such matters to long reports of offstage actions by messengers, the Elizabethan writers usually represented them onstage to satisfy the appetite of the contemporary audience for violence and horror (p.323).

Perhaps Thomas Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy* (1586) was the first revenge play in its kind and as Abrams says, “established this popular form, its subject is a murder and the quest for vengeance, and it includes a ghost, insanity, suicide, a play-within-a-play, sensational incidents, and a gruesomely bloody ending” (p.323). Following Kyd’s revenge tragedy, there was a spurt of revenge plays, and “it was during James’s reign that many of the most famous tragedies and comedies in English were written and first performed” (Widdowson, 2004, p.9). Abrams (1999) names these famous playwrights and writes: “Christopher Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* (1592) and Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* (1590) are in this mode; and from this lively but unlikely prototype came one of the greatest of tragedies, *Hamlet*, as well as John Webster’s fine horror plays of 1612-13 *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil*” (p. 323).

Other playwrights who continued writing of revenge tragedies are; John Marston (1575-1634) with his revenge tragedies of *Antonio’s Revenge* and *Antonio and Mellida*. George Chapman with his powerful revenge play *The Revenge of Bussy D’Ambois*. The other playwright that should be named here is Tourneur, whose masterpieces of revenge tragedies are *The revenger’s Tragedy* (1607) and *The Atheist’s Tragedy* (1611).

**1.2 Major characteristics:** The main features and characteristics of revenge tragedies are as follows: a) Some murder is committed and the ghost of the murdered person appears to some close relative or friend of his, and enjoins him to take revenge. b) Revenge is conceived as a sacred duty and not as a kind of wild justice. The "avenger is moved by a sense of sacred duty", (Kirkpatrik, 1988, p.42), and not out of any passion, say greed, or hatred for some personal injury. c) There is a piling up of crude, physical horror upon horror’s head, and thus there is much that is sensational and melodramatic. These terrors are intensified by the
repeated appearance of the ghost. d) In the end, there are a number of deaths and the stage is left littered with dead bodies. e) There is abundant use of the imagery of violence and terror. f) Prominent role is assigned to some rascally servant known as the malcontent, a Machiavellian-villain much given to reflection and satiric comments. g) Sympathy is aroused for the avenger.

2. Discussion

2.1 Thomas Kyd’s Spanish Tragedy

The credit for popularizing the revenge tragedy in England must go to Thomas Kyd, who was one of the university wits of the Elizabethan period. He was interested in the tragedies of the Greek dramatist Seneca very much and they were his favorite reading. When reading his plays, one can see that the chief characteristics of the Senecan tragedy re-appear in his masterpiece, *The Spanish Tragedy*. The immense popularity of this play is accounted for by the fact that the people wanted romantic melodrama and Kyd gave them what they wanted.

*Spanish Tragedy* is the first really effective tragedy in the Senecan style. The atmosphere is one of terror and gloom and the terror is produced by the piling up of crime, often monstrous crime. There is also heaping up of murder. A young prince is killed treacherously at the very moment he is to marry his beloved. His father feigns madness and plans revenge. He succeeds too well and in the end everyone including himself is killed. The stage is littered with dead bodies. The ghost in the Senecan manner appears at intervals throughout the tragedy to demand revenge. There are also long, declamatory speeches in the Senecan style.

Despite this classical influence, the tragedy does not follow the classical rules of dramatic composition. There is no unity of time and place, but there is unity of action and unity of motif, for it all centers round revenge. There is also much action on the stage, while there is no such action in the Senecan tragedy.

2.2 Shakespeare’s Hamlet

William Shakespeare, perhaps the greatest of his contemporaries, wrote *Hamlet* essentially as a revenge tragedy. This play has been raised to the level of high tragedy by the genius of the dramatist.

Hamlet’s father is murdered by his uncle; the ghost of the murdered king appears to his son Hamlet and promotes him to take revenge for the wrongs done to him. The revenge "is enjoined upon him as a sacred duty" (Simon, 1984, p. 12). Hamlet is determined to perform
this duty, but he hesitates and delays. The result is, there are a number of murders and in the end, the stage is left littered with dead bodies. Revenge motif is the basis of this play, there is much in it that is crude, melodramatic and sensational.

However the various soliloquies of the prince give us a sign into his tortured soul. We also realize that he is an essentially noble soul and his masterly inaction results from his inherent nobility. It is in this way that a crude melodrama becomes a high tragedy, a play in which tragedy is a matter of character and not merely an external horrors.

2.3 Marston’s Antonio’s Revenge and Antonio and Mellida

Another great writer of revenge tragedies is John Marston. The best of his tragedies are Antonio’s Revenge and Antonio and Mellida. Both of these tragedies are the direct descendants of the The Spanish Tragedy. These plays are written in the Senecan Tradition, and are characterized by coarseness, brutality and violence. They also reveal the cynicism and pessimism of the dramatist himself. They lack originality and are frankly imitative. When reading these plays, one can find greater coarseness in the playwright himself than in other writers.

2.4 George Chapman The Revenge of Bussy D’Ambois

Another great writer of revenge plays is George Chapman. His play, The Revenge of Bussy D’Ambois is a good and powerful play. In 1604 he had written the tragedy of Bussy D’Ambois, that it is about a brilliant swordsman at the court of Henry the Third of France, who was trapped by Count Monsturry for an intrigue with the connivance of the king’s brother, the Duke of Guise.

Chapman followed it up about six years later with The Revenge of Bussy D’Ambois in which he deserted history altogether and even invented a brother of Bussyy’s, whom he named Clermont, to avenge him.

On this figure Chapman concentrated all his powers. Clermont expressly called in the play ‘This Senecal man’, is the ideal Stoic. A grave moral teacher, studious of perfection in himself and others- this was the man on whom Chapman imposed the duty of taking swift, decisive, and ruthless action. Even without the clue that the author gives, we can see a certain kinship with Shakespeare’s Brutus, and the relationship to Hamlet is nearer still. The Revenge of Bussy D’Ambois, is the only play by Chapman with a clearly defined debt to Shakespeare.

In the very opening of the next century, there were two dramatists who put new life and vitality into revenge tragedy. These two dramatists are Cyril Tourneur and John Webster.

2.5 Tourneur’s The Revenger’s Tragedy and The Atheist’s Tragedy
Tourneur’s masterpieces are *The Revenger’s Tragedy* and *The Atheist’s Tragedy*. Both of the tragedies are set in Italy, in a coarse and brutal world of crime and vice, from which there is no escape and which knows no pity. The theme is revenge and punishment and the action moves swiftly, clearly and with intensity. They are revenge tragedies in the tradition of The Spanish tragedy, and in their flashes of dramatic power, the greatest of the later revenge plays. Simpson writes that “the savagery of the play is its most marked characteristic, a long-deferred vengeance carried through to the accompaniment of murder, rape and incest. As always in the world of decadence, there is a striving after originality. And in one point the author has succeeded better than one could hope; he has drawn with an unaltering hand the temptation and the triumph of one pure woman” (qtd. in Carpson, 1996, p.45).

2.6 John Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*

Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi* has several features of a revenge tragedy. There is a free exploitation of crude, physical horrors, like the dance of the mad men, the presentation of a dead man’s hand to the Duchess, the showing to her of the wax figures of her husband and children as if they were dead, the appearance of the tomb-maker and the executioner with all the apparatus of death. There are a number of murders including murders by strangling and poisoning.

Imagery of violence, decay and corruption has been abundantly used "to intensify the atmosphere of horror" (Wilkinson, 2010, p.32). There is also a Machiavellian Malcontent, Bosola, a rascal who also indulges in satiric reflections of life.

When *The Duchess of Malfi* is studied carefully, one can realize that the play differs in a number of ways from the traditional revenge play. For one thing, the revenge motif is weak in the play. It does not become clear why revenge is taken on the Duchess. Her only fault is that she married below her rank and status and thus, as the two brothers think, she has disgraced the family. She has certainly not committed any heinous crime and the horrible tortures to which she is subjected are unjustified, and far in excess of her guilt.

That the revenge motif is weak is clearly brought out by the fact that for more than two years Ferdinand and the Cardinal do nothing to punish the Duchess. Ferdinand informed of her marriage as soon as her first baby is born, and she has two other children before Ferdinand acts to have his revenge. If at all there is a revenge motif, it appears late in the play when Bosala avenges himself on the cardinal and Ferdinand for their ingratitude to him, and also because he has been touched by the murder of the Duchess and decides to avenge it.

Further, the revenge in the play is not a sacred duty enjoyed by the supernatural as in the Senecan tragedy, but it can be a satisfaction of a personal passions. Ferdinand’s motif
might be greed for the estate of the Duchess or sexual jealousy resulting from his incestuous passion for her, or it may merely result from the morbid pleasure which the brothers take in inflicting pain. In the case of Bosola, the motif is certainly the ingratitude of the two brothers. It is a satisfaction of personal grudge.

No doubt, Webster has made free use of crude physical horrors, but these horrors are made an integral part of the tragedy. The sensational and the melodramatic is seen acting on the soul of the Duchess, and in this way her inner suffering, in grandeur, majesty and nobility of her soul, are fully revealed. In this way the melodramatic is raised to the level of pure tragedy. In this way the horrible is subordinated to the total artistic effect the artist wants to create. The horror in the play does not remain something extraneous as is the case with other writers of the revenge play.

Intensity of moral vision is another contribution of Webster to the revenge tragedy. In this tragedy, revenge is made to look ugly and repulsive. In the end our sympathies are not with the avenger or avengers as in the conventional revenge tragedy, but with the victims of revenge.

We sympathies with the Duchess, we are conscious of her nobility, dignity and innocence, and our sense of justice is satisfied when the avengers perish. Our moral sense is gratified with the death of the Cardinal and Ferdinand, and revenge is felt to be something obnoxious and unethical.

Webster further transformed the revenge play by adding poetry to it. He was gifted with a poet's imagination and the poetry of his play has been admired by one critic after another. Schelling says that “the power of Webster, at his best is the revealing power of love, the poetry of sadness, the poetry of pathos, the poetry of ruin, and these poetic touches take off the edge of the various gruesome murders’ (qtd in Philips, 1998.p.67). In Act IV of the play, Webster’s poetry is all the more impressive because of its wistful, tender charm, wrung out of the very heart of tragedy. Webster’s splendidly imaginative vision and his poetic insight relieve the gloom and tedium of the play.

3. Conclusion

The first revenge tragedies such as The Spanish Tragedy that were produced during the Elizabethan period are historically important. The reason is that, such a play for example, foreshadows Shakespeare’s Hamlet, in detail as well as in spirit. In this play we also get for
the first time, the hesitative type of hero. Its tragic gloom is the gloom of a Shakespearean tragedy. However, Kyd lacked that vision and poetry which Shakespeare alone could supply.

*The Spanish Tragedy* is also important for it gave rise to the vogue of the revenge tragedy, a kind of tragedy which enjoyed immense popularity throughout the Elizabethan era.

The revenge motif was exploited *ad infinitum* by Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists, and all its possibilities were soon exhausted. The search for novelty resulted in ever increasing crudities and absurdities, and the revenge play died a natural death.

As the tragedy moves from the Elizabethan period towards the Jacobean era and the next century, the revenge tragedy degenerated into crude melodrama and there was a piling up of horror upon horror’s head. Murder and bloodshed were introduced in abundance to provide thrills and sensations to the degenerate tastes of the theater goers.

Dramatists still continued to exploit the revenge motif, but it soon ceased to occupy the central place, and was relegated to the background.

**References**


Title

A Componential Approach to Testing Reading Comprehension: A Case of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

To find the effective factors in learning reading skill, the ELT specialists have proposed different and sometimes contradictory hypotheses. As a result, different studies with specific orientations have been conducted in this regard. However, by taking a general look at the related literature it can be obviously observed that the main focus of the researchers has been mainly on the role of vocabulary and its related issues. The corollary of such excessive emphasis on vocabulary has resulted in the ignorance of the other important component which is grammar. The present study by considering both components of language learning attempts to show the role that grammar can play beside vocabulary in fulfilling the considered skill. Adopting a componential approach and by referring to the last related studies, the contamination problem was to some extent solved and the two components were tested separately and, finally, a reading comprehension test was given to the participants. Statistical analysis has showed that although vocabulary is still a better predictor of reading comprehension ability, the role played by grammar should not be ignored by the practitioners in the field.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, Grammar, Componential approach

1. Introduction
The increasing number of studies in second language reading from both theoretical and practical perspectives in the last decade show the significant role played by this skill in language learning. The critical role of reading ability in academic learning, the representation of the primary role of reading ability which leads in autonomous learning, the highlighted presence of written text in global media, and finally, the indispensible need of immigrants for the purpose of survival in the educational system in their host country are among the reasons indicating the dramatically influential status of this skill (Schmitt, 2002). In spite of its highly-emphasized role, providing a unitary definition for the meaning of reading is a difficult task (Grabe, 2002). The reason for this difficulty can be found in different purposes assigned to this skill. The logical interpretation is that each purpose demands specific processes and resources. Nevertheless, in this study the assumption is that most of students use reading for the purposes of understanding and learning and, as Urquhart and Weir (1998) state, with regard to the suggested processes reading demands "the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language from via the medium of print" (p. 22).

Supposing that the problem of purpose, at least in educational systems, is solved, another dimension of reading would come to the foreground, and it is the issue of the constituting components of reading skill. It is exactly to this issue that this paper attempts to contribute. What can be drawn from the related literature is that the majority of works focus exclusively on the role of vocabulary in reading comprehension (Laufer 1992; Hirsh & Nation 1992; Hazenberg & Hulstijn 1996; Hu & Nation 2000). Of course, there are some other issues investigated with regard to reading abilities e.g., the role of context in guessing, dictionary use, reading rate, and some others stated by Schmitt (2002), but the focus has been already on vocabulary. With regard to the componential approach to modelling reading ability, the individual contribution of each factor has been empirically investigated and finally validated. However, studies emphasizing the relative contribution of these factors to performance on second language reading tests are limited. Moreover, the study of the syntactic knowledge applied in reading comprehension is so far neglected in comparison with what has been done in vocabulary dimension.

1.1. Statements of the problem

Reading in a second language, as one of the most difficult skills to develop, especially to a high level of proficiency, requires a wide range of skills and strategies (Schmitt, 2002). There are a number of specialists such as Heaton (1988) in the field who closely paid attention to the strategies and skills applied in reading comprehension. However, most of these considered points are somehow related to lexical aspects of language, especially that of
vocabulary. Although the grammatical aspects are included in the lists, they are not as highly emphasized as vocabulary dimension. Moreover, the number of studies focusing on the other aspects of reading such as reading speed, contextual factors, size of vocabulary, text types, and reading strategies far exceed the studies conducted with regard to the grammatical or structural aspect of reading. Consequently, the study of the usage of grammatical analysis of reading text in reading comprehension tests is a gap which, as far as possible, the present study is going to deal with.

1.2. Objectives of the study
Implied in the previous section, the study is going to centralize the grammar aspect of reading comprehension in English. Of course, to such an end, the amount of comprehension in second language reading would be decided based on the amount of mastery in both grammar and vocabulary by second language learners. In other words, the study attempts to analyze the relative influence of learners' grammatical and vocabulary knowledge applied in comprehending second language reading texts.

This study aims at providing answers to the following questions:

1. Is grammatical knowledge an essential factor in reading comprehension?
2. Is this knowledge separable from the other components including in reading comprehension? If yes, how is it justifiable?

1.3. Significance of the study
The present status of reading ability, both in first and second language, with its highlighted role in academic contexts leads specialists in different fields of study, such as anthropology, social psychology, and language learning to clarify different aspects of this skill (Carter & Nunan, 2001). Because of its noticeable complexity and numerous dimensions, specialists have not been able to "define L2 reading as a single notion or unitary ability" (Grabe, 2002, p. 51). The aim of this study is to shed a new light on the significance of structural and grammatical rules in L2 reading comprehension. The literature shows clearly how this notion has been ignored by researchers in the field while other aspects such as vocabulary size and type of reading activities have been at the center of the researchers' attention.

2. Literature review
As mentioned before, because of the presence of various processes at work in fulfilling reading comprehension in L2, providing a general and simultaneously comprehensive definition for reading skill in L2 is a difficult task, if not impossible. According to Schmitt
Assuming that reading for understanding and reading to learn are the most usual purposes for which learners attempt, reading can be defined as what Urquhart and Weir (1998) have stated, "the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language from via the medium of print" (p. 232). Of course, Schmitt reasonably believes that this definition is also incomplete, because there are other processes involved in comprehending a reading text which are not listed in the above definition. Listing a detailed number of processes involving in reading comprehension, Schmitt (2002) crystallizes the complexity of this skill. In this regard he suggests:

Thus, a definition of reading requires some recognition that a reader engages in processing at the phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic a discourse levels, as well as engage in goal setting, text-summary building, interpretive elaboration from knowledge sources, monitoring and assessment of goal achievement, making various judgments to enhance comprehension, and making repairs to comprehension processing as needed. Moreover, these processes are carried out by the integration activated processes and resources (in working memory) under intense processing-time constraints. (p. 234)

Considering the complexity of reading definition, one cannot easily determine the degree of difficulty existing in a text solely based on the amount of knowledge acquired by learners in vocabulary size as it has been highly emphasized in the literature. To cope with such a complex task all the factors cited by Schmitt should be considered equally.

The present study is founded on the componential approach to reading as a productive skill in (second) language learning. Although this approach has been criticized by some scholars such as Bachman (1990)--because it does not indicate the relationship between skills and knowledge and also its failure in recognizing the full context of language use--this approach has been supported by specialists such as Carr and Levy (1990). According to these two specialists this approach presents an elaborated picture of reading ability and at the same time it takes the changing processes of this skill into account, and finally, it emphasizes on the individual differences that result in the different stances to which learners resort to. The adoption of componential approach has not been restricted to L2 reading research. The literature also shows the application of this approach in L1 reading. For instance, Cunningham et al. (1990), Jackson and McClelland (1979), and Palmer et al. (1985) have confirmed the distinguishing feature of skill component model in reading ability of L1 learners.
The ignorance of the contributory effect of grammatical or syntactic knowledge in reading comprehension in the literature has been highlighted in the works of Berman (1984) and Uquhart and Weir (1998). Alderson (2000) also in his book on reading assessment refers to the importance of syntactic knowledge in reading comprehension, especially with regard to the process of parsing sentences according to their syntactic structures.

As far as the literature is concerned, gaining a conclusive picture of the topic is not that much possible. However, regarding the qualitative research Bernhardt (1991; 2000) has found the tangible significance of syntactic knowledge in L2 reading comprehension. Needless to say, the holistic picture can be set when both qualitative and quantitative studies are taken into account. With regard to quantitative research, findings are somehow contradictory; however, the researchers have either confirmed the shortcomings of their work or others have criticized them. Before analyzing the related empirical studies, it should be noted that the present study would not deal with the effect of L1 reading ability and L2 proficiency on L2 reading ability (see Bernhardt 1999; 2000; Bernhardt & Kamil 1995, and Yamashit 1999 for reviews in this area). Consequently the current study would focus exclusively on the area of L2 knowledge which is supposed to affect L2 reading ability. Here two works with opposite findings would be discussed.

Alderson (1993) conducted a study considering IELTS test and he found a high correlation between grammar tests and different reading tests. Of course, this study is open to criticism, as Alderson himself puts it, from the point of view of the construction of grammar items. Alderson suggests that the grammar variables are contaminated as a result of the involvement of sentence semantic processing. In other words, in such a case when there is high emphasis on meaning in grammar test, there is the probability of the overlap with reading test. The main reason resulting in such overlap is that the processing of written text in grammar tests has commonality with the same processing in reading tests which are by nature written (Shiiotsu & Weir, 2007). Although Alderson admits the drawback of his study, he claims that this degree of contamination has been inevitable based on the category determined for grammatical features of the test. Urquhart and Weir (1998) referring to the drawbacks of Alderson's (1993) study, propose a modified sub-categorization of grammar items (for more detailed discussion refer to Urquhart and Weir (1998). The appropriate solution to the mentioned problem is the separation of grammar items and presenting them in decontextualised sentences and phrases (Alderson, 1993). Considering the criticism put on Alderson's (1993) study and simultaneously the adoption of the modified definition of
grammar items, the present study attempts to solve the problem of the mentioned overlap as far as possible; however, the researcher confesses that such preaching is difficult to practice.

Another study concerning the relative effect of syntax and vocabulary on L2 reading ability is that of Borisbois (1995). In her work, Borisbois has solved the problem of the contamination existing in Alderson's (1993) work; hence, the separation of grammar and vocabulary as independent variables which their respective affect on L2 reading ability has been investigated. This study, like that of Alderson (1993) has been open to criticism, particularly regarding two points emphasized by Shiotsu and Weir (2007). Referring to the literature, the study done by these two scholars is the last research conducted in the topic under consideration. Shiotsu and Weir (2007) points to the 'timing of data collection' and 'method of testing grammar and vocabulary knowledge'. According to the specialists these two aspects of Borisbois's study cannot be considered "as clear evidence of relative significance of vocabulary over syntax."(p. 104).

3. Method
3.1. Participants
The participants involved in the study were 300 Iranian EFL learners in five language institutes. Learners were male adults (aged between 20 and 25) studying at advanced levels and the native language of all of them was Persian. The vocabulary and grammar knowledge of students were controlled through the observation of the researcher as well as by the evaluation of the teacher which was recorded by the researcher.

3.2. Instruments
The types of vocabulary and grammar items as well as the type of reading texts to be tested were decided with regard to the difficulty level of learners' course book which was *Interchange Series*. In *Interchange Series* (the main source of learners in the institute to be covered) learners during each unit face a range of new vocabularies as well as a specified section for grammatical items, so it is expected of them to develop their lexical and grammatical knowledge in the course of each unit. Tests of vocabulary, grammar and reading texts were developed based on the criteria of componential approach; consequently, each section was presented separately while the optimal attempt is made to avoid any overlap among three sections.

3.3. Data collection
As stated earlier, the L2 learners, after passing the assigned semester focusing on the proposed material (*Interchange series*), were given a set of tests dealing with three separate sections which are vocabulary, grammar, and reading texts respectively. Each section was composed of 30 items presented in Multiple-choice form and with regard to reading texts, five texts will be developed each followed by six questions.

3.4. Data analysis
The results of the learners' performance on three sets of tests will be given to SPSS software and by using correlation analysis and multiple regression technique the data will be analyzed.

4. Results and discussion
4.1. Descriptive statistics
Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the scores of all participants related to their vocabulary and grammar tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocab</td>
<td>14.6833</td>
<td>2.39697</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram</td>
<td>14.3667</td>
<td>2.30671</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean score for vocabulary tests is 14.68 and that of grammar 14.36. The standard deviation for vocabulary is 2.39 but that of grammar 2.30 indicating less variance among the scores of the participants on vocabulary. The next table indicates the actual value of the Pearson correlation coefficient along with its p-value.

4.2. Correlation analysis
Table 2: Pearson correlation between vocabulary and grammar tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>vocab</th>
<th>Gram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocab</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.729***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the above table the correlation coefficient is 0.729 and the p-value is 0.000. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between the two sets of tests.
Of course, it should be mentioned that the calculated correlation does not indicate a very high correlation. The third table is indicative of the Spearman rho correlation which shows the correlation in terms of rank order.

Table 3: Spearman correlation between vocabulary and grammar tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>vocab</th>
<th>gram</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.725**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

With regard to this table the Spearman correlation is 0.725 and is significant; however, like the Pearson correlation it cannot be considered as a very high correlation coefficient. From the point of view of the rank order, it can be said that those who ranked higher in the vocabulary test to some extent have the same status in the test of grammar.

The following table presents the correlation coefficient among the scores of reading test and those of vocabulary and grammar.

Table 4: Spearman correlation matrix for the third variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td>Vocab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gram</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

What is drawn from the table 4 is that while the p-value both for vocabulary and reading, and grammar and reading is 0.000 and significant, vocabulary is more correlated with reading having the correlation coefficient of 0.792.
Three following tables are the result of multiple regression analysis. The first table gives us the percent of the variance in the reading scores explained jointly by the vocabulary and grammar scores.

### 4.3. Regression analysis

#### Table 5: Model summary in multiple regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.813a</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>.649</td>
<td>1.28067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), gram, vocab

This table shows that 0.66% of the variance in the participants’ reading comprehension scores is explained by the combination the two other variables which are vocabulary and grammar scores.

The next table which results from the regression analysis is the ANOVA table. This table shows that whether the two independent variables of vocabulary and grammar have been able to predict the variance in the reading scores as the dependent variable or not.

#### Table 6: ANOVA table in regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>182.447</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91.223</td>
<td>55.620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>93.487</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.640</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>275.933</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A: Predictor: gram and vocab-B: Dependent variable: read

As can be observed from the ANOVA table, the p-value of 0.000 indicates that the independent variables have significantly predicted the variance in the dependent variable.

The last table which is of special importance deals with the coefficients in regression analysis. This table shows that which independent variable can better predict the variance in the dependent variable.

#### Table 7: Coefficients in regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>3.394</td>
<td>1.120</td>
<td>3.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocab</td>
<td>.508</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gram</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: read
As indicated in the table, the p-value is significant both for vocabulary and grammar scores. But it should be considered that this significance level does not show that which independent variable is more predictive of the variance in the reading comprehension scores. To find this value of the independent variables, one has to look at Beta values. Regarding the Beta value, vocabulary test with the Beta value of 0.563 is a better predictor of reading comprehension scores.

5. Conclusion

The answer to the first question raised by the researcher, with regard to the statistical results, is that although vocabulary is a relatively better predictor of the participants’ reading comprehension, the essential role played by the grammar knowledge of learners should not be ignored. As the results has showed, the difference between the learners’ knowledge of grammar and that of vocabulary is not so big that one considers grammar as a less essential factor. Besides, considering the ANOVA analysis, it can be claimed that the fact that both grammar and vocabulary simultaneously play predictive role in the participants’ reading comprehension test scores, justifies the emphasis needed to be put on the grammar aspects of learning process in reading comprehension. As a result, any excessive emphasis on either lexical or structural features of reading comprehension texts results in the misunderstanding of the real nature of this skill. Of course, it can be a big claim to say that learners’ knowledge of vocabulary goes hand in hand with that of grammar, but at least with regard to the present study, this claim is not that much illogical. Approximately most of the participants in the study who gained better marks in vocabulary tests, in comparison to other participants, had the same status in grammar tests. This status can also be observed regarding the reading scores of the participants. In other words, those who perform better in vocabulary and grammar tests showed better performance in reading comprehension tests. With regard to the second question, it can be suggested that the separation grammar aspects of reading skill from the other components including in this skill is relatively possible. Of course, this claim can be acceptable until the appropriateness of the componential approach has not been questioned.

5.1. Limitations of the study

This study has had limitations from the point of view of the number of participants and the treatment. Comparing to the previous works, this study has a small number of participant and this fact can question the reliability as well as the validity of the study. However, through the random sampling, the attempt has been made to avoid any bias in selecting the participants.
Lack of any special treatment to the participants is also another factor may affect the findings of the study. Because of the presupposition existing in the participants’ mind, with regard to the less effective impact of grammar knowledge in reading comprehension, if the participants were subject to any kind of grammatical treatment, they might have performed better in both grammar and reading comprehension tests.

5.2. Pedagogical implications

Lack of enough attention to any existing factors including in reading comprehension, may result in having an incomplete picture of this skill. Grammar as an essential factor including in reading skill needs to be revisited by the researchers in the field. Moreover, EFL and ESL teachers can reconsider the view that the integrationist approach is the best way to teach language skills and components.

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Title

Does Planning in Writing Affect the Quality of Written Narrations?  
(A Case Study of Iranian EFL Learners)

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether planning in writing tasks affect the fluency of the written narrations or not. To do so, 90 EFL full time male and female students all between the ages of 21 and 27 were pooled out of a population of 120 through giving them the SAT practice test. They were randomly divided into three groups. All of the groups were assigned the same written task
which was a narration based on six-picture series. However, the conditions of task implementation differed. The no-planning group was served as the control group, while the within-task planning and strategic planning groups were considered as experimental groups. The fluency was measured by production rate and counting the number of dysfluencies. The result of the study showed that the strategic planning group outperformed the other groups.

**Keywords:** Task, Fluency, Within-task planning, No planning, Strategic planning, Narration

### 1. Introduction

Every teaching approach will influence the skills to be learned. Writing skill has not been an exception and has been affected by various teaching methods. The methods and approaches have undergone noticeable changes too. In the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach was introduced (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979). The goal of CLT was similar to earlier methods such as Audio Lingual Method (ALM) or oral-situational method. In fact, all of them sought to develop the ability to use language in communication. The difference was the means through which the goal was achieved. The earlier methods viewed language as a set of linguistic systems while CLT was based on a theory of developing communicative competence (Ellis, 2003). The term ‘task’ was introduced instead of ‘communicative activity’ during the 1980s (Rubdy, 1998). Tasks were widely used in both communicative and traditional approaches of language teaching. The way of teaching in which tasks are incorporated is referred to as task-supported language teaching (TSLT) (Ellis, 2003). Skehan (2003) refers to it as the ‘weak version’ of task based instruction. The strong version is referred to as task-based language teaching (TBLT).

First, TBLT focused on fluency while ignoring other aspects of language such as complexity and fluency. Skehan (1996a) believed that the implementation of TBLT does not develop the learners’ linguistic repertoire effectively. As a result, the idea of fluency or fluency became a dilemma for the teachers as well as learners. Traditional approaches failed to develop learners’ fluency and TBLT did not satisfy the learners’ needs for accurate language use (Yuan, 2001:3). Perhaps the reason behind this dilemma is that humans have limited attentional resources (Schmidt, 1990).
Different proposals were developed to account for this problem. One of them was how pre-, mid-, and post-task activities can be designed to ensure an effective balance between form and meaning in TBLT (Skehan, 1996a, 2003; Foster & Skehan, 1999; Yuan, 2001).

One line of research focused on the effects of pre-task planning on language production, and how it influences the ways attention is used; particularly in relation to form-meaning balance. Skehan (1996a) suggests that giving learners the opportunity to plan for their production prior to performing tasks may encourage them to focus on form and as a result create a balance in attentional resources between form and meaning while performing a task.

Another line of research focused on the effects of within-task or online planning (i.e. planning taking place while performing a task) on language production and whether or not it is more useful than strategic planning in terms of creating a balance between attention to form and attention to meaning. It seems that both types of planning develop learners’ oral and written production, but it is not clear which one is more effective. In the following section a brief account of task planning has been mentioned.

2. Task planning
Planning time is a term which has been the focus of attention in many studies in both first and second language production (Wigglesworth, 1997) and is still “an important feature of language production” (Sanagarun, 2001:6). Most of these studies have their roots in L1 research aiming at developing cognitive models of oral production with planning as one of their components (Crookes, 1989). Givon (1979) and Ochs (1979) came to this conclusion that L1 planned discourse would promote L2 development.

Givon (1979) compared planned and unplanned L1 oral and written productions and the result of his comparison was two modes of production: the “pragmatic mode” and the “syntactic mode”. According to Givon (1979) adult L1 production has a loose coordination. This matter is comparable to the pragmatic mode. Givon (1979) also concludes that adult L1 planned production can be compared with the syntactic mode with high subordination and high use of grammatical morphology. Ochs (1979) investigated the effects of L1 planned versus unplanned discourse from a psycholinguistic point of view. The result of her study was that a number of features which exist in the discourse of three to four-year-old children show themselves in adults’ unplanned discourse. She found that planned discourse was based on knowledge which had been acquired or learned later in life. She hypothesized that
whenever planning time is not available speakers rely on their early-acquired morphosyntactic structures and discourse skills.

On the other hand, Hayes and Gradwohl Nash (1996) came to this conclusion that the more time spent on a task, the more the effects of planning would appear. They focused their study on L1 writings and the result was that “planning is neither more nor less valuable than other writing activities” (p. 53). Thus, it can be said that strategic planning affords learners more time overall. Of course, the studies used holistic ratings of writings as measures.

Some studies on L1 and L2 planning have been carried out concerning the level of consciousness involved in each. In some studies like those of Farch and Kasper (1983) it has been mentioned that planning in L1 is subconscious and highly ballistic. Perhaps the reason is that L1 speakers have ready-made plans that reduce their processing load. On the other hand these ready-made plans may not be available to many L2 speakers especially at the beginner level and will result in an increased pressure on working memory of the speakers (Mehnert, 1998). It seems that L2 speakers must construct their own plans in order to compensate for the pressure imposed on their working memory. To do so, they should have a strong cognitive control which can be reduced through planning. The nature of planning is complicated. Thus it is better to first consider the definition of the term.

3. The definition of planning

Generally, planning is referred to as “a goal-oriented mental activity that people engage in to achieve a particular objective” (Newell & Simon, 1972). According to Yuan (2001), planning involves the allocation of attentional resources and the regulation of cognitive processes. Das, Kar, and Parilla (1996) define planning as follows:

[Planning] is oriented to future, and may include the creation and selection of problems, as well as the anticipation of a sequence of actions to solve them. (p. 54)

Foss and Hakes (1978) argue that planning in production involves the formulation of ideas, the choice of appropriate lexical items, and organizing them “in a suitable semantic and syntactic framework” (p. 170). Wendel (1997) believes that planning involves the retrieval and organization of an utterance. Ochs (1979) also differentiates planned from unplanned discourse in terms of the presence or lack of thought preparation and discourse organization. Ellis (2005), on the other hand, considers the types of linguistic devices used in planning which he refers to as “a problem solving activity”. According to Ellis, the aim of planning is “to affect the audience in the desired way” (p. 3).
In the literature on task planning, *speech planning* and *writing planning* have been taken into account. Clark and Clark (1977) refer to two types of activities involved in speaking: *planning* and *execution*. They found that planning is an umbrella term which involves discourse, sentence, and even constituents. These elements are interwoven in the execution of a language act. Farch and Kasper (1983) differentiate *planning phase* from *execution phase*. According to them, the planning phase involves searching the linguistic repertoire and selecting the rules and items that meet the communicative needs of the speaker. On the other hand, in the execution phase these rules and items are executed to satisfy the original goal.

Considering planning in writing, Hayes and Gradwohl Nash (1996) regard it as a kind of reflection which should be accompanied with other reflective processes such as decision making and inferencing. It has also been argued that the difference between planning and other reflective processes is that the environment of planning is completely different from that of the task. Hayes and Gradwohl Nash (1996) distinguish between two types of planning. The first type is *process* planning which is related to the writer and the strategies he/she uses to accomplish a given task. The second type is *text* planning which is related to the content and form of writing. Still another distinction has been made between different types of writing planning on the basis of the discoursal levels they involve. Whalen and Menard (1995) refer to types of planning such as *pragmatic* planning, *textual* planning, and *linguistic* planning. Pragmatic planning deals with the identification of audience and reason for writing, and developing a given topic. Textual planning, on the other hand, involves achieving coherence between idea sequences. Finally, linguistic planning involves the writer’s attempts to solve a linguistic problem to formulate an idea.

Planning has been linked to interlanguage (IL) development. Selinker (1972) coined the term interlanguage. It refers to the developmental language between L1 and L2. Interlanguage has its specific features. Corder (1981) believes that interlanguage is a mixed language that involves some features of the learner’s L1 and some features of his L2; but it is neither pure L1 nor L2 and has its own features. Ellis (1987) proposed that planning allows the learner to access the linguistic forms that have not been fully automated. Skehan (1996) also stated that planning frees up attentional resources and redirects them on the forms of language. As it was seen, there are various attitudes toward planning both considering writing and speaking. In the following section, different kinds of planning will be taken into account.
4. Types of task planning

Ellis (2005) classifies task planning into two main types. The difference is in the time of planning. The first type of planning is *pre-task planning* in which planning takes place before performing the task. In this type of planning as Schmidt (2001) calls it, there is ‘preparatory attention’ which helps in performing actions with greater fluency and speed. The second type of planning is *within-task planning*. Each of these types is divided into two other types.

Pre-task planning can be divided into *rehearsal* and *strategic* planning. In rehearsal planning, learners have the opportunity to “perform the task before the ‘main performance’” (Ellis, 2005: 3). In this type of planning, the first performance of the task is considered as a preparation for the main performance. Strategic planning, on the other hand, involves learners’ preparation of the content of the task they are going to perform. This type of planning is the focus of the present study. In strategic planning, learners “have access to the actual task materials” (Ellis, 2005: 3).

Within-task planning has been also divided into *pressured* and *unpressured* planning. In the first one, learners are not usually given enough time to plan on-line, while in unpressured within-task planning they are given enough time to plan online.

The classification can be continued. There are still other types of task planning that may occur with both main types of task planning. The first one is related to the amount of guidance that is given to learners (i.e. *unguided* vs. *guided* task planning). In unguided planning, learners will be on their own in their planning; however, they may be given some advice on what to plan and how to plan (Ellis, 2005). The second sub-type is on the basis of *source of planning*. Foster and Skehan (1999) found that different sources of planning have an effect on the outcome of planning. The sources may include *teacher-led*, *group-based*, and *solitary* planning. The third sub-type of planning is the *foci of planning* which is related to the orientation of planning in terms of form and content. As a result, planning may be content-focused, form-focused, or both form and content-focused (Sangarun, 2001). It seems that this subtype is somehow related to the first sub-type (i.e. unguided vs. guided task planning) since guidance usually is on the form, on the content or both.

Various combinations of principal and sub-types of planning have been the focus of different studies. Some of the studies will be mentioned in the following sections of the present dissertation.

In the present research, the researchers focused on the application of task planning on writing. To do so, they limited their study to the fluency of narrative tasks written by Iranian
EFL learners. Since the focus of the present study is writing, it will be better to consider one of the models of writing as a basis of the explanations related to the present study.

5. Kellog’s model of writing

Kellog’s (1996) model involves three basic systems (Ellis & Yuan, 2004). Each system involves two processes. The first system is *Formulation* and involves (i) ‘planning’ in which goals are set and ideas are organized, and (ii) ‘translation’ in which lexical units and syntactic frames are selected; then they are phonologically and graphologically represented to be ready for execution. The second system is *Execution* and involves (i) 'programming' where the output from translation is converted into production schema, and (ii) 'executing' which is the actual production of a sentence. The third system is *Monitoring* which involves (i) 'reading' in which the writer reads his/her production, and (ii) 'editing' in which the writer attends to either micro aspects (such as linguistic errors) and/or macro aspects (such as text organization) of the text. According to Kellogg, the Execution system which is responsible for problem-solving and mental calculation is involved in all sub-processes with the exception of executing in which there is no need for controlled processing.

However, Ellis (2005) believes that Kellogg considers an adult, native-like automaticity in handwriting and typing which might not be present in L2 learners with limited proficiency, especially those whose L1 employs a different script. Therefore, he concludes that the execution system would be called upon during executing by some L2 writers.

6. The nature of writing

Writing stands out among the four basic skills of language learning. Olshtain (1993) explores the special status of writing within the framework of language teaching. She identifies:

“The skill of writing enjoys special status. It is via writing that a person can communicate a variety of meanings to close or distant, known or unknown readers. Such communication is extremely important in the modern world, whether the interaction takes the form of a traditional paper and pencil writing or the most advanced electronic mail. As Olshtain (1993, p.235) puts it, “writing as a communicative activity needs to be encouraged and nurtured during the language learners’ course of study”.

Olshtain addresses the prominence of composition with reference to various audiences and the miscellaneous of its use. But, Chastain points to the significance of writing with respect to its relationship with language proficiency and level of education. According to Chastain, writing is a kind of communication skill as well as a unique asset in the process of
second language learning. He further argues that “writing with its unique features contributes to overall language learning. Both aspects of writing are important in the typical language class and both can serve to reinforce the other. Moreover, “writing is the distinctive ability of educated people” (Chastain, 1988, p.244).

Irrespective speaking, writing is a much slower process. Raimes (1983) draws our attention to a fact that everybody learns speech as a mother tongue, but he/she is not able to acquire how to read or write. All forms of communication such as facial expressions, gestures, all non-verbal forms are transformed to linguistic and mechanical forms in writing, and one needs to be informed of all these forms.

Speakers may violate the grammar rules, but writing will be remained as a valid document and is subject to different forms of criticism. Consequently, writing is the last skill in the sequence to develop, should be learned by study in a longer process of time. Harris (1969) states: “writing as a complex skill involves the spontaneous practice of a number of very different abilities, some of which are never fully achieved by many students even in their native language” (p.68) Writing, and specifically academic writing, requires training, instruction, practice, experience and purpose.” (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996, p.6)

Based on the previous studies in this domain, the following research questions were formed.

7. Methodology
This section will describe the methods which have been used to investigate the following questions:

1) Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL learners’ language fluency when they have the opportunity to plan a written narrative task both in advance and while writing than when they have no opportunity to do so?

2) Is there any significant difference between the performance of EFL Iranian males and females concerning the fluency of their written tasks?

In order to answer the posed questions, the design was proposed as follows:

7.1. Research Design
The design of the present study is a mixed one since there are both statistical analysis and interviews with the participants. The between-group factor in the study is planned condition, with three conditions (no-planning, strategic planning, and within-task planning). To measure
the effects of planned condition on learners’ written products, two way ANOVA (Two Way Analysis of Variance) study was conducted.

7.2. Participants
The participants in the study were 90 EFL full-time students. They were studying at Islamic Azad universities of Malayer, Hamedan, and also the state university of Malayer. They were between the ages of 21 and 27 years. There were 46 males and 44 females in the research who had studied English for at least two academic years. Some of them had participated in English classes of institutes. They had successfully passed language skill courses (i.e. writing, reading, listening, and speaking) in addition to grammar and vocabulary use.

7.3. Instruments
This section provides a description of the instruments used in the study, which includes: pretest materials, writing tasks, task conditions, scoring rubrics used to rate learners’ written products, and scoring procedures. Pretest material which included fifty items was selected from multiple-choice a SAT practice test which is a valid, reliable and official test series of English used to test the writing skills in English. This test was selected because it is inexpensive, easy to administer, and easy to score objectively. Raimes (1987) argued that linguistic proficiency is not the only factor to impact evaluation of L2 written text. It is evident, however, that if grammatical knowledge is viewed as “a set of linguistic resources from which learners select forms based on appropriateness for meaning, for audience, and for textual demands” (Frodesen&Holten, 2003, p. 157), learners’ L2 linguistic proficiency and writing proficiency in the evaluation of their written products are inseparable to a certain extent.

Additionally, as an indirect test of writing, the grammar section of the selected test is expected to evaluate learners’ knowledge of writing sub-skills, including grammar and sentence structure, which are supposed to underlie writing ability (Knoll, 1998). In the present study, L2 knowledge as an indicator of learners’ proficiency level is narrowly defined in terms of grammatical competence under Bachman’s (1990) communicative language ability framework. Grammatical competence, constituting one part of language competence, refers to the ability to control the formal structure of language and to recognize a grammatically correct sentence. Therefore, grammatical competence includes relatively independent capabilities such as the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology or graphology at the sentence level. A certain amount of linguistic knowledge is considered to be a prerequisite for constructing a coherent text.
The scores of the proficiency test were calculated and entered into ANOVA analysis and based on the obtained results 90 participants were selected for the study.

The term ‘task’ has been used in different studies on written narratives (Ellis, 1987; Yuan, 2001; and Ellis & Yuan, 2004). The task used in the present study is a story-narration based on a series of pictures from Heaton (1975). The pictures are designed to elicit a story, and each story requires interpretation on the part of the learner. The learner has to study the pictures and generate his/her ideas on the first draft. To do this, he/she may need collaboration and sharing ideas with other classmates.

### 7.4. Task conditions

In the present research planning was operationalized at three levels: (a) no planning (NP); (b) strategic planning (SP); and (c) within-task planning (WTP). The control group was the no-planning condition (NP) in which participants were given no time for planning and were asked to write at least 150 words. In order to set up the appropriate time during which they are required to finish the task, the pilot study involving similar participants had been carried out.

The fastest time found for completing the task was 25 minutes. This was time was given to complete the task in the main study to avoid within-task planning on the part of the participants.

The first experimental group was the strategic planning condition (SP) in which participants were given ten minutes to plan for their narrations prior to performing the task. They were also asked to write at least 150 words. No detailed guidance was provided for planning, but the participants were asked to plan their narratives in terms of content, organization, and language following (Crookes, 1989; Skehan& Foster, 1996, 1997, 1999; Wendel, 1997; Yuan, 2001; Yuan & Ellis, 2003; and Ellis & Yuan, 2004). They were allowed to write notes on a sheet of paper, but were asked not to write the whole story, and the notes were taken away before they performed the task. Again, based on the findings of the pilot study, participants under this planning condition were allowed 25 minutes to complete the task.

The second experimental group was the within-task planning condition (WTP) in which participants were required to start performing the task immediately, but were given as much time as needed to complete the task. The only difference was that they were not given any time to plan for the task in advance, but they were allowed unlimited time to plan while performing the task. There was a different condition. The participants were not required to write a minimum of 150 words because "this may be interpreted as requiring them to write..."
quickly" (Ellis & Yuan, 2004: 70). Task instructions were in Persian to avoid misunderstanding on the part of the learners.

7.5. Retrospective interviews
After performing the written narratives, three participants were randomly selected from each group for a retrospective interview with the researcher. The purpose of this interview was to investigate how participants used the planning time they were given, what they concentrated on, and whether or not they made use of what they planned.

8. Methodology of data analysis
8.1. Measures
Based on what Yuan (2001) and Ellis and Yuan (2004) have stated, the following measures for planning (independent variable) and complexity, fluency, and fluency (dependent variables) were considered:

8.1.1. Independent variables: planning and gender
Planning is the independent variable of the study. There are two planning conditions in the present study: strategic planning, and within-task planning. Planning was measured as follows:
1. Length of time: the total number of minutes on task was calculated for each participant.
2. Words: the total number of words produced by each participant was calculated.
3. Syllables: the total number of syllables produced by each participant was calculated.
The purpose of counting the syllabuses was to consider the length of words. It was not clear that whether or not participants under the within-task planning condition were engaged in significant within-task planning. Therefore, these measures were used "to see if the participants had performed the task in the expected planning condition" (Yuan, 2001: 61).

Also the gender of the participants who were either males or females was considered as an independent variable in the present study.

8.1.2. Dependent variable: Fluency
Fluency refers to "the ability of the learner to use the target language according to its norms" (Edwards, C. and Willis, J., 2005). It has been measured as follows:
1. Error-free clauses: the ratio of error-free clauses to the total number of clauses used was calculated.
2. Accurately used verbs: the percentage of accurately used verbs in tense, modality, and subject-verb agreement was counted within each narrative.
9. Results and discussions

In the following tables, the results of the two-way ANOVA are shown.

Table 1: The Scores of Participants *Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Planning Task</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>72.187</td>
<td>.622</td>
<td>70.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72.786</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>71.462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-task Planning</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>74.867</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>73.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74.067</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>72.788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>75.867</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>74.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>76.400</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>75.122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be inferred from table 1, the scores which are the result of assessing the fluency of the written tasks and are given on the scale of 100, are not significantly different between males and females who participated in the study. The interpretation is that as far as gender is considered, there are not any significant differences in the fluency of written tasks generated by Iranian EFL learners.

Table 2: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>74.307</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>73.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>74.417</td>
<td>.376</td>
<td>73.671</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table 2, the mean of the participating males in the study was 74.307; while, that of the females was 74.417. The minute difference between the means proves the neutrality of gender effect on the performance of males and females.

Table 3: The Scores of the Participants in the Three Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Planning Task</td>
<td>72.487</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>71.581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-task Planning</td>
<td>74.467</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>73.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>76.133</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>75.229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table 3 illustrates, the means of the scores of all of the three groups participating in the study are different. However the significance of these mean differences was not clear. Thus the researchers ran a Post Hoc test analysis to ensure whether the observed differences were significant or not. Table 4 summarizes the results of this analysis.
As it can be inferred from table 4, all of the mean differences between the three groups are statistically significant. The planning groups have outperformed the no-planning group as far as the fluency of written narrations is concerned. According to the table 4, the greatest mean difference was observed between the means of strategic planning and no-planning groups. Thus, on the basis of table 3, we may argue that the strategic group had the best performance than the other group; however, the within-task planning group was better than the no-planning group as far as the fluency of their written tasks is considered.

According to the table 5, it can be said that the F-value for participants is 16.089 which is significant at 0.000; and 0.044 for the gender which is significant at 0.834. The combination of participants and gender yields an F-value of 0.753 which is significant at 0.474. In the next part, the profile plot of the comparison between males and females is brought. Then the research questions have been answered.
As it is shown in the plot, the mean difference between the three groups cannot be attributed to the gender of the participants. Rather, the difference is because of the planning implemented before or during the task performance.

Following the research questions have been answered.

**Research question (1):** Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL learners’ language fluency when they have the opportunity to plan a written narrative task both in advance and while writing than when they have no opportunity to do so?

According to the table 4, the mean differences for no-planning (NP) and within-task planning (WTP) groups; WTP and strategic planning (SP) groups; as well as SP and NP groups are 2.00, 1.67, and 3.67 respectively. These differences are significant at 0.007, 0.030, and 0.000 respectively. Thus it may be inferred that planning has had a positive effect on the fluency of narrations produced by Iranian EFL learners.

**Research question (2):** Is there any significant difference between the performance of EFL Iranian males and females concerning the fluency of their written tasks?

There is not any significant difference between the performances of males and females regarding the fluency of their written narration tasks. It can be inferred from the table 4 that the F-value for the groups is 16.089 which is significant at 0.000. It means that planning has significantly affected the performances of the experimental groups. However as far as gender is regarded, the F-value is 0.44 and significant at 0.835 which is more than 0.05. It is not significant enough to reject the hypothesis. Accordingly it may be inferred that gender does not have any significant effects on the mean differences between control and experimental groups.
10. Discussion
Perhaps the significant differences between the groups can be attributed to the storage and processing of information in the long term and short term memories. Long term memory has an important role in storing information. Skilled writers as compared with unskilled ones can cope with the different writing conditions. It may be argued that the participants who gained the best scores are able to store their knowledge of writing in their long term memory. On the contrary, those participants who have been rather unsuccessful may store the information in their short term memory. Thus the most successful group, which is the strategic group in the present study, may have had the time to focus on both working memory and long-term memory at the same or different times. They have used the time of planning to retrieve the related information they needed and put the needed data on papers; thereby to enhance their writings.

Previous studies have investigated the effects of planning on the quality of written tasks and have found that planning results in more accurate writing (e.g., Yuan, 2001; Ellis & Yuan, 2004).

In the present study, the strategic planning group outperformed the no-planning group and within-task planning. Most of the participants in the NP group reported that if they had been given some time before starting to write, they would have reflected on their tasks and their tasks would have been much better. Thus, time seems to be a very important factor even if it is not used for planning. The students need the time to reflect on their writings more.

Generally, the SP group outperformed the NP group regarding the dependent variable. Planning and translation are the two stages of the formulation process in Kellogg's model. The formulation process of Kellogg's model places the heaviest burden on short term memory.

In the first stage of the formulation process, writers set goals, think up ideas related to the goals, and organize their ideas. These ideas are retrieved from the learner's long term memory. Therefore, it can be resulted that in every writing process both short term memory and long term memory are involved. The second stage, translating, involves a linguistic level of representation in which the pre-verbal message resulting from the planning stage is transformed into a verbal message. In this stage, "the writer activates semantic, syntactic, phonological, and orthographic sub-processes" (Kellogg, 1996: 59).

With regards to the planning stage of Kellogg's model, the notes sheets of the SP group show planning that resembles children's pattern in planning (Bereiter&Scardamalia, 1987) in
which conceptual planning notes, evaluative statements, and structural markers were less than those in other groups. This group simply generated complete sentences that were edited into a final draft when writing. Thus, it is apparent that the SP group because of their access to both short and long-term memory at the time of planning and doing the task had been more successful than the no-planning group. The SP group also had also time management in their planning and writing. At the time of planning, they focused on the main ideas, retrieving the right words, outlining, drafting, and organizing the sentences. While writing, the participants were paying their attention to the sequence of sentences, punctuation, using the correct verb forms and language in general. Therefore, since the SP group had distributed their time and at a time had focused on one area of writing, it seems that they had freed up some space in their memories which had caused them to have more informative and accurate writings.

Difficulties in translating, on the other hand, were due to the inability to manage the heavy demands of storage and processing as a result of low proficiency in lower level writing skills. Translating an idea into an acceptable sentence involves the phonological loop. Phonological representations of the words selected in a syntactic frame are stored in the short-term store of the loop. In addition to the phonological loop, translating also demands resources of the central executive when the writer must struggle to find the right words and sentence structures (Kellogg, 1996). The no-planning group, on the other hand, because of time limitation and lack of planning time had a lot of problems. They did not have access to their long term memory since their time was so limited. They could not even collaborate and share their ideas with each other. McCutchen (2000) claims that trade-offs exist between the storage and processing functions of working memory because of resource limitations within the system. That is, when more resources are devoted to processing, fewer resources are available for storage and vice versa. The NP group had to spend most or perhaps all their time processing the language and structure, thus the storage function of their short-term memory had perhaps very limited.

Both skilled and unskilled writers resort to short term memory resources to construct the sentences that comprise their texts. However, the fluent sentence generation processes of skilled writers, combined with their rich knowledge bases, enable them to link developing sentences to extensive knowledge stored in their long term memory.

11. Conclusion
As it was stated in the previous parts, the results of the two-way ANOVA procedure indicated that planning whether strategic or within-task planning affects the fluency of the written tasks. These results are in line with earlier investigations of the effects of planning either on oral performance or on written performance (de Bot, 1996; Franken & Haslett, 2002; Shi, 1998; Foster & Skehan, 1996; Wendel, 1997). Thus, these results tend to support the claim that the planning process eased the processing load during task completion and enabled learners to produce high quality texts.

The results of the study confirmed that planning in the L2 writing process enabled learners to lower their cognitive load during task completion and to yield high quality writing with regard to their scores. Remarkably, collaboration with a partner in the planning process was more effective in generating specific examples and details to help learners develop their own ideas. According to what was stated, it can be concluded that planning is highly effective in fostering the writing ability of learners.

One of the conclusions of the study is that the type of planning also plays an important role in improving the writing skills of the learners. The within-task planning in Iranian contexts is not as effective as strategic as the research suggests. In other contexts, the results differ. Generally, collaboration before implementing the task and on the basis of management is fruitful in Iranian contexts. If the students have the time to share their ideas, if they are given enough input whether pictorial, oral, and even written, the products of their writing will be much informative.

Perhaps the most important conclusion can be attributed to the differences between within-task and strategic planning. In the study, the strategic planning group because of time distribution and time management had the best performance. Thus, it can be concluded that in the writing classes, time management must be practiced a lot so that the students learn how to divide their time in accordance with the tasks they are going to perform.

References


Title

Persian Translation of English Print Advertisements for Cosmetic and Hygienic Products

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Abstract

Advertising exists in different markets for different goods. It has a great influence on the way people behave and think. Advertising translation is an important but difficult job for producers importing their products to other countries. Different procedures are used in advertising translation which might change the effect of such advertisements in the target language and culture. This study is a descriptive one which aimed to find out the kinds of procedures used by translators in translating English print advertisements for cosmetic and hygienic products into Persian. In order to analyze the procedures used, Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1958/1995) approach was adopted. The present study also made an attempt to show how such procedures could change the effect of such advertisements in the target language. The comparison of 10 English print advertisements for cosmetic and hygienic
products with their translations revealed that the main translation procedures used were literal translation and borrowing.

**Keywords:** Translation procedures, Advertisements, Cosmetic, Hygienic

1. **Introduction**

Advertising exists in different markets for different products. It is an important part of marketing which is mostly used to sell products and has a great influence on the way people behave and think. Advertisements comprise written forms in newspapers, magazines, posters, and are also found on TV and websites (Munday, 2004). Cook (1992) believes that

> We cannot walk down the street, shop, watch television, go through our mail, log on to the Internet, read a newspaper or take a train without encountering it. Whether we are alone, with our friends or family, or in a crowd, advertising is always with us, if only on the label of something we are using (p. 13).

Advertising translation is an important but difficult job for producers importing their goods to other countries. Guidere (2001) considers advertising translation as a “means of communication par excellence of a company exporting its products” (cited in Munday, 2004, p. 202).

Different strategies are used in the translation of advertisements. Loan words and neologisms are the ones mostly used (Munday, 2004). Bueno García (2000) brings examples of loan words in translation, especially in domains such as computing and cosmetics (cited in Munday, 2004, p. 203). As Munday (ibid.) mentions, if translators of advertising employ such techniques, “it would run counter to the tendency towards standardization in translation that is often noted by translation theorists (notably Toury, 1995)”.

Regarding advertising translation within general theories of translation, there are three main theoretical points that are emphasized by Munday (p. 204) as follows: the focus on the target audience, the purpose or skopos of the translation, and the fact that adverts are a clear example of cross-cultural transfer.

Reiss (1997/2000, cited in Munday, 2004, p. 206) who considers commercial advertising as an example of persuasive function of language, proposes that in translation this take priority over depictive functions. Munday (2004) suggests that a translator of advertisements recognize their real function or purpose and adopt appropriate techniques in the target culture if they exist. He (2004) also mentions that although in analyzing translated advertisements the
focus is mainly on the linguistic features of published ST-TT pairs, most advertisements are translated for information only.

Majority of studies have investigated advertisements from different viewpoints. In what follows a number of such studies will be reviewed. Sidiropoulo (1998) examined 55 pairs of English-Greek advertisements. Her study revealed differences in both linguistic devices employed and the content. Regarding the number of modifications introduced by the translator, it was shown that cosmetics are the most tolerant product types. “It is the product type which allows the unexpected set of modifications in media translation” (ibid., p. 12). She also showed that translator’s behavior changes in accordance with the type of product advertised.

De Mooij (2004) studied the influence of culture on consumers’ needs, motives and emotions. De Mooij (ibid.) believes that effective advertising uses a style which is “culturally appropriate”. In her opinion, the new knowledge of importance of culture might change the belief that most advertisements could be translated. De Mooij (ibid., p. 179) refers to translating advertising copy as “painting the tip of an iceberg” in that just words are seen and what exists behind the words should be understood in order to transfer advertising from one culture to another.

In the next study, which was carried out by Smith (2006), 45 English-Russian advertisement pairs were examined in order to find out what will happen to rhetorical figures during translation process. Three translation strategies which were used in translating rhetoric in headings are: transference, source-language-oriented, and target-language-oriented. The most popular strategies were source-language-oriented ones which resulted from “advertisers’ insistence on following a model advertisement” (ibid., p. 159).

Smith and Klein-Braley (1997) also identified five main strategies for translation of advertisements:

1. No change: retain both graphics and texts.
2. Export advertisement: retain logo, slogan in original, play on positive stereotypes of source culture, when recessing adds copy in target language.
4. Adaptation: keep visuals, change text slightly or significantly.

Al Agha (2006) also studied the translation of American fast food advertisements into Arabic in order to identify translation strategies used to translate culture-specific concepts, phrases, logos, and terms. Analysis of data was within the framework of Descriptive
Translation Studies which according to Toury (1995, cited in Al Agha, 2006) concerned with the strategies adopted by translators and the relationship between the translated text and their source text. It was shown that the main strategies were borrowing and transliteration. Also, he concluded that inadequate translations of culture specific concepts, terms, and logos produce TTs which are bound to STs. This leads to the rejection of the translation in the target culture.

Besides the above mentioned studies, there are some studies in Iran which investigated advertisements from different viewpoints. Amouzadeh and Tavangar (2007) studied pre- and post-revolutionary advertisements in Iran by means of Jacobson's (1971) structuralist distinction between metaphor and metonymy to show the use of pictorial metaphor and metonymy in advertisements of these two periods. Not being allowed to manipulate the picture of women for their intended publicity of commercial products, advertisers employ some pictorial metaphors to redress the balance in post-revolutionary times. It was also shown that the use of pictorial metaphor is very pervasive in the post revolutionary period, but not in the pre-revolutionary era. On the other hand, pictorial metonymy was predominantly used in pre-revolutionary times.

Khodabandeh (2007) investigated rhetorical figures in newspaper headlines of English and Persian advertisements by means of Clark's (1998) model. She focused on the ways in which social, political, and ideological changes over the past two decades (before 1979 and after 1990) are reflected and embodied in the language of commercial press advertising in Iran. She investigated the varying effects of these changes on sociolinguistic norms, and related the changes to external factors in the ideology and social history of Iran. It was demonstrated that advertising language in Iran does not directly reflect the society and it does not the same functions as it does in western countries.

Jalilifar (2010) investigated rhetorical figures in 300 Persian, English and Persian-English newspaper advertisements based on Haixin's (2005) and Clark's (1998) models. The findings of this study revealed that various rhetorical figures incorporated to make advertising vivid, conspicuous, impressive, and readable. The study also suggested that there is no significant difference between various parts of advertisements in the three sub-corpora. The result of the study showed that rhetorical figures deserve further attention for writing English advertisements which are written by non-native averters.

Iran has long been a market for new products from western countries. In order to make Iranian consumers familiar with these products, producers make use of advertising translation. However, it seems that such translations cannot create the same effect as the
original ones do. It might partly be due to the translation procedures employed. Nevertheless, it seems that only little research has been conducted on this issue, and especially the translation of advertisements for products such as cosmetics and hygienic ones which are mostly used in Iran. Therefore, it seems necessary to find out the kinds of procedures used to translate advertisements of such products from English into Persian and to show how such procedures could change the persuasive function and the effect of these advertisements in the target language.

It should be mentioned that effect in this study refers to the kind of impression advertisements leave on the readers by means of elements involved in them which are responsible for manipulating the readers in a way that finally being persuaded to buy the product advertised. Such elements include different factors. Only linguistic ones such as linguistic choices, literary devices… have been considered here.

2. Methodology

This study is a descriptive one which aimed to find out the kinds of procedures used by translators in translating English print advertisements for cosmetic and hygienic products into Persian and to show how such procedures could change the effect of these advertisements.

The product categories chosen for the study were cosmetic and hygienic products. The corpus of the study comprised English print advertisements for cosmetic and hygienic products and their Persian translations which are freely available at Iranian drugstores as brochures and catalogs. A total of thirty of such brochures and catalogs available at Isfahan drugstores were collected during 2011. All instances of the advertisements in these brochures and catalogs were not included in the data set. Those used in this study were 10 matching pairs.

In order to analyze the data, Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1958/1995) approach was used as the theoretical framework of the study. By carrying out a comparative stylistic analysis of French and English, Vinay and Darbelnet identified different translation ‘procedures’ (cited in Munday, 2001, pp. 56-58). The two main strategies introduced by them are direct translation and oblique translation. Direct translation covers three procedures: borrowing, calque and literal translation. According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995) where literal translation is not possible oblique translation is used which includes four procedures: transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. These procedures are as follows:
**Borrowing:** It happens when the source language word is transferred directly to the target language (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958/1995, p. 85, cited in Munday, 2001, p. 56).

**Calque:** It is a special kind of borrowing where the source language expression or structure is transferred literally (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958/1995, cited in Venuti, 2000, p. 85).

**Literal translation:** It is ‘word-for-word’ translation or the direct transference of a source language text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate TL text (ibid., p. 86).

**Transposition:** It happens when one word class is replaced with another without changing the sense of the message (p. 88).

**Modulation:** It changes the point of view and semantics of the source language.

**Equivalence:** This is used when languages describe the same situation by different stylistic or structural methods and this method produces equivalent texts (p. 90).

**Adaptation:** It happens where a situation in the SL culture does not exist in the target culture (p. 90-1).

In addition to above mentioned procedures, Vinay and Darbelnet introduced a series of ‘prosodic effects’ resulting from these procedures and work closer to the sentence level (Pym, 2010, P. 14). These ‘stylistic procedures’ are as follows:

**Amplification:** In order to express the same idea, the translator uses more words than the ST. When it is obligatory, the effect is called dilution (P. 14).

**Reduction:** It is the opposite of amplification (P. 14).

**Explicitation:** It happens when the translation gives specifications that are only implicit in the ST (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958/1972, p. 117, cited in Pym, 2010. P. 14).

**Implicitation:** It is the opposite of Explicitation (Pym, 2010, P. 14).

**Generalization:** It happens when a specific or concrete term is translated as a more general or abstract term (P. 14).

**Particularization:** It is the opposite of generalization (P. 14).
3. Data Analysis and Discussion

It is worth mentioning that following Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995), unit of translation is considered as equivalent to ‘unit of thought’ and ‘lexicological unit’ (cited in Hatim & Munday, 2004, p. 136) in analyzing the source and the target texts in the present study.

1. As it is observed, ‘care’ has been translated as ‘کرم’ or ‘cream’ which is a borrowing from English. ‘Anti-wrinkle’ and ‘night’ are translated literally.

What has happened in translating ‘firming’ as ‘افتادگی’ which has the opposite meaning, is a kind of modulation. Also, in order to make the target text sound natural, ‘ ضد چروک’ and ‘افتادگی’ should be in an additive relation. In so doing, the conjunction ‘و’ or ‘and’ is necessary in Persian text. However, because of following the source text structure (calque), this conjunction is not added.

Alliterations of /n/ and /r/ which contribute to create effect in the ST have been lost through literal translation.

2. ‘Inca inchi’ and ‘cream’ are borrowed from English. A modulation has happened in translating ‘anti-aging’ as ‘دور چشم’ through changing the semantics of the source text. Translating ‘with’ - a preposition- as ‘حاوی’ which is a noun in Persian, is a transposition.

The repetition of vowel sounds –assonance- in anti-aging’, ‘with’, and ‘Inca inchi’ which helps create more effect in the source text, is lost in the target text.

3. ‘Apaisac’ which is the brand name is transferred to Persian with some phonological modifications. ‘Balm’ which is also borrowed from English does not make sense in Persian.

Untranslated ads assume that Iranians have a sufficient command of English or as Smith (2006) mention, they would be so attracted to the foreignness that the use of foreign words becomes the persuasive aspect of the ad regardless of what the ad actually communicates.
However, not having a good command of English could cause misunderstanding in such advertisements.

4. What is seen in the target text is the literal translation of the source text except for the adjective ‘soothing’ which is deleted (reduction). As a result of this reduction, the effect of the message of this ad which is feeling more comfortable through using this eye make-up remover is lost in the Persian version. In other words, the source text is evaluative in that it contains an evaluative adjective (‘soothing’) which represents desirability. The reduction of this adjective has reduced the desirability in the TT.

5. Here, the words ‘baby’ and ‘wash’ are translated literally. There is amplification in adding the word ‘بدن’ or ‘body’ in the target text. This amplification has made explicit the fact that the advertised product is for washing the body and not hair. Literal translation of the word ‘wash’ without paying attention to its meaning, a liquid contacting soap which is used for cleaning the skin, could cause miscommunication in the target language.

There is a reduction in deleting the phrase ‘Extra soft’ in the target text. The source text is evaluative in that it contains an evaluative adjective (‘extra soft’) which shows desirability. The reduction of this adjective has strongly reduced the desirability in the TT.

6. ‘klorane’ which is the brand name is transferred literally to the target text.

The source text is evaluative in that it contains an evaluative adjective (‘power’), a polysemous word which shows desirability. Translating ‘power’ as ‘معجزه’ (‘miracle’) which denotes something extraordinary that does not always happen has increased desirability in the target text. Therefore, the hyperbole in the ST is reinforced in the TT through choosing ‘معجزه’ (‘miracle’) as the equivalent of ‘power’.
Johnson (2008) believes that technology terms are mostly used in ads for cosmetic and hygienic products which create the effect of newness and innovation. ‘Power’ is one of technology terms used in this ad which is juxtaposed with something old (using herbs) (Johnson, 2008). “It is a discursive strategy for using technology to promote products but at the same time nodding to tradition or to aspects of quality that are not products of modern design” (ibid., p. 170).

Also, there is a metaphor in that ‘Klorane’ is compared to ‘power of plants’. Alliteration of /p/ which contributes to create effect in the ST is lost in translation.

7.

Hygienic’ is translated literally. ‘Bar’ is translated as ‘پن’ which is itself a borrowed noun from French (‘pain’) meaning ‘soap’. By keeping this foreign word in the Persian version, the translator would add the desirability of the product in the target text compared to the source text. This is because of considering English as a prestigious language in the target culture.

According to the online dictionary (www.your dictionary.com) the adjective ‘intime’ means intimate, private, and personal. A transposition has happened by translating this adjective to a noun ‘بانوان’ ‘یان’. ‘Intime’ is an evaluative element which represents the desirability of the product in the source text. This desirability is lost in the target text. As a result, the target text is simply an informative ad and not a persuasive one.

8.

Here, ‘Double action’ is borrowed from English and is bound to its origin; therefore, it does not make sense in Persian. This borrowing could lead to the distortion of the original message. The double action of the product, preventing stretch marks to appear as well as removing new ones, is not understood in the target language for those who do not have a good command of English.

There is a modulation in translating ‘stretch marks’ into ‘ترک ضد’ which has the opposite meaning.

Also, amplification of the words ‘skin’ and ‘cream’ could increase the informative level of the ad in the target text.
9.

‘Color save’ has been changed to ‘رنگ کننده رنگ’ or ‘color fixative’. This modulation has changed the point of view of the source language.

Also, there is amplification in the target text (‘hair’).

The words ‘spray’ and ‘conditioner’ are borrowed from English. This use of foreign word in the target text could increase the level of desirability compared to the source text.

10.

‘Embrace’ is borrowed from English and is transferred to Persian with some phonological modifications. ‘Him’ is reduced. What is significant in the brand name, ‘embrace him’, is the discourse of male-female relationships which suggest the idea of obtaining beauty through certain products to women and obtaining a beautiful woman through advertised products to men (Baker, 2005, p. 25, cited in Johnson, 2008, p. 144). As a result of literal translation, this effect is lost in the target text.

4. Conclusion

The comparison of 10 English print advertisements for cosmetic and hygienic products with their translations revealed that the main translation procedures used were literal translation and borrowing. Borrowing was especially common in translating brand names. As a result, these translations are bound to their source language. This is in line with Al Agha (2006) who showed that translation of fast-food advertisements from English into Arabic is bound to their originals and has influence on understanding of the message conveyed.

The analysis of the advertisements showed that writers of these texts use certain adjectives in order to represent desirability. Reduction of these adjectives in the target texts could decrease desirability in comparison with the source texts. Amplifications were also observed which could make ads more informative in the target language. These shifts in translation lead to changes in the effect and persuasive function of such advertisements in the target text.
As the limitation of this study, it should be mention that the corpus was too small to make safe conclusions. By increasing the size of the corpus more exact conclusions would be drawn.

Also, comparative studies need to be carried out by using advertisements for other products and services in order to support the findings and make generalizations. Other kinds of advertising such as television, Internet, and newspaper could be used too.

To sum up, the findings of such research could be useful in translator training and translation courses at universities. Such research could help students of translation practice proper translation strategies for advertisements which are an example of persuasive function of language rather than just seeking for one-to-one equivalents for each word.

Also, they are helpful for translation agencies involved in the translation of advertisements in order to make them sensitive to the effect of advertisements in the source language and keep the same effect in the target language.

References


Title

The Effect of Peer Feedback Instructed by Teacher vs. Peer Feedback Discovered by Students on Iranian EFL Students’ Writing

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Abstract

This study was an attempt to investigate the effect of peer feedback in writing guided by the instructor vs. peer feedback discovered by the learners on EFL students’ writing performance. Fifty-three intermediate level teenager EFL learners studying at an Iranian middle school were divided in two an experimental and control group based on their performance on a nelson test which was used to assure their homogeneity. In Both groups students worked on some standard sample of writing and provided peer feedback. In the experimental group students worked on different features of the text including content, grammar, punctuation, language in use and the mechanics with no intervention from the instructor. While in the control group the students worked on the same writing samples following the specific questions set by the teacher on particular aspect of writing. At the end of the experiment both groups took the writing test of preliminary English test (PET). The result of T-test revealed that there was no significant different in the overall writing quality of the two groups. The results of MANOVA showed the performance of experimental group improve significantly only in terms of the content of their writing. The implications of the findings for teaching and learning EFL writing are discussed.
Keywords: Peer feedback, instructed peer feedback, discovered peer feedback, EFL writing

1. Introduction

As Truscott (2007) notes, the discussion on the effectiveness of corrective feedback has become mostly one-sided in that a host of mainstream sources argue for and present evidence for a favorable view of correction. The main question seems to be the nature of corrective feedback and how it can be optimized to have the greatest effect on the development of ESL/EFL learners' language skills. According to Lundstrom and Baker (2009), peer review, which is alternatively called peer editing, peer evaluation, or peer response, is an opportunity for writing teachers to provide their students with more feedback on the quality of their work. It is frequently used in both first (L1) and second language (L2) writing classes and gives students lots of practice on a range of skills directly related to their L2 development in general, and writing ability in particular. Students experience and learn how to have meaningful interaction with their peers, and they are given a greater exposure to ideas and new perspectives on the writing process (Hansen & Liu, 2005; Mangelsdorf, 1992; cited in Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

Lundstrom and Baker (2009) discuss the relationship between collaborative learning and peer review or feedback. According to them, in the mid-1970s, the idea of collaborative learning which concerned the role of students in the classroom with respect to each was developed. Bruffee (1973) published an article describing teachers as organizers of students rather than the source of knowledge. Later, Based on Bruffee’s ideas, other researchers argued that writing teachers should teach students how to edit papers collaboratively with their peers. It was believed that this would help them to be better writers of their own work (Butler, 1981; Gebhardt, 1980; O’Donnell, 1980; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009). This idea also received support from Sager (1973; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009) who maintained that students who evaluate writing improve in their own writing. She found that students who achieved the ability to evaluate writing using a rubric outperformed those without this asset. Therefore, students who have been taught how to use the scale were better judges of writing. This ability also brought the issues to their attention more forcefully in their own writing, as measured by improvement in their own writing scores over the course of the study. At the end of the program, they improved in collaborative learning skills enormously.
According to Lin (2009), there have also been studies on the differential effects of teacher and student feedback. For example, Tsui and Ng (2000) conducted a study on secondary students of English as L2 in Hong Kong who filled out a questionnaire and participated in an interview. As mentioned by students, they were able to make more extensive revisions based on the teacher's comments. On the other hand, Tsui and Ng also noted that reading peers' essays was more beneficial for students than commenting on their peers. However, some students found peer comments valuable because, in their view, peer suggestions allowed them to improve their revisions. Students also mentioned other roles for peer comments such as enhancing a sense of audience, raising awareness through reading peers' writings, encouraging collaborative learning, fostering text ownership, and some roles that teacher's comments might not be able to fulfill. In spite of all these roles mentioned by students in this study, they preferred teacher comments as they considered their teachers experienced and authoritative. Chinese EFL students in the study of Miao, Badger, and Zhen (2006) expressed a similar point of view as the students' in Tsui and Ng's study (all cited in Lin, 2009).

Caulk (1994; cited in Lin, 2009) also investigated the differences between teacher and student responses to writing. He found students' comments useful and acceptable from teachers' points of view. Although students and teachers provided similar suggestions, students' views were different from the teachers'. For instance, students' suggestions were more specific, but the teachers' views were provided in a more general way. Caulk also noticed that students reacted like real readers, rather than just giving peer feedback. These studies mostly revealed that students preferred receiving feedback from teachers and that teachers and students provided different types of feedback. According to Bitchener (2008), in terms of the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback, studies mainly focused on the extent to which direct and indirect feedback can improve accuracy.

As Bitchener (2008) maintains, indirect feedback has received more support for dealing with students' errors. According to him, As Lalande (1982) assured, because indirect feedback make learners engage in guided learning and problem solving, it leads to the type of reflection that is more valuable for fostering long-term learning. However, based on the findings of SLA researchers on oral L2 production, learners must first "notice" (Schmidt, 1990) the error in their production. Once the error has been noted, indirect feedback can play its role in pushing learners to engage in hypothesis testing—a process which Ferris (2002) and others (Doughty & Williams, 1998) suggested (all cited in Bitchener, 2008). It may need deeper internal processing and lead to the internalization of correct forms and structures. Bitchener (2008) further argues that although the value of indirect feedback cannot be
ignored, advocates of direct feedback states that teachers and students prefer direct feedback (Ferris & Helt, 2000; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Komura, 1999; cited in Bitchener 2008). Moreover, they support that direct feedback prevents confusion which is the result of students' failure to understand or remember the meaning of error codes used by teachers. Ferris and Roberts (2001; cited in Bitchener 2008) explained how this can easily occur with lower proficiency learners. As Bitchener (2008) states, Leki (1991) and Roberts (1999) have also pointed out the it is likely that the students' negative ideas regarding indirect feedback may make them believe that it cannot provide them with sufficient information to resolve more complex errors such as idiosyncratic and syntactic errors. Chandler (2003) provided explanation for the use of indirect feedback by stating that greater cognitive effort which is used by students when they are required to use indirect feedback compensates for the additional delay in knowing whether their own hypothesized correction is in fact correct. It is not possible to weight the values of various claims. A limited number of studies focused on the differences between two types feedback in terms of their facilitative role in promoting accuracy in L2 writing (Bitchener, 2008).

Lundstrom and Baker (2009) argue that although previously mentioned studies provide basic understanding of the beneficial role of reviewing L1 peer writing on a student’s own L1 writing ability, there are still doubts regarding the similar benefits of the procedure in the L2 writing classroom, where language and culture may bring more challenges (Carson & Nelson, 1994; Ramanthan & Atkinson, 1999; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009). Previously mentioned L1 studies did not address different issues that may arise due to distinct cultural expectations of students and different levels of language proficiency. As an example, Kamimura (2006; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009) found that while students at two different proficiency levels benefited from peer feedback activities, they were different in how they understood and dealt with peer feedback. Moreover, some students may be accustomed to teacher-centered classes; consequently, they may not feel comfortable working with peers in more student-centered situations. As a result, they may be resistant to group-centered peer review activities, and this can prevent them from developing critical evaluation skills (Braine, 2003; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009). According to Lundstrom and Baker (2009) another shortcoming is that most studies do not use experimental research methods or do not examine the nature of student improvement in terms of different aspects of writing globally with regard to organization, development, and cohesion as well as locally in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Based on the limited number of research and contradictory results in the area of the value of direct and indirect feedback, there is a need
for further research by incorporating both types within a single study. The present study was an attempt to provide empirical evidence for the effectiveness of two of such choices on the way peer feedback can be put into practice in EFL writing classes.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 53 Iranian EFL learners. They were all the students of a school for the talented named Dr. Hesabi. Their English course was taught by the researcher who was familiar enough with their level of proficiency in English in general, and their writing ability, in particular, at the outset of the experiment.

2.2. Instrumentation

Two instruments were used in this study. The Nelson proficiency test was used for checking the homogeneity of the groups at the beginning of the study and a post-test of writing for comparing the writing ability of the experimental and control groups at the end of the study. In order to check the homogeneity of the groups, the Nelson test was used as a standard test of language proficiency. As the students' level of proficiency was intermediate, book B of Nelson was used which contained 50 multiple items. Based on the results of the Nelson Test those scores which were beyond \( \pm 1 \) standard deviation of the mean were excluded from the sample in order to have homogeneous groups. The post-test was chosen from Cambridge University Preliminary English Test referred to as PET (official examination papers from University of Cambridge ESOL) recognized as being at the appropriate level of difficulty for the learners based on their teacher’s familiarity with their level of proficiency.

2.3. Procedure

The experiment conducted in this study made use of some standard writing samples taken from Cambridge ILETS examination papers (2002 & 1998). There were five samples altogether which were used in five consecutive sessions and covered a range of topics, namely, the comparison of Iran and America, the comparison of your dreamy house and the house where you live in, the comparison between old technology vs. modern ones, the explanation of your dreamy school and explaining how to solve problems they at school.

The instructor distributed the samples among the students and asked groups of two or three students to go through the texts. In the experimental group, the learner talked about different features of the text including content, grammar, punctuation, language in use and the mechanics with no intervention from the instructor, in other words the learners relied on their
own understanding of the nature of writing in the given samples and the teacher did not pose any specific questions to focus their attention on a particular aspect of the criteria for good writing specified in this study. It is noteworthy that the participants in this study already had some basic knowledge of the above mentioned criteria at the intermediate level of proficiency from the previous English classes. On the other hand in the control group the instructor posed some specific questions regarding each criterion of good writing for the students in advance. More specifically, with regard to any single criterion the students were supposed to focus on a particular point throughout the sample and discussed that point as guided by their instructor. Therefore, the subjects of experimental group were free to discover different aspects of good writing based on their own understanding and knowledge of the nature of good writing while the control group was required to think in the framework of the questions set by the teacher and focus on what the instructor asked them to find and discuss.

The researcher and two other raters scored the papers based on the following rating scale (Appendix A) which is a modified version of Chohen’s (1994), and Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, and Hughey (1981) (cited in Ghafarian, 2011). The raters had a minimum of five years of experience in teaching writing skills and well aware of the students’ strengths and weaknesses. In order to increase the inter-rater reliability and accuracy of scoring, the three raters had a couple of sessions in which they were introduced to the rubrics and practiced scoring a couple of sample papers in order to come to a common understanding of the rubrics. They also discussed some possible differences of opinion in their interpretation and application of the rubrics in the process of scoring sample papers.

3. Results

Four assumptions of interval data, independence, normality and homogeneity of variances were checked before running any parametric tests to analyze quantitative data (Field, 2009). The data gathered on the performance of the participants on the Nelson test of proficiency and the writing post- test used in this study were on an interval scale. The assumption of independence was met as none of the subjects participated in more than one group.

The assumption of normality as measured through the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors are presented in Table 1. The ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their standard errors were all within the ranges of plus and minus 1.96. Therefore, it was concluded that the gathered data was normally distributed.
Table 1. *Normality Tests*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Skewness Statistic</th>
<th>Kurtosis Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Normality</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NELSON</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-0.311</td>
<td>0.448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITING</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NELSON</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITING</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.659</td>
<td>0.472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the Nelson proficiency test in order to check whether the two groups were comparable in term of their proficiency level prior to the experiment. The results of the independent t-test (t = 1.47, P = .146 > .05) (Table 2) indicate that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups regarding their proficiency level before the experiment. It should also be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene’s F = 1.01, P = .318 > .05).

Table 2. *Independent t-test for Nelson Proficiency Test (Experimental vs. Control group)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>1.018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To check the inter-rater reliability of scoring for the two raters used in the study, the correlation coefficient of the scores given for each component of the rating scale was calculated and their statistical significance considering the sample size was checked. As Table 3 shows, all the inter-rater indices were statistically significant. In other words, there was a significant correlation in the scores given by the two raters for all the components of the rating scale which indicates the reliability of the scores given. The overall inter-rater reliability for the two raters of the writing test was .92 which was also statistically significant.

Table 3. *Inter-Rater Reliability for the Components of the Rating Scale*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.815**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the first research question of the study the following null hypothesis was formulated: There is no significant difference in the effect of peer feedback in writing guided by the instructor vs. peer feedback discovered by learners on Iranian EFL students’ overall writing performance. In order to test this hypothesis, an independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on writing test. The results presented in Table 4 (t = 1.70, P = .094 > .05) indicate that there was no significant difference between experimental and control groups' overall performance on the writing test. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study was supported. It should also be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene’s F = .519, P = .474 > .05).

Table 4. Independent t-test on the Writing Test (Experimental vs. Control Group)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second hypothesis of the study had a more atomistic look at the effect of the two types of feedback on the participants' writing performance. It was formulated as: There is no significant difference in the effect of peer feedback guided by the instructor vs. peer feedback...
discovered by learners on different aspects of Iranian EFL students' writing performance. Different aspects actually referred to the five criteria of scoring used in the rating process, namely, content, organization, language use, grammar, and mechanics. In order to answer the second question of the study, multivariate analysis of variances (MANOVA) was used as there were five dependent variables involved. In other words, the effect of the two types of feedback on five aspects of the students' performance in writing was examined based on the results shown in Table 5 \((F (5, 45) = 5.07, P = .001 < .05)\), it was concluded that there were significant differences between the groups’ mean scores on the five criteria of their writing performance. As a result, the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

Further comparisons were needed to find the exact points of significant difference regarding the five criteria examined. Table 6 compares groups’ performance on the criteria of writing performance used in this study. Based on the results, \((F (1, 49) = 21.74, P = .000 < .05)\) there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the "content" of their writing. However, there was not any significant difference between the two groups’ performance on the other components \((P > .05)\). In other words, the performance of the subjects in the experimental group was significantly better than that of the control group only in term of the "content" of their writings. Their performance on the other aspects of writing did not suggest such an advantage.

Table 5. *Multivariate Tests for the Different Aspects of Writing Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>.949</td>
<td>168.348</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>168.348</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>18.705</td>
<td>168.348</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>18.705</td>
<td>168.348</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP</td>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>5.075</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>5.075</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>5.075</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>5.075</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. *Univariate Test for the Different Aspects of Writing Performance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTENT</td>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>11.896</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.896</td>
<td>21.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>26.810</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>.547</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Discussion

The findings of this study supported the null hypothesis as there is no significant difference between peer feedbacks on writing guided by an instructor and those discovered by the learners themselves. Regardless of the statistical significance which is influenced by many factors including sample size, which was small in this study, a comparison of the means of the groups showed that the students in the experimental group who worked based on a discovery approach indeed benefited more from their peers' feedback although the difference did not turn out to be statistically significant. On the other hand, the results of statistical analysis for the second research question which had a more atomistic view on the effect of the two procedures on each criterion of good writing indicated that for the experimental group not only the performance in all the criteria was better according to their mean scores, but in terms of the "content" of their writing, the students performance was also statistically significant. In a nutshell, the group which worked based on a discovery learning approach outperformed the group which worked in the framework set by their teacher.

The findings can once again emphasize the role of collaboration in learning contexts – a factor which was more involved in the way the experimental group worked on the writing samples compared with the task of the control group which was more structured in terms of finding answers to specific questions – as an important prerequisite for deep and meaningful learning. Researchers have argued that writing teachers should teach students how to edit papers collaboratively with their peers. It is believed that this would help them to be better writers of their own work (Butler, 1981; Gebhardt, 1980; O’Donnell, 1980; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009). This idea also received support from Sager (1973; cited in Lundstrom and Baker, 2009) who maintained that students who evaluate writing improve in their own writing. She found that students who achieved the ability to evaluate writing using a rubric outperformed those without this asset, a finding which is more or less in line with the
findings of the present study. Therefore, students who were taught how to use the scale were better judges of the writing samples. This ability also brought the issues to their attention more forcefully in their own writing, as measured by improvement in their own writing scores over the course of the study. At the end of the program, they improved in collaborative learning skills enormously.

There is a lack of research on the instructed vs. discovered peer feedback and their effects on EFL learners' writing. The findings of this study can be generally interpreted as further evidence for the effectiveness of peers feedback and reflection in writing. Further research is certainly needed on the nature of discovery learning in writing and the effectiveness of different approaches to implementing peer feedback.

The findings of the present study shed some light on different ways of dealing with peer feedback and student involvement in writing classes in order to make them more effective. It was observed that the role of teachers and their intervention in the process can make a difference in the outcome. The better performance of the participants in the experimental group, especially in terms of "content" of their writing, indicates that peer feedback discovered by the learners with little involvement of the teacher can create better results. In fact, although statistically speaking there was no significant difference, the mean scores showed better performance of the experimental group. More specifically, it can be concluded that giving student freedom to explore a text and discuss its characteristics can be a viable procedure for teaching writing. Of course, the practice of setting specific questions by the teacher to be explored in the text by the students seems a fruitful activity, too. On the other hand, there might be more prospects in following a kind of discovery learning approach in EFL writing classes. The results were perhaps contrary to the common assumption on the helpful role of teacher guidance and involvement. Contrary to such an assumption, we can come to the conclusion that although statistically speaking the differences were not significant, better gains of the students as revealed in their mean scores indicate that a more learner-centered and cooperative approach to teaching and learning writing especially when learners are given more freedom to explore and discover for themselves can be more productive.

The results can have implications for language teachers and those who work on material development and syllabus design for teaching writing in English as a foreign language. Apart from the gains in writing, working on peer feedback, especially when it is discovered by learners themselves can create self-reliance and help them better understand the importance of self-correction which is a fundamental aspect of the writing process. During the
experiment, the researcher could clearly see the learners' enthusiasm to think critically especially in the experimental group where they were encouraged to work independent of the teacher's authoritative guidance. The findings of the study and observations of the researcher can have implications for writing teachers who are looking for better ways of harnessing peer feedback and a variety of methods of dealing with learners' problems in their writing classes. Similarly, syllabus designers and material writers can make use of more innovative exercises in more cooperatively-oriented textbooks. Taking advantage of peer feedback and the variety of ways in which learners can engage in analyzing and discussing such feedback can become an integral part of any modern textbook on teaching writing.

References


**Appendix A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>5 Advanced-High</th>
<th>4 Advanced-Low</th>
<th>3 Intermediate-High</th>
<th>2 Intermediate-Low</th>
<th>1 Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Logical development of ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Effectively addresses the topic and task, using clearly appropriate explanations, examples, and details</td>
<td>Addresses the topic and task well with using appropriate explanations, examples, and details</td>
<td>Addresses the topic and task using somewhat developed explanations, examples and details</td>
<td>Limited development in response to the topic and task using inappropriate explanations, examples and details</td>
<td>Questionable responsiveness to the topic and task with using no detail or irrelevant explanations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Main ideas, supporting ideas, and examples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Well organized and cohesive devices effectively used</td>
<td>Fairly well organized and cohesive devices adequately used</td>
<td>Loosely organized and incomplete sequencing; cohesive devices may be absent or misused.</td>
<td>Ideas are disconnected and lack of logical sequencing; inadequate order of ideas</td>
<td>No organization and no use of cohesive devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The sequence of introduction, body, and conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of cohesive devices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language in use</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate choice of words and use of idioms</td>
<td>Relatively appropriate choice of words and use of idioms</td>
<td>Adequate choice of words but some misuse of vocabulary or idioms</td>
<td>Limited range of vocabulary, confused use of words and idioms</td>
<td>Very limited vocabulary, very poor knowledge of idioms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Choice of vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Register</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>No errors, full control of syntactic variety</td>
<td>Almost no errors, good control of syntactic variety</td>
<td>Some errors, poor control of syntactic variety</td>
<td>Many errors, poor control of syntactic variety</td>
<td>Severe and persistent errors, no control of syntactic variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sentence-level structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mastery of spelling and punctuation</td>
<td>Few errors in spelling and punctuation</td>
<td>Fair number of spelling and punctuation errors</td>
<td>Frequent errors in spelling and punctuation</td>
<td>No control over spelling and punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Punctuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Capitalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4 A modified version of Cohen’s (1994) and Jacobs, Einkgraf, Womsuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey’s (1981) scoring scale

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The effect of error correction on learners’ ability to write accurately.
The Role of Translation Tasks in Foreign Language Listening Comprehension

Authors

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Leila Boloori M.A in language teaching from Islamic Azad University-Takestan Branch. Her research interests are teaching and assessment.

Abstract

Listening has long been the neglected skill in foreign language acquisition, teaching, research, and assessment. However, in recent years there has been an increased focus on L2 listening ability because of its perceived importance in language learning and acquisition. The present study explored the effect of translation tasks on the foreign language listening comprehension. Eighty intermediate level students in 8 classes, in three terms at Shokouh institute were placed into two groups: one experimental and one control group. A 40 item pre-test was administered to both groups to assess their listening proficiency. A 40 item pre-test was administered to both groups to assess their listening proficiency. A 40 item pre-test was administered to both groups to assess their listening proficiency. A 40 item pre-test was administered to both groups to assess their listening proficiency. The pretest revealed no statistical difference between the two groups' performance. The treatment started and experimental group were exposed to two kinds of translation tasks: one by the teacher and the other by the students themselves. A post-test was administered at the end of the terms. The data were then put to statistical tests. A statistical analysis of the results provided some evidence in support of the effect of translation on listening comprehension. The result showed that translation helped the students in acquiring the foreign language listening comprehension. This study has implications for teachers in that it demonstrates the
importance of meaning and understanding in the process of listening comprehension in teaching programs.

Keywords: Task, Schema, Metacognitive strategy, Comprehensible input, Communication strategy

1. Introduction
Listening plays a significant role in the lives of people. Janusik (2006) says that listening and listening related abilities such as understanding, open mindedness and supportiveness constitute a single dimension upon which people make judgments regarding communicative competence. Of the four major areas of communication skills and language development listening, speaking, reading, and writing the most basic one is listening. It is evident that children listen and respond to language before they learn to talk. When it is the time for children to learn to read, they still have to listen so that they gain knowledge and information to follow directions.

According to Shouyuan listening deserve a particular attention in the five aspects of English competence _ listening, writing, reading, speaking and translation. This study aims to build a model that recognizes the distinctive nature of knowing two or more languages and does not measure L2 knowledge by monolingual standards. According to Cook (2001), L2 users’ knowledge of the second language is not the same as that of the native language and L2 users think in different ways in comparison to monolinguals. In different studies researchers such as Cook, 2001 Tucker, 1999 and Shouyuan, 2003 have supported the use of L1 in classrooms, but translation which is a dimension of using L1 is absent in their works. They have not also provided clearly the tasks and techniques based on the first language.

1.1 Statement of the problem and significance of the study
There are several approaches of assessing learners listening ability (discrete point approach, integrative testing and communicative testing) (Buck, 2001), both the linguistic forms and comprehension. Although many learners can easily recall what they can hear, they might not have correct comprehension of the text. In the present study, translation effects are investigated to find out whether learners are able to get the linguistic forms and comprehend the oral text they listen to.

The significance of this study is in that it employs two new tasks. The first one is that, the teacher presents the students with the Persian paraphrase of the text they listen to. The second one is that students themselves are asked to provide their own Persian translation of the text.
The pedagogical implications of these two tasks are expected to help learners improve their listening comprehension abilities, teachers can test their students in a new way and they can be put in the curriculum as a teaching / testing fashion. These tasks can also have implications for learning theories.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Translation and the Use of L1 in Language Classrooms

The issue of whether or not to use the mother tongue (L1) in the English language (L2) classroom has long been the subject of many researches. In language institutes teachers have to speak only in English from the early stages of language learning. In general, students seem skeptical about the use of L1 in the classroom, particularly at higher levels. However, “the bilingual / bicultural teachers are in a position to enrich the process of learning by using the mother tongue as a resource, and then, by using the L1 culture, they can facilitate the progress of their students towards the other tongue, the other culture” (Vu, 2008, p. 8).

The investigation of students and teachers attitudes toward using L1 (Spanish) in the L2 (English) classrooms was carried out by Schweer (1999, p. 14). He listed a number of possible applications of mother tongue in the L2 classrooms as:
- eliciting language
- checking comprehension
- giving complex instruction
- testing
- developing circumlocution strategies
- classroom management
- presentation of grammar rules

Ferrer (2003) believes that “translating the content of L1 chunks can help learners realize the pitfalls of word-level translation, but, too much of this and the learner starts to rely on translation rather than work out meaning from context” (p. 3). The issue of L1 use in the ESL class is, to a certain extent, no longer a contentious one (Auerbach, 1993; Polio, 1994). Auerbach (1993, p. 1) argued that the "use of students' linguistic resources can be beneficial at all levels of ESL." Similarly, Cook (2001) reminded teachers that whether they want it to be there or not, the L1 is ever present in the minds of their L2 learners. Furthermore, translation is a frequently cited cognitive strategy in L2 reading (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). As cited by Seng and Hashim (2006, p. 30) L2 readers have been found to rely on
translation in the process of comprehending L2 texts and that the degree of such reliance is related to the level of proficiency (Kern, 1994; Upton, 1997).

A look at the history of translation shows that it’s not been used as a teaching instrument of listening comprehension. Cook (2001) states that over the last century, the use of the first language has been largely taboo in second language teaching. In the strongest form, L1 use is banned, and in the weakest sense, it is minimized. However, he advocates a more positive view: maximizing L2 use. Since multi competence means that the L1 is always present in the users’ minds, it would be artificial and sometimes inefficient to avoid its use.

Proponents of translation believe that if properly designed, translation activities can be employed to enhance the four skills and develop accuracy, clarity and flexibility (Tucker, 1999; Shouyuan, 2003). As regards the use of the native language, its effect on language acquisition has been the subject of many debates lately. Addressing the issues connected with it is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, it suffices to say that teachers should constantly bear in mind that in an EFL situation L1 ought to be employed judiciously.

2.2 The Need for Explicit Strategy Instruction

Chamot (2005) provides a broad definition for second language learner strategies by which they encompass both second language learning and second language use strategies. Taken together, they constitute the steps or actions selected by learners either to improve the learning of a second language, the use of it, or both.

Language use strategies actually include retrieval strategies, rehearsal strategies, cover strategies, and communication strategies. Research studies have been helpful in demonstrating the potential of listening strategy instruction to help second language listeners comprehend oral input. The question of how teachers should provide strategy instruction is answered by O’Malley & Chamot (1990). They referred to the methodological issue of whether strategy instruction should be embedded or direct. In embedded instruction, the teacher guides the students through activities that require the use of a particular strategy, but does not inform the students that they are utilizing the strategy to practice it and generalize it to other uses outside that particular lesson.

In direct instruction, however, the teacher informs the students about the anticipated benefits of using the strategy and then gives explicit instruction on how to apply and also transfer the strategy (Carrier, 2004). One of the ways learners become actively involved in controlling their own learning is by using strategies. Strategies are the thoughts and behaviors that learners use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain information (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990).
As cited in Carrier (2004), when students are given strategy instruction that includes information on the usefulness of the strategy for accomplishing the task or moving toward their goal, they are more likely to maintain the strategy than students who are simply told to use the strategy without specific information about its value (Pressley, Borkowski, & O’Sullivan, 1984). In the present study, the translation tasks are used as strategies for learning and the students are informed about the procedures we are following in the class.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants who took part in this study for three terms were 80 students of Shokuh English language institute in 7 classes. Some of the students in three terms sat in the in searcher’ class again who were not included in the study anymore. Participants of all the classes ranged from fourteen to nineteen year-old students and all of them were male. The study was limited to intermediate level classes because students with basic-level proficiency may have had difficulty expressing strategy use and may, in fact, have lack of proficiency to process the listening tasks presented during the study. Students taking part in the study were two types, those newly registered into the English language classes and those who had been promoted from lower levels (or who may have been repeating a level they failed in a previous term). Class size depended upon the term registration, and was not a factor for the study. Class size ranges from a low of 10 to a high of 15.

3.2 Instrument

Three research instruments were used in the study. The first was the listening comprehension portion of the NTC’s Preparation for the TOEFL (Broukal and Nolan-woods, 1991), administered at the beginning of the study to determine listening comprehension proficiency levels of participants. For the purposes of this study, the listening portion of the test was used to determine the appropriate listening proficiency levels of the participants. Since students were placed in course levels based upon results from an entire battery of tests, some students may, in fact, have possessed a listening proficiency level somewhat higher or lower than what one might expect from their overall course placement. The test included 40 items consisting of short statements, short conversation and longer conversation. The second instrument consisted of two course books. In two terms the course book was ‘True Colors’, and in one ‘spectrum’. Both books were communication based and had nine units which were all covered. Two quick quizzes were administered based on those books. The third instrument
consisted of V.O.A special English activities ‘the making of a nation’, and of an intermediate bilingual level short story, “a time to kill “where the English and Persian translations of both texts were presented to the participants.

3.3 Procedure

Before the beginning of each term, the participants of this study were administered pre-test to assess their knowledge of listening comprehension. To do that, the researcher chose and administered the listening section of a TOEFL test, including 40 items. In order to score the test, the researcher gave ‘1’ to the correct answer and ‘0’ to the wrong one, and then added them up scoring. Therefore, the final score of each participant on this test fell within 40 but rounded to twenty (because all the exams of the study were part of the class activity score of the students in the report card).

Forty items were chosen on the basis of TOEFL sample test. The first group of items that measured subjects’ performance on true-false tasks included ten items, each of which was followed by three answers: true, false, or not given. The subjects were expected to listen to the corresponding dialogue and to decide whether the statement of the speaker at the end of that dialogue was true or false.

The second set of items aimed at measuring the subjects’ performance on sentence completion. This set included 15 items followed by possible endings. The subjects had to listen to the corresponding dialogue and, on the basis of the information present in the text, to choose two possible endings from the list to complete each item. Third group of items measured the subjects’ performance on overall comprehension. This category included fifteen items. The subjects were expected to listen to a dialogue and then answer the questions. Moreover, the TOEFL test was checked for reliability and the result turned out to be satisfying (Cronbach alpha=.84).

The control group were exposed to the common techniques of listening comprehension, but the students of the second group practiced the Persian paraphrase of the text (The two tasks used in the translation group were: a)providing Persian paraphrase by the teacher b) asking students to paraphrase the text they had already listened to in Persian. The participants were not informed that they were taking part in an experiment. This is done to control the external validity of the experiment. There is no reason to suspect that the results of the study originated from a reaction to the experimental arrangement the teacher of the group himself carried out the text as an activity. Each term consisted of 20 sessions, and in each session, students in the experimental group received treatment between twenty and thirty minutes. One or two 20 – item exams in the term were given to assess the students’ progress.
Generally, the teacher started each lesson in the control group with a few pre-listening exercises that is, discussion about the illustrations in the textbook, pronunciation of vocabulary items, and matching definitions with vocabulary items. Then the teacher normally introduced an audio-tape containing a dialogue or a monologue. Each of them ranged from 2 to 3.30 minutes in length, with the mean length of 2.40 minutes. The tape revealed a wide range of academic topics including business, engineering, computer science, general science, and so on.

When the teacher began to play the tape for the first time, he generally paused the tape after a few sentences, to ask the students to identify the vocabulary items they had practiced during the pre-listening phase, before he continued the tape. After the students had listened to the entire dialogue for a few times, they did some exercises related to what they had heard. The exercises during the listening phase primarily involved identifying the main idea and the supporting details of the dialogue. Then, the teacher played the tape one or two more times so that the students could practice taking notes. Eventually, the teacher gave each student a transcript of the dialogue.

The work in the experimental group was generally like the control group. It started by playing a tape. Like the control group, the average length of the recordings was about 2.5 minutes. First students were asked to provide a general description about the text and then to answer base on the text sentence by sentence in Persian. Longer sentences were cut down into meaningful units. If they couldn’t answer anyway the teacher provided the translation of that text.

In the first term, from two classes, one was given the treatment by the above said translation tasks, and in the other one the control group, the usual techniques were used such as synonym/antonym, cloze passage, etc. The data was recorded for the analysis as a pilot study to show the differences of the two groups. At the end of the term, a post-test was administered to assess the progress of the students.

In spring term, the same method was followed. There were two classes: one class was given treatment and the other served as the control group. Like the previous term, one exam during the term and the other as the post_test in session 18 were administered. In the summer term, there were two classes. Like the previous terms in session 12, the first quiz of the term was administered. In the second exam, as the post-test, a general test was given to the two classes.

3.4 Design and Data Collection
In this research there were two groups – the experimental which received the specific treatment and the control group which did not. Here, the use of Persian as technique for listening comprehension is the independent variable and improvement on listening comprehension was the dependent variable. Two different sets of data were collected from two tests: the first was the data extracted from the pre-test of the NTC’s TOEFL test to see whether there is any significant difference between the two groups. And the second was the data gathered after the experiment when the post-test was administered. The data collected came from the results of the tests administered to the tasks performed by the teacher and the students and processed through one way ANOVA. Although one quick quiz was, at least, given after each term to assess the progress of the students, the scores were not considered in the total analysis of the post test scores.

4. Data Analysis and Results

The study showed that translation assists the students in acquiring the foreign language listening comprehension. When methodologies using the students' primary language as a scaffold to support learners are properly engaged, substantial listening improvements can result. Although Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis speaks against the reasons for using the first language, the notion of translating the language into the students' primary language would seem reasonable. When students know that the input will be translated into their primary language, they feel secure to pay attention carefully to input in English. As a general rule, listening exercises are most effective if they are constructed round a task. That is to say, the students are required to do something in response to what they hear that will demonstrate their understanding.

On the other hand as Ur (1984) says designing tasks which provide effective responses needs to have some features. It is more interesting for students to respond actively to something than to listening passively. Students should be given immediate feedback on their performance of the task. Task should be success oriented and simple. The tasks in the present study were aimed to meet the best objectives.

Ellis (2003) regards listening to another language as task at a high level of difficulty in cognitive terms and therefore demanding full attention. Second language listeners appear to fall into two groups, namely the risk takers and the risk avoiders. The first group of listeners forms hypotheses as to meaning while recognizing little of the signal. The latter demand a large amount of hard bottom-up evidence before they draw conclusion as to the overall
meaning. Neither, however, react in groups of listeners the way they would in L1 listening problems where the employ different listening skills/techniques.

There has been a revival of interest to translation due to the shift of its emphasis – to using a mother tongue as a resource for the promotion of language learning. Translation method develops three qualities essential to any language learning: accuracy, clarity, and flexibility (Carrier, 2004).

Therefore, translation can serve as a tool for improving language skills. Many methods and techniques have their place, depending on the differing circumstances of the teaching environment. By excluding the students’ L1, we are severely limiting the number of methods and techniques available to teachers. Regarding the use of L1 in the L2 classroom, it is important to find out how students themselves feel about it. C. Schweers (1999) conducted a research into this issue and found out that a high percentage (88.7%) of the student participants felt that mother tongue should be used in their English classes.

The key to listening comprehension teaching and learning, as well as language acquisition, can be seen as mediation of meaning. It is the role of teachers to mediate such acquisition using methodologies and techniques that focus their attentions on learners’ needs and best responses to different tasks and techniques. Second language listening competence is a complex skill which needs to be developed consciously. It can best be developed with practice when students reflect on the process of listening without the threat of evaluation. “Using listening activities to only test comprehension leads to anxiety which debilitates the development of metacognitive strategies” (Vandergrift, 2002 p. 17). Use of strategies positively impacts self-concept, attitudes, about learning and attributional beliefs about personal control. Guiding students through the process of listening not only provides them with the knowledge by which they can successfully complete a listening task; it also motivates them and puts them in control of their learning (Vandergrift, 2002).

Even though many research studies indicate that L2 listening comprehension is complex and difficult to describe, it has not been always approached as a language skill in its own right. More recently there appears to be a movement toward regarding listening comprehension, and particularly listening in academic contexts, as a skill area that specifically needs investigation (Shouyuan, 2003; Carrier, 2004).

The results of this study showed the positive effects of adhering to such a methodological and theoretical framework. These findings support previous research indicating that listening without using the facilities which show students’ comprehension will not be effective, using
techniques in which student will correctly remember the exact words but they cannot say the meaning of the sentences (Robin, 2007).

5. Discussion
The present study examined the impact of translation on foreign language listening comprehension by using one monolingual and a bilingual methodology. Findings indicated that there was a significant difference between the translation (experimental) and the control groups in terms of comprehension as measured by post-tests. It is clear that students understand, learn and feel secure when they are presented with the translation (the meaning) compared with the time when a traditional monolingual methodology is applied because in the latter, there is no guarantee to check whether the learners comprehended the vocabulary or the text (as in listen and write practice of listening). What is even more important to note is that “the use of the primary language in the form of translation facilitate significantly this comprehension and even learning new vocabulary items because they have to translate and use exact equivalent words” (Simon, 2006 p. 192). This speaks against the view of keeping both languages separate in terms of instruction.

The students participating in this research used three types of learning strategies to facilitate their comprehension and language learning. These are cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social and affective strategies (Chamot, 2004). Language learning strategies are thoughts and behaviors that students use to improve their knowledge and understanding of a target language (Cohen, 1996).

Cognitive strategies used by the students involve unconscious interactions with the material to be learned, such as inferencing: using available information to guess meanings of unfamiliar words, resourcing: using available reference sources such as a dictionary, and note-taking: writing down key words to assist the listening task. Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, involve conscious management and control over the learning process, such as paying attention, and monitoring.

Metacognitive strategies used by the students were, directed attention: deciding in advance to attend to the listening task and maintaining attention while listening; seeking practice opportunities. Social and affective strategies involve interacting with another person or using affective control to assist learning, such as questioning, working with peers, and lowering anxiety. Social and affective strategies used by the students in this study were questioning: asking another person to say again or to slow down (Ellis, 1990). The language learning
strategies used by different language learners vary according to many variables including cultural background, and learning style (Kadia, 1988). Translation is one of them which is used in his study and helped learners improve their listening comprehension. Various statistical analyses indicated the effectiveness of the treatment by translation tasks.

While this study dealt specifically with the impact of translation on English learners' foreign language listening comprehension, it has implications for learners in that it demonstrates the importance of meaning and understanding as a way which ensures learning happened. If use of the primary language as a scaffold in listening facilitates comprehension, as evidenced by the present study, these techniques (strategies) should be more widely employed to facilitate learning as a guide to English learners on the path toward second language learning. Although using the first language in English language institutes are not tolerated, it can be used as a supplementary, method of teaching listening and a way in evaluating comprehension.

This study discovered a good deal of information on the basis of certain characteristics. As the participants of this study were teenagers, a change can be made in the settings to examine adult learners. And because of the limitations relating to location of this study, the same study can be conducted in other parts of the country. One other recommendation is to examine the effect of translation on other skills such as speaking.

References


Title

Teachers Perception and Practice in the Post Method Era Concerning Teaching Conversational Dialogs and Reading Comprehension Passages

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Abstract

There has recently been a growing concern over the inadequacy of the post-methodology (Larsen-Freeman 2001, Bell 2003) stating that practitioners seem to still feel that methods are not dead or useless the way it was, more or less strongly, suggested by other scholars in the past 20 years (see Prabhu 1990; Brown 2002; Richards 1990; Kumaravadivelu 1994, 2001). Moreover, there are reports suggesting that teachers seem to keep on using methods in a variety of eclectic ways (Bell 2007). Put differently, language teachers have not changed in tune with new trends in the world of theory (Rajagopalan 2008). Accordingly, attempts were made to shed light on what teaching is all about, in this post-method era, as conceptualized by EFL teachers. A semi-structured interview was administered to a sample of thirty male and female EFL teachers. The instrument had 22 questions divided into 2 parts of (1) Knowledge and awareness and (2) Attitudes and preferences. The finding of the study showed that teachers’ teaching practice is essentially based on personal taste. They were found to be unaware of principles of language teaching and learning. For this reason, they resorted to picking out techniques from different methods putting them together one way or another. Thus although they would like to identify themselves as eclectic L2 teachers to follow the fashion, this may not be true as far as the concept of
principled eclecticism which is the methodological suggestion of post-methodology is concerned.

**Keywords:** Method, Approach, Post-method era, Eclecticism, EFL, L2, Semi-structured interview, Principled eclecticism

1. Introduction

As far as history of language teaching is concerned it is seen that various language teaching methods such as GTM, DM, ALM, CLT and so on have come into view and vanished due to their merits and restrictions. That is why English teachers describe teaching as a dynamic area. Finding the best method has always been one of the teachers’ main concerns. Among all the supported methods, the two most innovative ones which have lasted for a long time seem to be CLT and TBLT, task based language teaching. Recently a new concept has developed in language teaching which is post-methodology. Particularity, practicality, and possibility are three main factors in post method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2001/2003) that put more emphasis on the social context of the classroom and teachers’ understanding of what leads to learning in such a classroom. It means that teachers can’t satisfy students’ pedagogical needs unless students’ social needs are paid attention and taken care of (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). The next important fact in post methodology is that teachers are supposed to be familiar with macro-strategies and micro-strategies.

The significance of this study originates in the fact that the state of current practice in language education in the EFL context seems to be confused after breaking from the concept of method. What we need to develop is the picture of teacher practice, that is, how teachers go about teaching in the post-method era. Do they follow the old methods, have they turned into reflective teachers or do they give lessons according to their mere taste. Experience shows that it is too simplistic to think that EFL teachers have turned into reflective teachers overnight. Then if this may not be the case, how do they practice what they are supposed to practice. How do they think about L2 pedagogy on the whole? These are important questions that have been answered in this study. The findings of this study are useful to school boards as well as language centers, both teachers and educational managers.

The paper attempts to investigate two cases. The first purpose of this paper is to shed light on teacher perception and practice in the post method era. Next is looking at the way post method teachers teach reading comprehension passages and dialogs. In other words this
paper’s primary purpose is, understanding how much language teachers are familiar with the post method era and if their perception is what is indeed meant by post methodology or something different. Second it attempts to see the patterns language teachers employ to teach reading comprehension passages and dialogs.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Bell (2007) examines Block’s (2001) claim that while the concept of method doesn’t play an important role as it used to in the thinking of applied linguists, it still plays a crucial role in the thinking of teachers. To assess generally what he claimed, He posed questions directly addressing teachers’ opinions on methods and Post – Method. The result from the data suggests that as far as a method helps teachers deal with a teaching context well the method is supported by teachers. Otherwise, it is not favored. In fact teachers’ attitude toward methods is pragmatic. He states that teachers should be exposed to all methods, so that they can, make or better to say, build their own methods and principles they need in their teaching. He mentions that to build our own teaching a basis is needed which directly or indirectly comes from previous methods and approaches.

Kumaravadielu (2007) claims that teacher education needs to be adjusted, and amended in this era which is known as Post-Method era. It has to move away from traditional master-apprentice model toward a practice which focuses on enabling teachers to analyze and think about their context and needs better to find the best local methodologies. He believes that an urgent need for teacher education to focus on developing more autonomous, critical teachers is paid attention nowadays. Teachers should be able to respond to local problems with local solutions. He states that positive peer working or dialogizing is an essential element in the teachers’ professional development.

Bax (2003) argues that the dominance of communicative language teaching neglected a very important aspect of language teaching which is context. Context plays an important role since teaching and learning, pedagogy, takes place in it. He claims that CLT should be replaced with a context approach, as he names it, which places context at the heart of language teaching. He adds that this kind of shift which was mentioned before is happening now so that teachers practice will be affected. He thinks that the popularity of CLT was due to its corrective feature. CLT corrected most previous methods and approaches pitfalls. CLT doesn’t pay much attention to context in which it takes place. Eventually he claims that CLT has to be replaced with what he terms as context approach.
Mahdavi (2006) states that ELT has been associated with many language teaching methods. There has been a search to find the best method. What the teachers have looked for is a single, ideal method which is applicable to all different teaching contexts. The final purpose of all things has been mentioned is teaching students language successfully in the classroom. So he focuses on an observation of TTCs, pre-service classes, in which experienced teachers became familiarized with the approach, Post-method, then their ideas on its applicability was solicited. In conclusion he claims that teachers can benefit from a Post-Method principled approach to Language Teaching. In fact Post-Method approach frees teachers from top-down rules and lets them be the main decision maker in each unique language teaching situation.

Brown (2007) states that nowadays ESL and EFL teachers are supposed to look at all approaches, methods, and procedures to see if they work in an ELT context or not, which is technically known as eclecticism. He claims that it is hardly ever possible to make use of a single method or approach which is suitable for all teaching contexts.

Larsen-freeman (2000) states that teaching is like a multidimensional theoretical framework which familiarizes us with a new perspective in Language Teaching in the 21 century. Teaching is not determined by any sole factor or individual teacher. It is a kind of adjustable decision that is formed and reformed through teaching and learning.

Rajagopalan, K. (2008) suggests that there is little or sometimes no concern with what happens in the classroom while much academic discussion about the effectiveness and usefulness of language teaching method is done. That fact is that the business of language teaching doesn’t change in tune with new ideas which emerge in the world of theory.

Baroudi&Mohseni-Far (2006) State that reconstructive strategy is the best strategy in the successful development of second language which is best studied to the Iranian educational system. They performed a survey related to identification and adaptation of the most appropriate teaching strategy between two selected strategies which are communicative strategy and reconstructive strategy. Both learners and teachers were paid attention to. In this survey experienced teachers belief systems were probed. In addition to teachers, the learners’ proficiency and stamina variables related to personality factor were put into consideration.

Salmani-Nodoushan (2006) claims that the profession of Language teaching has experienced many changes in its lifetime. In the beginning it was not built on a theoretical foundation, then psychology and linguistics came into view to solve the problem which was previously mentioned. Afterwards the validity of methods was questioned, and then words
Brown (2002) maintains that the entire notion of separate methods is no longer a central issue in language teaching. He catalogs a number of explanations for the method breakdown as follows. (1) Methods are too prescriptive, assuming too much about a context before the context has even been identified. Therefore, they are generalizable in their potential application to practical situations. (2) Methods are generally quite distinctive at the early, beginning stages of a language course and rather indistinguishable from each other at later stages. (3) Methods are too artful and intuitive as language pedagogy to be ever verified by empirical validation. (4) Methods are laden with "agendas" of their proponents (Pennycook, 1989).

Brown (2002, p. 11) states that we need to "get on with the business of unifying our approach to language teaching and of designing effective tasks and techniques informed by that approach". An approach to language teaching is not just a number of principles "set in stone." Rather, it is a dynamic "composite of energies" within a teacher that changes with continued experience in learning and teaching. He refers to a number of principles that can guide the approach adopted by language teachers. They are (1) automaticity, (2) meaningful learning, (3) the anticipation of reward, (4) intrinsic motivation, (5) strategic investment, (6) language ego, (7) self-confidence, (8) risk taking, (9) the language culture connection, (10) the native language effect, (11) inter-language, and (12) communicative competence. Of course, neither are these principles exhaustive, nor are they of the same weight in adopting our approach in language teaching. That is, one can think of more principles including learning style and strategies on the one hand; and on the other, one can, for instance, see how communicative competence as a principle has priority over the other mentioned principles in adopting innovative teaching practice in our classrooms.

Nunan (1991, p. 228) comments on methods as follows: It has been realized that there never was and probably never will be a method for all, and the focus in recent years has been on the development of classroom tasks and activities which are consonant with what we know about second language acquisition, and which are also in keeping with the dynamics of the classroom itself.

Liu (2004) claims that to substantiate the multi-dimensional theoretical framework for language teaching methods which Freeman (2000) proposed, we need to know about the currently practiced methods by language teachers for learners at various developmental stages of language learning in both ESL and EFL contexts, and to assess and explain the
differential effects of various methods on learning for different learners in different contexts. We need to know the factors that support or constrain language teaching methods. Also we need to understand in retrospect the effects of various English language teaching methods on our learners as we tend to look at the effectiveness of methods only from teachers’ viewpoints. In short, we need more research studies at the method level to enhance our understanding of essence of ELT.

Savignon, (2007) claims that the emergence of English as an international language, technological innovation and an increasing need for learner autonomy and self-sufficiency are changing the contexts of language learning swiftly and profoundly. Recognition of the current complexity and diversity of these contexts has led some to suggest that we have moved ‘beyond methods’ to a post-method condition (Kumaravadivelu, 2002), that the quest for a better method has been or should be abandoned in favor of the identification of practices or strategies of teaching designed to reflect local needs and experiences. In this paper heconsiders the professional consequences of the challenges facing the language teaching profession in the years ahead. How will the needs and goals of the next generation of learners be met? Will applied linguists continue to assert an expert or authority status in the determination of practice? Or will a post-method era lead to the recognition of teachers as the professional decision-makers and theory builders that they in fact could be?

Olagoke, O, D. (2002) states that, It is now broadly recognized that there is no one ‘best method’ or no single ‘most efficient way’ of teaching languages, nor is there any single theory that can account for such a complex process as second language teaching. However, in movements to evolve an eclectic approach, there is a danger that the current reaction against behaviorism will distort the balance by rejecting pattern practice and drills. A fashionable preference for contrastive studies as opposed to error analysis may lead to similar distortion. Finally, there is a danger of excessive reliance on the transformational-generative approach. Accordingly, the 3 following research questions will be investigated:
1. What is the current teaching-perception pattern of Iranian EFL teachers?
2. How Iranian EFL teachers perceive teaching dialogs?
3. How Iranian EFL teachers perceive teaching reading comprehension passages?

3. Methodology
3.1. Participants
A sample of thirty teachers was interviewed with an average of teaching experience ranging
from two to eight years in seven different English Language Institutes of Kerman, Iran. The sample includes male and female teachers, fourteen males, and sixteen females. Selected teachers were approximately between twenty and thirty years of age. Seven teachers were not majoring in TEFL, English Literature, or English translation. However, five teachers were TEFL MA students. About four or five teachers in each English Language Institute were interviewed. The sample was non-native English speaker teachers who were generally adult teachers.

3.2. Instruments
The instrument utilized in this study was a semi-structured interview developed by the researcher; ideas were also used from similar studies concerning Post-Method era (see Bell 2007). The instrument utilized had 22 questions divided into 2 parts of (1) Knowledge and awareness and (2) Attitudes and preferences.

The purpose of the first part (with 9 questions) was to collect data on (1) Teachers’ knowledge of basic concepts of TEFL, (2) Teachers’ awareness of general aspects of practice (class activities and steps), and (3) Teachers’ (sources of) knowledge of techniques. The aim of the second part (with 13 questions) was to gather data on (1) Teachers’ general attitude / preferences for TEFL and (2) Preferences for practice to teach dialogs and reading passages.

3.3. Data Collection Procedures
In the beginning of conducting the interview fifty experienced and semi-experienced teachers were appointed. Out of the initial sample, those who were interested enough to take part in the study were invited. It sometimes happened that a teacher tended to deviate from the aim of a question by saying irrelevant things in which they were interrupted, directed toward the point of the question. After almost 2 months, the interview for all teachers was over. On the average, each interview session took approximately 35 minutes.

Afterwards the audio files recorded were listened to carefully and transcribed by the researcher. For the responses, frequencies were determined and percentages were calculated for male and female participants. The audio files were listened again to make sure mistakes has not happened while transcription. A few minor mistakes were detected and corrected.

3.4. Data Analysis
Frequency counts as well as percentage indexes were used to analyze the data. The same indexes of measurement were used to report the characteristics of the data for male and female responses to the questions of the interview. The results were tabulated under their corresponding questions.
4. Results
In this section the participants’ answers to all the 23 questions will be presented. There
questions have been divided into 2 sections of (1) Knowledge and awareness and (2)
Attitudes and preferences.

Response to the interview questions

4.1. Knowledge and awareness
Teachers’ knowledge and awareness has been treated in three sections, namely, (1) Teachers’
knowledge of basic concepts of TEFL, (2) Teachers’ awareness of general aspects of practice
(class activities and steps), (3) Teachers’ (sources of) knowledge of techniques.

4.1.1. Teachers’ knowledge of basic concepts of TEFL
There are 5 questions in this section as follows:

Table 1. Do teachers know what the term APPROACH means?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>56.67</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirty interviewees were asked the question. Six teachers or 20% knew what the term
“approach” was, half male and half female. Seventeen teachers, 56.67%, were a little familiar
with the term “approach”, 33.32% male, and 23.33% female. Seven candidates out of thirty,
23.33%, didn’t know what APPROACH meant, 3.33% male and 20% female.

Table 2. What approaches are teachers familiar with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Familiar</th>
<th>Unfamiliar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the interviewees, 0%, were familiar with EFL approaches. Nobody could even name
approaches in the field of TEFL neither language and learning approaches, nor teaching
approaches.

Table 3. Do teachers know what the term METHOD means?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Iranian EFL Journal
Nineteen students, 63.33%, had a good knowledge of the term METHOD. They could define what “method” meant pretty well, 36.67% male and 26.67% female. Six candidates or 20% were a little familiar with the term, 10% male and 10% female. The term was totally unfamiliar to five interviewees, 16.67%, 3.33% male and 13.33% female.

Table 4. What methods are teachers familiar with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>T%</th>
<th>M%</th>
<th>F%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GTM</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63.33</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>26.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUG</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>7.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.70</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALM</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11.02</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPR</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBLT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were mostly familiar with Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, Communicative Language Teaching, and Audio-Lingual Method. Next they knew, to some extent, Suggestopedia and Total Physical response. Their knowledge of the other methods and approaches was little. Moreover, they thought CLT, TBLT and CBLT were methods whereas they were not. On the whole, the knowledge of female teachers was a bit higher although the difference didn’t seemed to be real.

Table 5. Do teachers know what the term Post-Method means?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>73.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>36.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>36.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than 73 percent of the participant had never heard of the term “post-method”. The percentage will boost if we add the 13 percent of the sample who had a little information about the term, together more than 86 percent of them.

4.1.2. Teachers’ awareness of general aspects of practice (class activities and steps)

This section comprises 2 questions as has been presented below:
Table 6. Generally, are teachers aware of what they do in the class? (e.g., purpose of class activities; effect of techniques used)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>66.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 3.3% of the sample, 0% male and 3.33% female, one person, was aware of what he or she normally does in the class. Seven interviewees, 23.33%, 13.33% male and 10% female, can almost tell what is done in the class. Twenty teachers, 66.67%, 30% male and 36.67% female, were more and less conscious of things done in the class. Two interviewees, 6.67%, 3.33% male and 3.33% female, could a little realize the purpose of class activities, and effect of techniques used in the class.

Table 7. Are teachers conscious of the steps they normally follow to teach conversational dialogs and reading passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dialogs</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Dialogs</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Dialogs</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>63.33</td>
<td>86.67</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the subject of teaching dialog, two interviewees, 6.66%, half male and half female, were conscious of the steps they, by and large, follow to teach conversational dialogs. Nineteen teachers out of thirty, 63.33%, 36.67% male and 26.67% female, were aware of some steps, and 30%, 6.67% male and 23.33% female, or nine teachers didn’t know the steps followed to teach conversational dialogs.

Regarding reading passages, it has been summed up that 3.33% of the sample, 0% male and 3.33% female, which equals 1 candidate knew well what the steps followed to teach reading passages are. 26 interviewees, 86.67%, 43.33% male and 43.33% female, were relatively aware of some steps. 10% of the sample, 3 teachers, 3.33% male and 6.67% female, was not conscious of the steps they follow to teach reading passages.

4.1.3. Teachers’ (sources of) knowledge of techniques

The following section includes 2 questions:
Table 8. What are the sources of teachers’ techniques? Where have they learned them from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>TTC/OJT</th>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Intuition</th>
<th>Creativity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>46.93</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>18.36</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>20.40</td>
<td>20.40</td>
<td>8.16</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>26.53</td>
<td>8.17</td>
<td>10.20</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty three teachers or 46.93% of interviewees, 20.40% male and 26.53% female, claimed that their own and others’ experience are their sources. 28.57% of the teachers, 20.40% male and 8.17% female, made use of the TTC or OJT classes they participated in order to choose their techniques. TEFL books were used as sources of techniques by 9 interviewees which equals 9 teachers, 8.16% male and 10.2% female. The rest is intuition 4.08% and creativity 2.04%.

Table 9. Do teachers know the theoretical / methodological origin of the techniques they use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>They know it.</th>
<th>They don’t know it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>36.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eleven teachers, 36.67%, were aware of the theoretical and methodological origin of the techniques they use, 16.67% male and 20% female. While it was not known by 63.33% of the interviewees, 33.33% male and 30% female, or 19 teachers.

4.2. Attitudes and preferences

The following part incorporates two sections, namely, (1) Teachers’ general attitude / preferences for TEFL and (2) Preferences for practice to teach dialogs and reading passages.

4.2.1. Teachers’ general attitude / preferences for TEFL

This section includes 5 questions as follows:

Table 10. Are teaching methods as important as they used to be in their heydays?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As much as 13.33% of teachers, half male and half female, thought that teaching methods were as important as they were in their heydays. Another 86.67% of interviewees, 40% male and 46.67% female, believed that methods are not as popular as they used to be in the past.

Table 11. What is the best method?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>T%</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M%</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>F%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GTM</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46.87</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALM</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPR</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBLT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBLT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One male interviewee, 3.13%, thinks that DM is the best method ever. SUG is known as the best method by a female teacher, 3.13% of the population. GTM, SLT, and CLL are not considered the best method by anybody. It was understood that CLT is the best method to 15 teachers, 46.87% of the sample, 25% male and 21.87% female. TPR attracts a female teacher, 3.13%. ALM was favored by 2 male and 2 female teachers, 12.50% of the population. A male and a female teacher, 6.24%, voted for SW. CBLT was paid attention by a male interviewee, 3.13%. In 4 interviewees Ideas or 12.50% of teachers TBLT was the best method, 1 male and 3 female. 3 teachers including a male teacher and 2 female teachers claimed that none of the methods mentioned is the best. Again, at least some teachers thought that CLT, TBLT and CBLT were methods.

Table 12. What is teacher creativity share in TEFL?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>T%</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>M%</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>F%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-25%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-50%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-75%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty four interviewees including 10 male teachers and 14 female teachers, 80% of the population, think that creativity share in TEFL is 25% or less. It is believed that creativity share is between 25% and 50% by 6 teachers out of 30, 4 male and 2 female. Nobody or 0% of the sample agreed with teacher creativity share more than 75% or even between 50% and 75%.

Table 13. What methods do Teachers’ use?

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As much as 83.34% claimed that they are used to using their own eclectic methods, 40% male and 43.34% female. ALM and TPR are used by 5 interviewees, 16.67%, 6.67% male and 10% female.

4.2.2. Preferences for practice to teach dialogs and reading passages

In this section, 9 questions have been dealt with all related to teachers’ specific practice of 2 main language bodies typically found in L2 textbooks.

Table 14. Which methods do teachers use to teach conversational dialogs and reading passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A specific Method</th>
<th>Own Eclectic Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogs</td>
<td>Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Does each teacher have a fixed eclectic method of their own to teach conversational dialogs and reading passages? (Or do they change the order of steps?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Some Fixed Steps</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogs</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Dialogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As much as 20% of the sample has a fixed eclectic method of their own, fixed steps, to teach conversational dialogs and reading passages, in both cases 13.34% male and 6.67% female. 13.34%, all male, has some fixed steps to teach conversational dialogs while 66.67% has no fixed eclectic method to teach conversational dialogs, 20% male and 46.67% female. To teach reading passages 36.67% including 23.33% male and 13.33% female have some fixed steps. 43.34% of the population has no fixed steps to teach reading passages, 10% male and 33.34% female.

Table 16. How many steps do teachers follow to teach conversational dialogs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Steps</th>
<th>5 Steps</th>
<th>6 Steps</th>
<th>7 Steps</th>
<th>8 Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T%</strong></td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M%</strong></td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F%</strong></td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As much as 13.33% of the interviewees, half male and half female, follow 4 steps to teach conversational dialogs. 26.67% of teachers, 10% male and 16.67% female, have 5 steps to teach dialogs. 23.33% have 6 steps. A 7-step procedure is used by 26.67% of interviewees to teach conversations, 16.67% male and 10% female. 10% have a 8 step procedure, 3.33% male and 6.67% female. There were no responses as to the number of steps teachers take to teach reading passages.

Table 17. Do teachers pre-teach vocabulary while teaching conversational dialogs and reading passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dialogs</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Dialogs</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Dialogs</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T%</strong></td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>53.33</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M%</strong></td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F%</strong></td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding teaching conversational dialogs, 40% pre-teach vocabulary, 43.34% don’t do it and 16.67% may do it or not depending on different thing. Concerning reading passages 53.33% pre-teach vocabulary. 33.34% never do it and 13.33% claimed that it is directly affected by some factors, so they may or may not do it.
Table 18. Do teachers make use of pair or group work while teaching conversational dialogs and reading passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogs</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Dialogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>93.33</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While teaching conversational dialogs 93% of interviewees apply pair or group work, 43.33% male and 50% female. However pair or group work is not used by 6.67%. While teaching reading passages 13 interviewees, 43.33%, make use of pair or group work. It is not done by 56.67% of teachers.

Table 19. While teaching a conversation, is the conversation first read by the teacher or students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>By Teacher / Recorded voice</th>
<th>By Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>46.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conversation is read by teachers or audio by 88.33% of interviewees, 36.67% male and 46.67% female. 16.67% including 10% male and 6.67% female think that conversation should be read by students, so this is what done in their classes.

Table 20. Is artwork included in teachers’ procedures?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Artwork is included in 90% of teachers’ procedures, 40% male and 50% female. 3 teachers, 10%, don’t make use of artwork as a step in their procedures.
Table 21. Do teachers support silent reading or reading aloud to teach textbooks’ reading passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Silent</th>
<th>Aloud</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>46.67</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As much as 46.67% of teachers support silent reading. 33.33% of interviewees are in favor of reading aloud. 20% apply both silent reading and reading aloud.

Table 22. Are reading techniques (e.g., skimming, scanning) taught while teaching reading passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>At Times</th>
<th>If Sugg. By Textbooks</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T%</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>56.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M%</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>26.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F%</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As much as 16.67% of the interviewees teach reading skills and techniques while teaching reading passages. 16.67% sometimes do it. 10% do it provided that it is suggested by textbooks. 56.67% never teach reading skills and techniques while teaching reading passages.

5. Discussion

5.1. Teachers’ knowledge of basic concepts of TEFL

Tables 1 and 2 which deal with teachers' awareness and knowledge of approach show that approximately 80% of selected teachers have little/no idea what the term “approach” means whereas this is absolutely necessary for a post-method teacher. In fact, as Brown (2001) states teachers should be familiar with approaches and techniques to be successful. Moreover, even those who know the term fail to name any recognized approach of teaching and learning.

The focus of Tables 3 and 4 is on Teaching Methods. The tables show that teachers can name and define what method is better than they do with the term approach. However, it is strange that more than 36% of the teachers have little/no idea about the term “method”
which does not seem to be due to post-method’s playing down of the concept of method. For one thing, again, they know little/nothing about the term post-method, as shown in Table 5.

To sum up the first section, it seems that teachers are familiar with the term method as well as the name of a number of them. Although some of them don't know the steps that each and every method includes, most teachers are more or less aware of techniques and activities suggested in each method.

5.2. Teachers’ awareness of general aspects of practice (class activities and steps)

The main questions posed in this section are whether teachers are generally aware of what they do in the class (e.g., purpose of class activities; effect of techniques used) and also whether teachers are conscious of the steps they normally follow to teach conversational dialogs and reading passages. Tables 6 and 7 show that only a small number of the teachers are aware of what they do in their classes. They have no idea what the exact purposes of different class activities are. They can't say theoretically if a certain technique which they normally use is effective and efficient for a certain purpose, but still they keep applying them. This issue indicates that teachers tend to follow prescriptivism. By prescriptivism it is typically meant that they follow things they have been said in TTCs or OJT classes. Prescriptivism is rejected in Kumaravadielu’s (2007) idea since he believes that in this era which he calls the post-method era, teachers should be more autonomous than before and they should respond to local problems with local solutions. TTC and OJT training are not valuable unless tasks, techniques or procedures presented are defined and their theoretical, methodological and psychological approaches and bases are also clarified so that teachers become empowered.

Mahdavi (2006) states that although TTC or OJT training are so valuable to familiarize teachers with new ideas and concepts, these classes should be held to improve teachers’ knowledge provided that new ideas and concepts are presented descriptively rather than prescriptively. He also adds that developing ideas about post-method frees teachers from top-down rules and can let them be the main decision maker in each teaching and learning context. Thus, based on the data from Tables 6 and 7, it seems that in the past it was the theoretician who issued commands as to how to teach and now only the commander has changed and so no teacher empowerment has taken place.

5.3. Teachers’ (sources of) knowledge of techniques

The purpose of Tables 8 and 9 is to find out about sources of teachers’ techniques, where the teachers have learned the techniques from, and whether or not they know the theoretical and methodological origin of the techniques they use. The findings show that teachers make use
of many different sources to pick out their techniques. Sources such as their own or others’ Experiences, TTC / OJT, which are sometimes called pre-service and in-service training, TEFL Books, intuition, and creativity. The need for prescriptive advice again is observed in this part. Teachers are not as creative as they are supposed to be while creativity plays an important role in the post-method notion of teaching. In fact, the less creativity is seen (see also Table 12), the more prescriptivism is expected which is not compatible with the post-methodology. Most teachers rely on pre-service or in-service courses which tend to be at least partially prescriptive. Few teachers study TEFL books to find their techniques. It is inferred that teachers prefer being told what to do rather than studying source books. When teachers cannot make their own decisions or have no idea what to do in different teaching contexts, they resort to prescriptive ideas of others which is quiet against the current beliefs in the field of language pedagogy (see Kumaravadielu 2007; Mahdavi, 2006; Brown 2007; Larsen Freeman 2000; Nunan 1991). More or less, they believe that creativity does not play a crucial role in helping teachers make their own decisions as to how to teach. Of course it is worth saying that, generally, creativity is more at the service of those teachers who are conscious of different teaching schools, approaches, methods, and techniques to develop their own teaching procedures and tasks which is in tune with what Nunan (1991), Kumaravadielu (2007), Rajagopalan (2008) suggest. Also, teachers are somewhat familiar with theoretical and methodological origin of the techniques they use. This knowledge is expected to derive from TTC / OJT as well as teaching methodology courses some of the teachers have studied as a course requirement.

5.4. Attitudes and preferences for TEFL

According to Table 10, most teachers believe that methods are dead or they are not as important as they used to be in their heydays because they are not applicable in every context. On this issue, teachers appear to think in the same way as Nunan (1991) who believes that there never was and probably will never be a method for all. That is why methods are more or less devalued nowadays and the focus of teaching is on developing classroom tasks and activities. Similarly, Block (2001) proposes that methods are not as important as they used to be in linguists’ ideas, but still teachers make use of methods when they are applicable and help teachers teach effectively.

According to Table 11, a smaller number of the teachers think that method can still be used depending on the context. Those who think methods are still valuable are generally in favor of CLT. There are two important issues here: the first is CLT is a not a method but an approach. In addition to this, CLT-oriented teachers don't make use of the idea of CLT much.
For them CLT means pair-work and group-work. Put differently, they tend to think CLT is a method the best part of which is the group-work technique. It is also interesting that they think TBLT and CBLT are methods of teaching.

According to Table 13, most teachers call the way they teach eclecticism. The term eclectic method may be interpreted in two main ways. One is principled eclecticism in which teachers are supposed to develop and/or pick out techniques from any sources and link them together through a broader thought pattern. To use an analogy, it can be said that for these teachers techniques look like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. The pieces are not important and valuable unless they are put in a framework which represents the larger picture. The second interpretation of eclecticism, which is an old one, is just to borrow techniques from any method and use them in any order. As mentioned before teachers aren't aware of TEFL approaches, so they are not in the right position to use them in a principled fashion. That is why teachers in this study seem to follow the second old-fashioned, eclectic pattern. Put differently, they seem to practice something that they call eclectic method although it is, in fact, putting techniques together that do not necessarily go together. Yet they would like to call their way of teaching eclectic because the term is fashionable now.

5.5. Preferences to teach dialogs and reading passages

According to Table 14, teachers strongly tend to call the way they teach conversational dialogs and reading passages eclectic. They typically learn how to teach these two types in pre-service or in service classes or they develop their teaching ways by putting individual techniques from different methods together. Moreover, as suggested by Table 15, teachers don't have a fixed procedure to teach conversational dialogs or reading passages. It may change from time to time although there is no mention what motivates changes to happen. To teach conversational dialogs and reading ability they follow some steps which are not fixed. Some steps can be omitted or added or if necessary the order of presenting them may vary, the first step can be the third step, for instance. Some teachers use six steps to teach a dialog while other teachers have three steps although most teachers’ steps generally range from five to seven. The issue is this variation does not appear to depend on differences from class to class. They seem to root in ignorance since teachers do not seem to be generally conscious of the steps they take to teach these bodies of language. As to the number of steps taken to teach reading passages, teachers could not provide any specific information.

Finally, according to Tables 16-22, the contrast and comparison concerning teachers’ preferences to teach conversational dialogs and reading comprehension suggest that in order to teach conversational dialogs, teachers make more use of pair and group work than reading
passages. Also, artwork is paid more attention in teaching dialogs. In both conversational dialogs and reading passages, problematic words are normally pre-taught, but this is done more in dialogs as reading passages have much more difficult words in comparison with reading passages. Skills like skimming and scanning aren't taught much concerning reading ability. In both conversational dialogs and reading passages, teachers are not conscious of all steps fully. Some teachers prefer silent reading and some reading aloud. Conversations are normally first read by teachers or tapes are played. In both conversational dialogs and reading passages the number of steps teachers take is not fixed.

6. Conclusion

The post-method approach suggests that methods aren’t as important now as they used to be in their own time. The post-method notion of language pedagogy is based on the direct relationship between theory and practice, like the unifying construct behind a jigsaw puzzle and the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. In other words, what Post-Method endorses is associating macro-strategies with micro-strategies. To have a kind principled eclecticism, techniques are needed which are pointless unless they are placed in a larger conceptual framework. The data show teachers’ low awareness of approaches. Teachers are more or less familiar with techniques coming from different sources but it seems that they are un-awareness of approaches. To get familiar with techniques, teachers generally make use of sources such as their own or others’ experience, teacher training classes, and a little of TEFL books. Teachers have good knowledge of methods, at the same time although they follow the current tendency to believe that methods are not important any longer. Also they believe that there is no best method. What is important is to see whether this belief comes from understanding or they believe so because this is the current fashion which may be called “bandwagonism”. The latter is more likely since most teachers choose CLT as the best method ever. As we know CLT is not a method. Besides group and pair work which are two techniques of CLT are typically taken to represent CLT almost totally. Concerning teaching materials like TEFL textbooks, they mostly follow what the books suggest. In short what is seen shows that most teachers have little knowledge of post-method.

To sum up, the study seems to suggest that teachers do what they want, right or wrong. They employ their own favorite techniques from different methods mixed with some CLT techniques, mainly group-work. Then they call it eclecticism to stay fashionable because they don’t have the minimum needs to follow principled eclecticism. They might be eclectic in a
very traditional way but this is too far away from the basic goals of post-methodology in which teachers were hoped to be principled and empowered.

References


Title
The Relationship between Verbal and Emotional Intelligences and Iranian EFL Learners’ Reading Comprehension Ability

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Abstract
Researchers all agree that reading comprehension is the main concern of education, literacy and academic setting. It is reported that Iranian students experience many difficulties reading texts in their text-books. Moreover, some variables including intelligences have been evaluated in academic setting, so far. The present study was an attempt to examine the relationship between two variables of verbal/linguistic and emotional intelligences on the skill of reading comprehension. Participants in this study were 30 male and 30 female undergraduate students who were attending TOEFL classes at the Iran Language Institute (ILI) of Shiraz section whose scores fell above the mean in a language proficiency test. The average age of these participants ranged from 22 to 31. Three instruments were used to accomplish the purpose of this study: TOEFL Language Proficiency Test (2004), Verbal Intelligence Test, and Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence (SSREI) scale. The results elicited from data manifested that there was a meaningful relationship between the subject’s verbal intelligence and their reading comprehension ability. Moreover, the results confirmed that linguistic intelligence is a relatively strong predictor of reading performance.
compared to emotional intelligence. Considering the analysis of emotional intelligence components, just two variables of Appraisal of Emotion in the Self (AES) and Utilization of Emotion for Problem Solving (UEPS) affected the learners’ reading comprehension positively.

**Keywords:** Multiple Intelligence, Verbal Intelligence, Emotional intelligence, Reading Comprehension

### 1. Introduction

According to Gardner (1999), intelligence is often thought to be one of the most significant predictors of language learning. Through the centuries, many philosophers and scientists have viewed human intelligence as being a single capacity that one is born with. Traditionally standardized Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) and aptitude test based on verbal fluency, wide vocabulary and computational skill were used as an instrument to measure intelligence. However, these tests cannot measure the value of a product or one’s ability to produce a product. In recent years, with progress in the realm of education and teaching, and with the arrival of psychology in academic society, learners have been regarded as individuals with all of their needs, challenges, pitfalls, and strengths who are remarkably different from one another. Children are different; they come to this world with different skills, abilities, personalities, preferences, and ways of doing things and with different exposure to oral or written language. Multiple Intelligence (MI) is a theory of intelligence put forth by Howard Gardner in 1983. MI theory suggests that all human beings possess different intelligences that are unique to each person and reflect different pathways of interacting with the world. The ultimate goal of MI is to increase students’ understanding about the skills that help them become happy and have successful life and to provide opportunities for authentic learning based on students’ needs interests and talents (Gardner, 1999).

In 1983, Gardner presented his famous theory of multiple intelligences and divided this notion into seven intelligences, and later he added two other intelligences to them. He mentioned that each individual intelligence performs as a distinct entity and these intelligences are related to each other simultaneously. Each intelligence addresses different learning styles and has a significant value in educational settings. Studying Gardner’s view of intelligence implies that each of us is a unique individual with unique patterns of intelligences that make us exceptional among others. Children are different from one another
even in the experience of learning; they process and represent knowledge differently. Besides, their learning style is unique. Moreover, intelligence and its related issues have been the concern of educators and those involved in it; however, the concept of intelligence, per se, has had an evolutionary trend. It has changed from a one-dimensional and single concept, g factor, to a multidimensional conceptualization with different facets, i.e. multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2006). Gardner’s theory deals with different domains of intelligences, including linguistic intelligence, logical/mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, bodily/kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and possibly existential intelligence. This trend of multiple intelligences evolved and finally reached a new kind of intelligence, namely, emotional intelligence, introduced by Mayer and Salovey (1990). They define emotional intelligence as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (Mayer & Salovey, 1990, p. 189). Different models of emotional intelligence are suggested, namely, ability-based model, mixed model (Bar-on model and Goleman model) and trait model of emotional intelligence. Besides, several questionnaires and measures have been devised in line with these models. Thus many studies have been done to seek out the effect of these concepts on many aspects of life, including learning activities and learners, in particular; that is, a lot of studies have been done on the role of each of these intelligences in academic achievement, social behavior, and academic success (Barchard, 2003; Bastian, Burns, & Nettelbeck, 2005; Fahim & Pishghadam, 2007).

One of the other skills that seem to be of utmost importance in the educational setting is reading comprehension. Compared to other skills, reading comprehension seems to have a pivotal role in our educational settings. This skill is considered important due to its role as a means of conveying information among individuals in the academic society. Reading comprehension can be enhanced through activation of various intelligences (multiple intelligences) in the classroom.

The significance of this study lies in the possibility that learners with high verbal and emotional intelligences would enhance their understanding of reading passages. If it is proved that high verbal or emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with the learner's reading comprehension, it will help educators and teachers pedagogically in devising some courses and teaching activities in a way that develops learners' comprehension of the text respectively, and therefore, their improvement in reading
comprehension.

2. Literature Review

Petrides and Furnham (2004) tried to determine the role of trait emotional intelligence in academic performance and deviant behavior of 650 British secondary school students with the average age of 16.5. Trait emotional intelligence moderated the relationship between cognitive ability and academic performance. Moreover, students with high scores in trait emotional intelligence had less deviant behavior such as frequent absences and being excluded from school. It was concluded that in implementation of this scale is a useful one in the realm of academic performance and measurement of deviant behaviors among disadvantaged adolescents.

Ayduk (2006) provided empirical evidence for the relation between verbal intelligence and self regulatory competence in which two groups of participants; 98 of the sample were middle school, low income boys, mostly of minority ethnicity, and 59 of the other group chosen from a treatment camp for boys with low income and with adjustment behavior problems. The relation between verbal intelligence and self-regulation was significant in such a way that high verbal intelligence was associated with lower aggression among boys with effective self-regulatory skill than the group with ineffective self-regulatory skill.

Shearer (2006) conducted a study, which examined the differences between multiple intelligences of high school students with their level of reading skill. The participants in the study were 215 ninth grade students from suburban U.S. high school who filled in Multiple Intelligences Developmental Assessment Scales (MIDAS) and completed Ohio Advanced Achievement Test. Some significant differences were observed in terms of range of reading skills and some components of multiple intelligences including linguistic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. The reading skill was divided into three ranges of low, mid and high. The result indicated that the high reading group is “personal achievement oriented” while the moderate group seemed to be more “socially focused” and the low readers are more “pragmatic, practical and action-oriented”. Some Meaningful differences were also observed between boys' and girls' multiple intelligences at the high and low reading levels.

Buschicks, Shipton, Winner, and Wise (2007) implemented multiple intelligences in a research project for increasing reading motivation among elementary and middle school students. This project was administered by four teachers with second, fourth, sixth, and
eighth graders. The teachers who taught the second and fourth grade level students taught all subjects implementing multiple intelligences; while the two others teaching sixth and eighth graders taught reading and language arts. The participants in this study were 133 students, including 26 second graders, 25 fourth graders, 46 sixth graders, and 33 eighth graders. First, teachers marked a tally sheet through observing students' behavior indicated in the list. Then, students' reading habits were also recognized. The result of the preliminary survey showed that in spite of learners' belief on their ability to read well and their enjoyment of being read by their teachers, not only did they not read well, but also did not enjoy reading for pleasure. They did not feel comfortable visiting a library or encountering a new word, as well. After implementation of multiple intelligences in the classroom, in another survey it was observed an improvement in the students' behavior (decrease in non-movement and movement behaviors). They also became skilled in selecting books and choosing activities that suited their dominant intelligences. There were also an increase in reading at home of the students; moreover, they did not show reluctance to encountering a new word or visiting a library any more.

Hafez (2010) attempted to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL students' multiple intelligences and their use of reading strategies. An attempt was made to find out which intelligence can predict learning strategies. The existence of relationships between the variables was investigated through the administration of Multiple Intelligences Development Assessment Scale (MIDAS), Strategy Inventory for Language learners (SILL), and Oxford Quick Placement (OQPT) on 60 Iranian senior male and female TEFL undergraduate students from Islamic Azad University of Shiraz. The results obtained from the correlational procedure analysis indicated that there was a meaningful relationship between the subjects’ MI and their use of reading strategies. Furthermore, multiple regressions showed that linguistic intelligence was the best predicator of reading strategies. The results of t-test showed that there was a relationship between MI and proficiency of students.

The study by Tahriri (2011) aimed at determining the effectiveness of an MI-inspired instruction in Iran. In particular, it sought to investigate whether MI-based instruction enhances EFL students’ language proficiency and language achievement in comparison with the instruction in which verbal-linguistic intelligence is activated. In addition, EFL instructors’ views concerning the implementation of the MI theory were surveyed. They were asked to complete an open-ended questionnaire. The findings revealed that only 40% of those who were already familiar with the MI theory had implemented it in their classes at least 'to some extent.' Concerning the applicability of the MI theory in an EFL context, 66.6
In this study the effect of verbal intelligence on the EFL learners' reading comprehension is investigated to provide some empirical data in terms of the effectiveness of each of these variables that were scrutinized somehow separately in different studies mentioned in this section. The study on each type of intelligence, here verbal intelligence, is something that has remained unexplored in Iran. Besides, no study has been reported in order to examine the role of verbal and emotional intelligences in English learners' language skills, especially reading comprehension.

The main objective of the present study is to investigate whether or not there is a possible relationship between verbal/linguistic intelligence as well as emotional intelligence of senior language learners in reading comprehension ability.

3. Research Questions

1) Is there any relationship between the Iranian learner’s verbal intelligence and their reading comprehension?

2) Is there any relationship between the Iranian EFL learners’ emotional intelligence and their reading comprehension’s ability?

3) Do verbal and emotional intelligences interact in shaping reading comprehension of the Iranian EFL learners?

4. Method

4.1 Participants

Participants in this study were 30 male and 30 female undergraduate students who were attending TOEFL classes at the Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Shiraz section whose scores fell above the mean in a language proficiency test. Those students whose scores did not meet the prerequisite criterion were stepped outside the experiment. The average age of these participants ranged from 22 to 31.

4.2 Instruments

Three instruments were used to accomplish the purpose of this study: TOEFL Language Proficiency Test (2004), Verbal Intelligence Test, and Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence (SSREI) scale; each is explained in tandem. The instrument utilized to examine the language proficiency level of students and simultaneously their level of comprehension in reading skill was an actual TOEFL proficiency test (2004). It consisted of 90 multiple-choice questions on skills and sub skills of grammar and reading comprehension. The grammar
section, including fill-in the blank, multiple-choice items and detecting and selecting the ungrammatical items, contained 40 items. The second instrument used to measure the students' verbal/linguistic intelligence was a ten-item linguistic intelligence test, which was part of a multiple intelligence questionnaire based on Gardner's nine profiles of intelligences, namely, linguistic/verbal, logical/mathematical, musical, bodily/kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic and existential intelligences. In order to avoid any comprehension problem, the original test, which was in English, was translated into Persian. The verbal intelligence section of the test used in this study was a ten-item test. The reliability of this test was calculated through Cronbach alpha ($\alpha = 0.55$). In order to evaluate the participants' emotional intelligence, Schutte, (1998) self-report emotional intelligence scale (SSRES) was used. This questionnaire includes 33 items with a five-point Likert scale, three of which are negatively stated. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach’s Alpha method, yielding an index of 0.87.

4.3 Procedure
In order to assess the students' knowledge of English and their level of reading comprehension, the proficiency test was administered to the participants. This two section test (i.e. Grammar and reading comprehension sections) was answered in the allocated time (60 minutes) by the participants. The purpose of reading comprehension section in the proficiency was to evaluate the reading skills of participants. Then the same participants answered Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Scale (SSRES). The results showed their level of emotional intelligence and the ten-item verbal intelligence questionnaire was used to assess their levels in the domain of linguistic intelligence, respectively. All of these questionnaire were administered in one session at the language institute with no time limit and the administration of all the instruments took about eighty minutes. During test administration, if some points were problematic for the students, they were explained to them in Persian by the researcher.

4.4 Data Analysis
In order to calculate and analyze the results, the sum of different items related to six-factor components of emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) classification (ERS, EE, ERO, AEO, AES, and UEPS) was calculated to find the effect of each of these components on the variable of reading comprehension, and verbal intelligence of the learners. The participants' emotional intelligence scores, ranging from 33 to 165, as well as their scores on the verbal intelligence test, ranging from 10 to 50, were also calculated. After the required data were obtained from the tests, Spearmen's rank correlation coefficient was used to
measure the relationship between the two sets of data. Having calculated the results of the proficiency test, the emotional intelligence test, and the verbal intelligence test, the researchers analyzed the results through SPSS program version 15. The results obtained from statistical analyses are presented below.

5. Results and Discussion

Students' verbal and emotional intelligence were taken as two independent variables. Then their scores on reading comprehension were also taken as the dependent variable. Therefore, the relationship between the above-mentioned variables and this dependent variable was examined through scatter plot to find whether there is any relationship between verbal intelligence and reading comprehension, and emotional intelligence and reading comprehension score respectively (Figures 1 & 2).

*Figure 1 Verbal and Reading*

[Scatter plot showing a positive correlation between verbal intelligence and reading comprehension.]

*Figure 2 Emotional and Reading*

[Scatter plot showing a negative and low correlation between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension.]

The first graph depicted a positive correlation between verbal intelligence and reading comprehension. The second graph (figure 2) showed a relation between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension, but this relationship is negative and low. To answer the first question, Spearman’s correlation was used to show if there is any relationship between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension. The correlation between these
two variables is significant (-0.12). That is, the correlation between emotional intelligence and the learners' reading comprehension is negative and low, which was evident through scatter plot. Spearman's rho correlation was also used to find the relationship between the verbal intelligence and reading comprehension (Table 1). As Table 4.3 indicates, the correlation between verbal intelligence and reading comprehension was (0.24). Through looking at the p-value (0.00) it could be inferred that the correlation coefficient was significant; and this correlation was positive.

Table 1. Correlation between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
<th>Reading comprehension</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-0.12**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
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Table 2. Correlation between verbal intelligence and reading comprehension

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<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
<th>Reading comprehension</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>N</td>
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</table>
The results revealed that in order to have a good command of reading skill, students were required to have a high level of verbal intelligence. The correlation between this variable and reading comprehension was positive ($r = 0.24$, Table 2), however, multiple regression analysis depicted that only 10% of the variance in the students' reading comprehension scores was explained by the two variables of verbal and emotional intelligence. Moreover, verbal intelligence is a better predictor of reading comprehension's score ($\beta = 0.32$) compared to emotional intelligence ($\beta = -0.26$).

One of the questions of this study considered the interaction of emotional and verbal intelligences in shaping reading comprehension ability. The results indicated that there was a high and positive correlation between verbal and emotional intelligence. The results are in line with those of Ayduk’s (2006), in that he provided empirical evidence for the relation between verbal intelligence and emotional intelligence. The relation between verbal intelligence and self-regulation was significant in such a way that high verbal intelligence was associated with lower aggression among boys with effective self-regulatory skill than the group with ineffective self-regulatory skill.

The findings of this study support Gardner's claim (2006) that interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences are both two aspects of the intelligences that he introduced. These kinds of intelligences can be related to the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) depending on how it is measured. That is, emotional intelligence can be associated either with intelligence or personality. Visser (2006) reported that ability measures of emotional intelligence was correlated more with cognitive aspect of intelligence rather than the personality aspect; On the other hand, a self-report inventory of emotional intelligence are correlated more with the personality aspect, and descriptive aspect of one's behavior rather than cognitive ability. Gardner (2006) believes emotional intelligence or emotional sensitivity is only part of both inter and intrapersonal intelligences. Both inter and intrapersonal intelligences accompany with one another in most circumstances, to the extent that it can be inferred that they are related to each other. The former focuses on the external world, while the latter look at the internal aspect of the self. In this sense, one can conclude that self-awareness and some knowledge with regard to the self may be affected by others' judgments and beliefs. Visser (2006) views learning as a process that is achieved both "inter mentally" and "intra mentally". In other words, it is facilitated with interaction with others and exchange of information between the minds and interaction between the self and his brain. Gardner's (2006) views personal intelligence as having an access to one's emotions and
feeling, discriminate among them, express it in words and base one's behavior on understanding them. This view is closely related to emotional intelligence with the subtle difference in the degree of relation to the others, in the sense that, in emotional intelligence the focus is on both the self and others and the feelings is used as a means of motivation and social behavior, whereas in personal intelligence the focus is on the self. And these two kinds of intelligences are similar to what Goleman (1995) introduced as emotional intelligences. Putting together, emotional and verbal intelligences are both two kinds of intelligences that can be related to each other. In this study we found the interaction between verbal intelligence and emotional intelligence is significant (sig=0.001 < 0.05). Therefore, put it another way, verbal and emotional intelligence are not separate from each other. Moreover, as Table 3 shows emotional intelligence is a good predictor of verbal intelligence (beta=0.42).

Table 3. Correlation between verbal and emotional intelligence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Verbal Intelligence</th>
<th>Emotional Intelligence</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.42**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.001</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>0.42**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
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<td>N</td>
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</table>

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

5. Conclusion

According to Gardner’s theory (2006), not every language learner learns in the same way. Generally speaking, it can be said that an understanding of multiple intelligence theory broadens teachers’ awareness of their students' knowledge and skills and enable them to look at each student from the perspective of strengths and potential. It would beneficial to understand how all human beings manifest intelligence in different ways. While all humans have the capacity for all of the different types of intelligence, some have stronger linguistic/verbal intelligence, while others have stronger logical, mathematical, spatial, interpersonal or body/kinesthetical intelligence. Gardner does not only bring about new understanding of intelligence but he also opened up the significance of understanding itself.
Understating the world along with physical world, biological world, human world and the world of artifacts is what he drew our attention to. Gardner (1999) stated the meaning of true understanding is the ability to demonstrate, exhibit, perform, or explain in a variety of forms. This can be made possible by setting explicit understanding goals, specifying the correlated performances of understanding, and sharing these perspectives with the students. Moreover, multiple intelligence theory provides a way of understanding intelligence, which teachers can use as a guide for developing classroom activities that address multiple ways of learning and knowing. Consistent with the current literature on intelligence, it is believed that our students have a broad range of capacities, only some of which are valued, and conscious development of broader capacities would better prepare our students for reading and understanding of a text as well as engaging them more effectively in boosting their reading comprehension ability. Multiple intelligence theory in fact gives us a more egalitarian perspective towards giftedness. This is a revolutionary idea which has outstanding pedagogical implications. When it comes to classroom, the point is “how the intelligences can best be mobilized to achieve specific pedagogical goals (Gardner, 2006, p. 11). This is a much-desired goal that should be taken into consideration. Gardner’s question is a much significant question to which a well-grounded answer is in fact an answer to a multitude of unsettled issues and controversies in the area of language teaching and learning.

5.1 The MI Teacher

As Armstrong (2009) states a teacher in an MI classroom contrasts sharply with a teacher in a traditional linguistic/logical-mathematical classroom. In the traditional classroom, the teacher lectures while standing at the front of the classroom, writes on the blackboard, asks students questions about the assigned reading or handouts, and waits while students finish their written work. In the MI classroom, while keeping her educational objective firmly in mind, the teacher continually shifts her method of presentation from linguistic to spatial to musical and so on, often combining intelligences in creative ways. The MI teacher may spend part of the time lecturing and writing on the blackboard at the front of the room. This, after all, is a legitimate teaching technique. Teachers have simply been doing too much of it. The MI teacher, however, also draws pictures on the blackboard or shows a video clip to illustrate an idea. She often plays music at some time during the day, either to set the stage for an objective, to make a point about the objective, or to provide an environment for studying the objective. The MI teacher provides hands-on experiences, whether they involve getting students up and moving about, passing an artifact around to bring to life the material studied, or having students build something tangible to reveal their understanding. The MI teacher
also has students interacting with each other in different ways (e.g., in pairs, small groups, or large groups); plans time for students to engage in self-reflection, undertake self-paced work, or link their personal experiences and feelings to the material being studied; and creates opportunities for learning to occur through living things.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

The result of the present study will be useful for both EFL and ESL learners and teachers. Intelligence models have provided us with opportunities to look differently at curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This study may prove a useful contribution to our understanding of teaching English as a foreign language. In particular, findings will benefit Iranian teachers who are responsible for providing effective learning pedagogy for students. Additionally, findings of this study will be beneficial for the authorities in the Ministry of Education in Iran, who develop policy and provide curriculum. With regard to the two intelligences, it is believed that our students have a wide range of capabilities, only some of which are valued, and conscious development of these useful capabilities can enhance the students' performance and prepare them for reading and understanding of the text. The clear implication of the study is, therefore, that the teachers had better pay attention to affective dimensions of language learning. They, also, should train the students to increase their vocabulary knowledge and to manage their feelings and emotions efficiently. Further, if we believe that emotional intelligence can be increased, language policy makers are expected to raise both verbal and emotional intelligences of their learners and teachers and the value of learning emotional competencies should be acknowledged.

This study aimed to assess the students' verbal and emotional intelligence in order to study their relationship with the reading comprehension of the EFL students. Naturally, there are limitations in a study like this, the most important of which is related to sampling and data collection, since working with such a small number of students in a limited level, namely EFL learners in the institutes, limits the generalizibility of the results to some extent. Furthermore no study was done on the other group of learners, i.e. the EFL learners at universities, at the same level. Therefore, there is a limitation for generalizing the results of this study even on all EFL learners.

This study opens up several lines of enquiry in the light of the findings of the current study, these areas deserve exploration:

One domain which needs further investigation can be carried out to examine the relationship of verbal and emotional intelligence with other skills of language proficiency including listening, speaking, and writing. A study can also be conducted to assess the

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relationship of verbal and emotional intelligence with reading comprehension of EFL students at universities. Another line of enquiry is concerned with research to investigate the relationship of verbal and emotional intelligence with reading comprehension at other levels, namely intermediate and elementary levels, of the students, as well. Moreover, another study can be carried out to examine the relationship of other components of multiple intelligences with each skill of language proficiency. The way intelligence type interacts with other affective, social and cognitive factors is another area worthy of further investigations.

References


Title

Digitized and Non-Digitized Language Assessment:
A Contrastive Study of Iranian EFL Language Learners

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Abstract

Computer technology has influenced the realm of language teaching and testing so drastically that no language teaching program could be imagined nowadays without the use of digitized software and multimedia. This study aims at investigating Iranian EFL learners' performance on paper-based test compared with their performance on computer-based test while considering their attitudes.
towards the computer and learning language through computer. The sample selected for this study consisted of 205 Iranian male and female EFL learners, having been selected randomly from some language institutes and colleges, their age ranging from 17 to 27 years. To materialize the objectives of the study, the researchers used three research instruments: a test in two versions, a questionnaire and an interview. The Objective Placement Test (one computer-based and the other paper-based) including, listening, reading and language use was given to participants in two separate administrations. The format of the computer-based version of the test was designed by the researchers so that it could be the same as that of the paper-based version and could have the same level of practicality. The questionnaire was based on Min (1998), designed to measure the participants' attitudes towards the computer in general and computer-based language learning in particular. To confirm the questionnaire data, an interview was also randomly conducted with 20 learners. It was found that Iranian EFL learners are mostly exposed to paper-based tests. The findings revealed that although learners showed positive attitude towards computer-based tests and digitized language learning, they performed better on the paper-based test than on the computer-based test.

**Keywords**: Computer-based language learning, Computer-based test, EFL learners' attitudes, Paper-based test.

1. Introduction

Language testing practice evolved in the 1960s and 70s, essentially by a theoretical view of language ability as consisting of skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation), and as an approach to test design. Also, language testing research was dominated by the hypothesis that language proficiency consisted of a single unitary trait and a quantitative, statistical research methodology (Oller, 1979). The 1980s experienced other areas of development in language testing; throughout this period, second language acquisition research inclined language testers to uncover a variety of factors such as field independence/dependence (Chapelle, 1988), academic discipline and background knowledge (Hale, 1988) and discourse domains (Douglas and Selinker, 1985) on language test performance. In the 1990s, on the other hand, the field of language testing witnessed expansion in a number of areas: a) research methodology (criterion-referenced measurement, structural equation modeling, qualitative research
approaches, generalizability theory, and item response theory), b) practical advances (testing cross-cultural pragmatics, testing languages for specific purposes, testing vocabulary, and computer-based assessment), c) research into factors that affect performance on language tests (characteristics of the testing procedure, the test-taking process, and characteristics of test-takers), d) performance assessment, and e) ethical issues (ethics of test use and professionalization of the field) (Bachman, 2007).

Inspired by the developments stated above, computer-based testing has been increasingly applied around the world (Chapelle, 2007). Developments in language testing research in the past twenty years have witnessed progress in using computer technology in education and in language assessment including developing, scoring, administration, storing, handling test data, and performing sophisticated statistical analysis. The widespread use of computer technology in the delivery of language tests and the availability of personal computers, along with increased computer familiarity have made the administration of computer-based tests feasible for the first time on a large scale (Douglas, 2007). By the same token, advances in multimedia and web technology offer the potential for designing and developing computer-based tests that are more authentic and interactional than their paper-and-pencil counterparts. For instance, in the computer-based TOEFL test administrations, a test taker would receive test items on the computer screen or based on a set order of items (as in a paper-and-pencil test). In both of these ways, the test-taker would need to have the computer literacy such as clicking, scrolling, highlighting, etc., in order to be able to read the test items and record the answers. Hence, the issue of the administration of computer test is under question if the test is required in areas where such computer skills and computer-based tests are relatively new or non-existent as they are in the context of the present study. Furthermore, other relevant issues need to be taken into account. For example, cost is a concern when the paper-and-pencil version of the test is replaced with computer-based version. Geographical consideration, along with the comparability of computer-based and paper-and-pencil tests, is a matter of concern as well. Thus, if these are the major concerns, then technology with computer-based testing may raise more questions than answers (Chapelle and Douglas, 2006; Douglas, 2000).

However, there remains a split among the researchers in the field as to whether test takers perform better on the computer-based tests or prefer them over the paper-and-pencil ones (Sawaki, 1999; Jamieson, 2005). On the other hand, a number of studies have suggested that there is little difference between learners’ performance on paper-and-pencil language
tests (PBTs) and computer-based tests (CBTs) by groups of test takers (Breland, Lee, and Muraki, 2004; Coniam, 2006; Wolfe and Manalo, 2005). Apart from these, the researchers have not been able to find a single study directly investigating the effect of computer literacy on CBT performance, and the upshot is that we still do not know with any certainty how computer technology in language tests affects individual test takers performance.

Perhaps the most ubiquitous concern raised about technology for language assessment is that examinees’ performance on a CALT may fail to reflect the same construct as what other forms of assessment would measure. The potential problem addresses the inferences that can be made about examinees’ ability in terms of their test performance. Of course, if a computer-based test yields results which are significantly different from the results of a parallel paper-and-pencil test, it is a threat only to the extent that score users intend the two scores to be equivalent. This unstated aim typically underlies the discussion of the potential threat, and therefore, the following is one way educational measurement specialists have expressed the problem: “If the fact that items are presented on a computer screen, rather than on a piece of paper, changes the mental processes required to respond correctly to the item, the validity of the inferences based on these scores may be changed” (Wainer, Dorans, Eignor, Flaugher, Green, Mislervy, Steinberg, and Thissen, 2000, p. 16). As a case in point, Canale (1986) stated that computer use held out the prospect of providing a better means for measuring different language constructs than that which was attainable through traditional test methods. However, research and development has had the intention of focusing on the goals of increasing efficiency and authenticity of testing, whereas to date few researchers have explored the intriguing question of how the computer might be used to assess different abilities, or constructs, than those currently assessed by traditional methods.

According to Douglas and Hegelheimer (2007), the shift from paper-based to computer-based tests must be considered to attain a better measure of the construct, not simply a more efficient one, which brings us to a consideration of the potential of computers to provide what Jamieson (2005) called “computerized tasks that better represent authentic language use” (p. 233). Furthermore, Chapelle and Douglas (2006) have suggested that “communicative language ability needs to be conceived in view of the joint role that language and technology play in the process of communication” (p. 108), and recommended that language ability needs to be defined in terms of an interface between language and technology: “the ability to select and deploy appropriate language through the technology that are germane to a situation” (p. 107).
2. Controversies on PBTs & CBTs

Perhaps the most tangible way of investigating the issue of whether examinees perform well on a computer-based test for the wrong reason (i.e., differential test performance due to factors other than differences in the ability to be measured) is through a study that compares examinees’ performance on two tests which are the same except for the mode of delivery, i.e., one form of the test is delivered as a paper-and-pencil test and the other is administered by the computer. Amongst the first large-scale testing programs in the United States to transform their tests to computer-based testing, the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) carried out a number of comparisons on test items, sections, and total test scores in a research program aimed to investigate the comparability of the computer-based and paper-and-pencil forms of the GRE. In several studies which obtained test performance data from examinees who had taken both the computer-based form and the paper-and-pencil version of the GRE, researchers found very few and slight differences that were thought to warrant further investigation of mode effects, but they did not find general, obvious, and consistent mode effects that would suggest different inferences could be made from the two forms of the GRE (Schaeffer, Reese, Steffen, McKinley & Mills, 1993).

Chapelle and Douglas (2006) believed that learners’ performance on a computer-based test might fail to reflect the same construct as what would be measured by other forms of assessment. With regard to this statement, studies comparing performance on CBT with that on the alternative delivery format, i.e., PBT (Choi et al., 2003, Coniam, 2006) have indicated rather small or mixed differences. Coniam (2006), for instance, explored some significant differences in learners’ performance on a listening test administered by a computer compared with that on a paper-based listening test resembling the CBT version. In a study conducted by Taylor, Jamieson, and Eignor (2000) local differences in computer use by the learners were reported. Developers of computer-based tests should be cautious about carefully investigating differences in computer familiarity among their prospective test takers. In a similar vein, Cumming et al (2006) worked out major discrepancies in the essays composed by integrated prompts compared to those produced in response to the traditional TOEFL essay. It might be inferred that their findings provide justification for including both task types on the iBT. Another study made a similar comparison applying a range of empirical methods that yielded complementary perspectives. In an effort to find out evidence, Choi, Kim, and Boo (2003) compared the paper-based language test with the computer version of the Test of English Proficiency developed by Seoul National University conducting content
analysis, correlational analyses, ANOVA, and confirmatory factor analysis. Findings demonstrated considerable similarities between the two versions (PBT and CBT) of each of the different parts of the test, with the grammar sections showing the greatest similarities and the reading section displaying the largest differences.

It may be that if the profession is to appreciate the significance of detailed results of studies explaining differences between CALT (Computer Assisted Language Testing) and other forms of tests, statistical differences need to be found in test scores. As both Sawaki’s and Chalhoub-Deville and Deville’s (1999) reviews of research on CALT point out, despite the many CALT projects, no published research has attempted to investigate questions of score comparability. Chalhoub-Deville and Deville conclude that “research in L2 is still scarce regarding the comparability of PBT and CBT” (1999, p. 282). This conclusion may imply that comparability research is forthcoming, and indeed, some studies have appeared since then. However, considering that computer-based L2 testing has been going on for at least two decades, we have to question why such research has not played a more prominent role in test developers’ agendas. The aforementioned studies on the comparability of learners’ performance on PBTs and CBTs on the one hand and the fact that the current study is the first large scale research on CALT in Iran on the other, the researchers were motivated to do this significant study in the context of Iran. Consequently, the researchers try to provide logical answers to the following research questions:

**RQ1:** Is there any statistically significant difference between Iranian learners’ performance on a test administered by the computer and their performance on the traditional paper-based test?

**RQ2:** Which type of tests (paper-based tests or computer-based tests) is used more frequently by Iranian EFL learners?

**RQ3:** Do Iranian learners’ attitudes towards computer, attitudes towards learning language through computers have any effect on their performance on the CBT test?

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Participants

The participants were 205 undergraduate university students as well as some English learners from different language institutes. The undergraduate university students were selected from Mofid University in Qom (a provincial city located nearly in the center of Iran). Instructors agreed to cooperate and get the consent of their students to partake in the study. The students
were pursuing their bachelor’s degree in English translation as this is one of the most popular undergraduate degrees offered by Iranian universities across the country. Nonetheless, given that the participants were not selected randomly from all of the English departments across the country, the researchers may not be able to make strong claims about the generalizability of the findings. The participants ranged in age from 17 to 27. It is noteworthy that a questionnaire and two test types—computer based and paper based tests were administered to 280 students, but 80 students were removed from the analysis because they had either missing questionnaires, incomplete PBTs or CBTs.

3.2 Instrumentation
In order to measure the participants’ attitudes towards computer-enhanced instructional program of the English, the researchers used Min’s (1998) questionnaire. The first section of the questionnaire provided information about its purpose and elicited background knowledge on the participants’ age, gender and educational level. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 30 items to gauge the learners’ attitudes towards learning English through computer. In effect, the questionnaire comprised of 30 items, 15 of which measured attitudes toward computer and the other 15 items measured participants’ attitudes toward learning English through computer. What is more, the researchers distributed the 70-item Objective Placement Test developed by Jack C. Richards. The Objective Placement Test (both computer-based and paper-based test) has three sections: Listening, Reading, and Language Use. The participants were allowed 50 minutes to complete the test.

3.3 Procedures
In the beginning phase of the study, the Objective Placement Test (paper-based mode of assessment) was given to the participants. This test has three sections: In section I, the Listening section, nine conversations were played and participants were supposed to answer one or more questions about each one. The participants read, listened and answered the questions after the conversation ended. The participants were briefed about how to answer each section of the test on the answer sheet. They had 15 minutes to complete this section. Section II, the Reading section, has several short passages. After reading each passage, they were required to choose the correct answer for each question and mark it on the answer sheet. They had 20 minutes to complete this section. Section III, the Language Use section, has 30 items. They had 15 minutes to complete this section. After a two-week timeperiod, the second phase of the study took place. The participants were first asked to fill out the questionnaire of attitude towards computer and learning language through computer, and then they were given the Objective Placement Test (computer-based mode of assessment).
The researchers in the present study designed the software of the Objective Placement Test which took one month to develop. Having piloted the Objective Placement Test by 10 experts, the researchers administered this version of test among the participants. To confirm the questionnaire findings, 20 participants were selected out of a total number of 205 learners who filled out the questionnaire and they agreed to be interviewed. The interviews, which were limited to 5-12 minutes to keep it manageable, were conducted in Persian individually after the questionnaire data were collected.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 Analysis of the first research question
To probe the first question of the study, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted. As can be seen from table1, the F Observed value comparing the students performance on paper- and computer- based tests is 6.40 (P = .012 < 0.05). The results of MANOVA showed a significance difference between the students mean scores on paper-based and computer-based tests.

Table1. Multivariate Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>6.408a</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.968</td>
<td>6.408a</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>6.408a</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>6.408a</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base * AttCompLevel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.214a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.998</td>
<td>.214a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.214a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.214a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base * AttLearnLevel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai's Trace</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.549a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.994</td>
<td>.549a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.549a</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>196.000</td>
<td>.578</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Analysis of the second research question

As displayed in Table 2, descriptive statistics showed that the Iranian EFL undergraduate, in the main, performed better on paper-based tests because the mean score of students who took the paper-based exceeds that of their performance on computer-based tests. (M= 41.54)

Table 2. Base: Descriptive statistics of learners’ performance on tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure: MEASURE_1</th>
<th>Base</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>41.540a</td>
<td>1.606</td>
<td>38.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>38.879a</td>
<td>1.530</td>
<td>35.860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Based on modified population marginal mean.

4.3 Analysis of the third research question

As for the third question of the study, the results in Table 3 show that the F Observed value for the effect of the students’ attitude toward computer on their performance on paper and computer based proficiency tests is 1.92 (P = .14 > 0.05). Based on these results it can be concluded that the students’ attitudes toward computer does not have any significant effect on their performance on the proficiency test.
3. Table 3. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Measure: MEASURE_1
Transformed Variable: Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>133125.947</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>133125.947</td>
<td>552.685</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttCompLevel</td>
<td>926.115</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>463.058</td>
<td>1.922</td>
<td>.149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttLearnLevel</td>
<td>853.366</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>426.683</td>
<td>1.771</td>
<td>.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttCompLevel * AttLearnLevel</td>
<td>558.917</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>279.459</td>
<td>1.160</td>
<td>.316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>47210.778</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>240.871</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed in Table 4, the mean score for low, moderate, and high attitudes toward computer mean scores are 43.38, 36.65, and 42.37 respectively.

4.4 AttCompLevel

Measure: MEASURE_1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AttComp Level</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>43.380&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.313</td>
<td>36.846</td>
<td>49.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>36.655</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>32.709</td>
<td>40.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>42.371&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2.697</td>
<td>37.051</td>
<td>47.691</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Based on modified population marginal mean.

The F Observed value for the effect of the students’ attitude towards learning through computer on their performance on paper and computer based proficiency tests is 1.77 (P = .17 > 0.05). Based on these results it can be concluded that there students attitude toward learning through computer does not have any significant effect on their performance on the proficiency test.

As displayed in Table 5, the mean score for low, moderate, and high attitude toward computer mean scores are 41.26, 42.71, and 35.40 respectively.
4.5. AttLearnLevel

Measure: MEASURE_1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AttLearn Level</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>41.265a</td>
<td>3.574</td>
<td>34.217 - 48.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>42.712</td>
<td>1.041</td>
<td>40.658 - 44.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>35.400a</td>
<td>3.470</td>
<td>28.556 - 42.244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Based on modified population marginal mean.

In sum, the following results were reported by the researchers:

There is not any significant interaction between;

a. Type of test and attitude toward computer (f = .21, p = .80 > .05)

b. Type of test and attitude toward learning through computer (F = .54, p = .57 > .05)

c. Attitude toward computer and Attitude toward learning through computer (F = 1.16, p = .31 > .05)

d. Type of test, Attitude toward computer and Attitude toward learning through computer (F = .19, p = .82 > .05)

5. Conclusion

The results of the current study demonstrated significant difference between the Iranian EFL learners mean scores on paper-based test and computer-based counterpart. These learners performed better on paper-based tests (M=41.54). These findings are in contrast with the research in the previous studies, which claim the preferences of the learners toward computer-based test administration rather than traditional paper based. (Chapelle, 2007; Douglas, 2007; Jamieson, 2005; Canale, 1986; Douglas & Hegelheimer, 2007). Nonetheless, it supports the literature in the sense that there is a significant difference in learners’ performance on a computer-based test compared with that on a paper-based test favoring paper-based test. (Coniam, 2006; Cumminget al, 2006). Therefore, these disparities in administration of the test provide support for the claim mentioned in the literature as there are disparities among the scholars in the field regarding whether test takers either perform better or preferred computer-based as opposed to traditional paper-based tests. (Sawaki, 1999; Bachman, 2000; Wolfe & Manalo, 2005). Therefore, the researchers would expect to include
both modes of presentation in the language program. However, the results provide justification for including paper-based test administration.

Moreover, computer technology has continued into the 21st century as a critical and powerful tool for communication. However, rapid technological advancement can create a tendency towards a blind acceptance of innovation and the belief that technology will solve all problems (Kim, 1997). This view can create obstacles, particularly if educators fail to act and react to the needs of learners. In Iran, it is perhaps becoming more acceptable to learn English language using computers. Thus, students who do not hold positive attitudes towards learning through computers will be at a distinct disadvantage. Based on the results of the current study, the Iranian EFL learners showed positive attitudes towards learning through computers but they performed better on the paper-and-pencil based test administration.

The purpose of the current study was to perform an effective comparison of computerized assessment and a traditional based paper and pencil assessment in Iran. The study is unique in Iranian EFL context because it is the first that look into testing by computer juxtaposed traditional paper and pencil formats. There simply has not been research that compares these two groups in Iran. The findings of this study are in line with the claims mentioned by Canale (1986) and Laurier (1991) who pointed out that the challenge in applying technology to language assessment would be to figure out the benefits and limitations of the technologies in the context. One of the major limitations is test takers’ apprehension about computer literacy and skills that might affect Iranian learners’ performance. Lack of provision, cost, practicality, time, teachers’ training and learners’ briefing are among some limitations hinder the learners’ preference for better performance on paper-based tests. Regarding the learners’ computer literacy, Warschauer (1998) argues that computer literacy is of vital importance for success.

The results of the study showed the positive attitudes towards computerized language program. The learners reported the followings as the main reasons for their positive attitudes: ease of response, use of individually controlled time limits, and feedback. On the other hand, we have students who express anxiety as the main reason which impedes the learners’ performance on computerized assessment effectively.

References


Title

On the Effects of Gender, Age, Status, Years of EFL Learning, and Proficiency Level on the Field-Independency/Dependency of EFL Learners and Instructors

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the effects of gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, and proficiency level on the field-independency/dependency of EFL learners and instructors at language institutes to see whether any of the above variables can predict the field-independency/dependency of EFL learners and instructors. To this aim, 144 randomly-selected participants from three different proficiency levels of elementary, intermediate, and advanced, both EFL students and instructors participated in this study. The instruments used consisted of a background questionnaire and a field independent/dependent checklist (Wyss, 2002). The results of data analyses revealed that males were found to be more field dependent than females. Second, a significant difference in the field dependency of EFL learners and instructors was obtained. Third, students were found to be more field dependent than their instructors. Also, age did not seem to have any effects on the field independency but on the field dependency of EFL learners and instructors. Fifth, years of EFL learning correlated with the field dependency of EFL learners and instructors. Moreover, considering the proficiency level of EFL learners, the less proficient the students, the more field dependent they are.
Finally, gender and age of EFL learners and instructors were found as the predictors of field dependency. Males were found to be more field dependent than females. Teenagers were more field dependent than adults indicating that as the age increases, the level of field dependency decreases.

**Keywords**: Age, Field independent, Field dependent, Gender, Proficiency level.

1. **Introduction**

Imagine you have just arrived at 2 A.M. at the airport of a foreign country whose language you are not familiar with. Nobody is available to help you. What will you do? Your response to this question will largely depend on your "cognitive styles", your general predisposition toward processing new information or challenges in a particular way (Skehan, 1989). For instance, you will not get easily flustered by your unfortunate circumstances if you are "ambiguity tolerant". If you are "reflective", you will be patient. If you are "field independent", you will be able to focus on the relevant details and not be distracted by unnecessary details (Brown, 1994).

Generally, the way we learn things and particularly our approach to deal with problems depend on a mysterious link between personality and cognition which is referred to as cognitive style. Cognitive styles related to an educational context are generally referred to as "learning styles". Learning styles are cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to their learning environment (Keefe, 1979).

There are as many learning styles as there are learners. Nevertheless, only a few of the possible learning styles have received the attention of L2 researchers in recent years. One of the well-received areas of the attention is "field independence" (FI) or "field dependence" (FD).

The present paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the characteristics of field independent/dependent individuals. Section 3 explains the factors affecting the field independency/dependency. The previous studies conducted are reviewed in section 4. Section 5 illustrates the methodology used in the study followed by data analysis in section 6. The paper ends by the discussion and conclusion offered in section 7.

2. **Field independence/Field dependence**
FI/FD refers to how people perceive, memorize, remember, and process the information as they can influence on the way learners learn a language. So, learners can be divided into two groups of field dependent versus field independent based on their cognitive styles. The following table adopted from Witkin, Moore, Goodenough & Cox (1977) outlines different characteristics of FI and FD learners.

**Table 1 Differences between Field-dependent / Field-independent Learners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Independent Learners</th>
<th>Field Dependent Learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytic, competitive, independent, and individualistic</td>
<td>Sensitive to environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self defined goals, strategies, and reinforcement</td>
<td>Easily influenced by prevailing field or context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsically motivated</td>
<td>Group oriented, global, and socially-sensitive/ prefer group project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor social skills/ prefer individual project</td>
<td>Prefer externally defined goals and reinforcements, and clear definitions of desired outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-organized and structured in their learning</td>
<td>Extrinsically motivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous in restructuring skills</td>
<td>Less structured, less autonomous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FI learners do not see the big picture. While they may get “stuck” on unfamiliar vocabulary or ambiguous grammar structures, their FD counterparts will get the gist of a written or spoken discourse without any need to catch the precise meaning of every word. In this respect, the FD learners who are global have the advantage of overlooking problems in order to see the general configuration of a problem or idea (Maghsudi, 2007).

In addition to the preceding characteristics, field independence learners are analytical, task oriented, internally referent, hypothesis testing, self-structuring, linear, detail oriented, and visually perceptive while field dependent ones are serialists, group-oriented, global sensitive to social interactions and criticism, externally referential, not visually perceptive, non-verbal, and passive learners preferring external information structures.

According to Governer (1998), FD learners are in more need of social input and external help in interpreting clues embedded in a particular learning task. On the other hand, FI learners are more analytic relying less on external clues than their FD ones. They are more able to structure their own knowledge on their own rather than accepting the knowledge
produced by others. Hall (2000) pointed out that the differences between FI and FD learners are more likely the result of “varying information processing skills such as selective attention, short-term memory encoding, and long-term recall at which field independent individuals are more accurate and efficient”.

The following table by Ellis (1985) identifies the principal characteristics of field dependency and field independency. He mentions that the terms do not really represent alternatives, but poles along a continuum, with individuals varying in the extent to which they lean towards dependence or independence.

**Table 2 Principal Characteristics of Field Dependency/Independency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field dependence</th>
<th>Field independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Personal orientation  
i.e. reliance on external frame of reference in processing information | 1. Impersonal orientation  
i.e. reliance on internal frame of reference in processing information |
| 2. Holistic  
i.e. perceives a field as a whole; parts are fused with background | 2. Analytic  
i.e. perceives a field in terms of its component parts; parts are distinguished from background |
| 3. Dependent  
i.e. the self-view is derived from others | 3. Independent  
i.e. sense of separate identity |
| 4. Socially sensitive  
i.e. greater skill in interpersonal/social relationships | 4. Not so socially aware  
i.e. less skilled in interpersonal/social relationships |

While a field-independent person possesses enhanced cognitive restructuring abilities, a field-dependent individual possesses well-developed interpersonal skills. Hence, it can be hypothesized that field independence is related to the acquisition of linguistic competence while field dependence is related to the acquisition of communicative competence.

According to Wyss (2002), Both FI and FD learning styles have advantages and disadvantages and both are important for L2 learning. The FI learner can excel in classroom learning which involves analysis, attention to details, mastering of exercises, drills, and other focused activities. By contrast, the FD learner achieves a higher degree of success in everyday language situations beyond the constraints of the classroom requiring interpersonal communication skills.
3. Factors affecting Field Dependence-Independence

Maghsudi (2007) mentioned three factors which affect the degree to which one is field dependent or independent.

a. Child Rearing Practices

Field dependence-independence tendencies result from child rearing practices which emphasize gaining independence from parental controls. The early studies of child rearing showed that when there is a strong emphasis on obedience to parental authority and external control of impulses, the child will likely become relatively more field dependent. On the other hand, when there is an encouragement within the family for the child to develop separate and autonomous functioning, the child will become relatively more field independent.

b. Gender

There is mixed evidence on the effect of gender on field dependence-independence. In the case of children, no differences were found. However, in some studies of adults in which an interaction between gender and field dependence-independence is found, males always are found to be more field independent. The effect of gender on field dependence-independence is too small making this factor practically insignificant.

c. Age

It seems that there is some effect of age on field dependence-independence. Children are found to be generally field dependent, but their field independence increases as they become adults. Adults (especially adult learners) have been found to be more field independent. Then, field independence gradually decreases throughout the remainder of life, with older people tending to be more field dependent than younger people.

4. Review of the Related Literature

Witkin, Goodenough, and Karp (1967) indicated that FI individuals tended to do better in the fields which require high analytic ability (e.g. engineering, sciences, and mathematics). On the other hand, FD individuals tended to do better in counseling, social sciences, teaching and other people-oriented professions.

Witkin, Oltman, Raskin & Karp (1971) have found out that a FI person tends to perceive surroundings analytically, separating objects discretely from their backgrounds, while a FD person tends to perceive things in a relatively global fashion, being influenced by a prevailing field or context.
Witkin & Berry (1975) examined the relationship of FI/FD with gender. As a result, it was suggested that boys were usually more field dependent than girls.

Hansen & Stansfield (1981) reported that FI learners had slight advantages for communicative tasks, greater advantages for academic tasks, and even greater for the combined tasks. In another work, they investigated whether or not there was any relationship between field dependent-independent cognitive styles and foreign language achievement. 300 students enrolled in a first semester college Spanish class as the participants of this study took the Group Embedded Figures Test of field dependence-independence. The results of this investigation indicated that field independence plays a role in second language learning. This role is especially noticeable in the acquisition of linguistic competence and integrative competence. On the other hand, it was only hardly noticeable in the acquisition of communicative competence.

Hansen in another study (1984) noted that field independent learners achieved better scores on cloze tests.

Abraham (1985) tried to discover whether less rule-oriented teaching might prove more beneficial for field-dependent students. A pretest/post-test design was used to compare the effectiveness of two ESL lessons on participle formation for subjects at various points along the field independent/dependent continuum. One lesson was based on a traditional deductive approach; the other provided no rules but directed attention to many examples of participles in context. A regression analysis showed a significant interaction between field independence and lesson, with field-independent subjects performing better with the deductive lesson while field-dependent subjects did better with the example lesson. Examination of individual items on pre- and post-tests showed that the majority of subjects in both lessons had engaged in step-by-step rule building.

Chapelle (1988) indicated that the results of the research conducted point to some relationships between FI and tests of some relatively discrete skills such as imitation, sentence disambiguation, and tests of reading, writing, and listening. Considering these results, FI students were found to be good at analytic skills needed for classroom language learning and discrete point tests. Also, FI style was thought to be predictive of performance on 'communicative' and 'integrative' measures and on cloze, dictation, and test of spoken communicative competence.

Lourdusamy (1994) indicated that research has found that individuals are different in their ways of seeking and processing information. Cognitive styles serve as a relatively stable
indicator on how learners perceive and interpret information, and respond to learning environments.

Dwyer and Moore (1995) investigated the effect of cognitive style on achievement of 179 students in the United States. They found that the field independent learners were superior to field dependent learners on tests measuring different educational objectives. They concluded that cognitive style had a significant association with students’ academic achievement.

Murphy, Casey, Day & Young (1997) tried to determine the relationship between academic achievement and cognitive style of 63 undergraduate Canadian students in information management program. They found that field independent students performed better than field dependent ones only on one of the technical courses not all of them. However, the performance of the two groups was the same for the other courses.

Tinajero & Páramo (1997) examined the relationship between academic achievement and field dependence-independence cognitive styles. They analyzed various subjects of the school curriculum in a single sample of 408 students (215 boys and 193 girls) aged between 13 and 16 years old. The instrument used was a test of perception of the upright (the Rod and Frame Test) and a restructuring ability test (the Embedded Figures Test). In addition, they examined possible mediation by the variable ‘gender’ in the above-mentioned relationship. The results of their study indicated that field-independent boys and girls performed better than field-dependent ones in all of the subjects considered, although this superiority was only manifested in the cognitive dimension of field dependence-independence which was evaluated by the embedded figures test. The conclusion taken from this study is that field dependence-independence is related to overall academic achievement.

Summerville (1999) examined the effect of a hypermedia environment on 177 students enrolled in undergraduate technology courses. Although the quantitative result did not yield significant differences in achievement and satisfaction scores, interviews revealed that FD learners preferred more step-by-step instructions with more human direction. FD learners need more social interaction and assistance in a hypermedia environment. Thus, he referred to FI and FD dimensions as a global versus an articulated style that reflected the degree to which an individual’s processing of information is affected by the contextual field.

Ford & Chen (2002) measured the learning behavior and performance of 65 postgraduate students using a hypermedia-based tutorial. The data was obtained on cognitive style, levels of prior experience, motivation, age, and gender of the postgraduate students. The results of data analysis indicated that field-dependent/independent cognitive styles were linked to
战略差异在导航。水平的先前经验被联系到导航行为和学习绩效的定性差异。

Ennjo & Doohun (2005) 发现，领域的不依赖性水平对学习者组织和导航信息、优先内容、以及开发元认知策略具有显著影响。FD 学生在计算机辅助教学中的表现比在课堂环境中更少成功，尤其是在再组织和再现信息、识别显著线索、以及在计算机辅助教学中结构信息方面。

Jailani, Rashid, Ahmad & Madar (2007) 研究了是否在特定的成就测试中，FD 学生学习使用动画图形课程和传统方法的成就有显著差异，以及一般成就在 FI 和 FD 学生之间的得分差。63 名第一学期学生在电气工程系被比较。结果发现，领域的不依赖性/依赖性可以影响学生的学习成就在使用动画图形课程作为有效的、创新的、和激励性的教学和学习策略，帮助学生理解和记住课程中的复杂概念和主题。

Maghsudi (2007) 检查了学习者的学习风格和他们的母语在语言习得中的相互作用。236 名高中生（男女）作为这项研究的参与者，他们完成了背景调查问卷，语法成就测试 (GAT) 和学习风格测试 (LST) 也就是分嵌图形测试 (GEFT) 设计的来区分领域依赖和领域独立学习风格。他的结果表明，学生英语成就测试分数与他们的领域依赖和领域独立学习风格有显著的交互作用，而在这些成绩中，学生的学习风格和性别没有显著交互作用。同样，没有显著的交互作用在学生的学习风格和母语的英语成就测试分数上。

Salmani Nodoushan (2007) 探究了领域依赖或独立是否会对伊朗 EFL 学生的整体和任务特定阅读理解测试成绩产生系统性的差异。为了达到这一目标，1743 名学生在各种伊朗大学和学院中进行了领域嵌入图形测试 (GEFT)，根据其中学生被分为领域独立和领域依赖组。然后，他们根据 IELTS 被分为四个组：高能效、中等能效、相当能效、和低能效学生。数据分析...
showed that individuals’ cognitive styles resulted in a significant difference in their overall test performance in the proficient, semi-proficient, and fairly proficient groups, but not in the low-proficient group. The findings also indicated that the cognitive styles resulted in a significant difference in participants’ performance on true-false, sentence completion, outlining, scanning, and elicitation tasks in all proficiency groups.

Sally (2011) investigated students’ main learning style preferences trying to help them build on the learning styles and strategies that they presently use. A Multiple Choice Questionnaire along with some survey questions aimed at investigating students’ main learning styles were applied for various Secondary School and university students. The results indicated some significant differences and similarities in the learning style preferences of these students. Also, it was suggested that teachers should better understand their students’ different learning style preferences in order to address these needs in the classrooms. They can encourage their students to learn by interacting with others in small groups, taking notes, and participating in role plays.

Yousefi (2011) investigated whether, and to what extent, there was a relationship between field independence/dependence cognitive styles and Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension ability. 131 randomly-selected subjects as the participants of this study took a battery of tests including: a) the Group Embedded Figures Test, b) the TOFEL listening test, c) the listening task preference questionnaire, and d) the Michigan ECPE test. The results of data analyses indicated a correlation between the TOFEL and the GEFT scores for FD learners (both males and females). While a relationship was found between cognitive style and listening comprehension, no such a relationship was obtained between listening comprehension and gender. Learners mostly favored short conversations, informal assessments, and one item/one conversation in the TOFEL test. However, the FI ones did better than the FD ones on the longer conversations of the second and the third parts of the TOEFL Listening test.

In sum, previous research has indicated that field dependent is different from field independent, the former being socially-oriented and good at counseling and teaching while the latter are good at analytic activities such as engineering, and mathematics. To name a few of the characteristics of the field independent ones, they are analytic, global, and intrinsically-motivated while the field dependent ones are sensitive to environments, holistic, and extrinsically-motivated. Actually, the difference between field independent/dependent ones roots from varying information processing skills such as selective attention, short term memory encoding, and long term recall. Field independency plays a role in SLA especially in
the acquisition of linguistic and integrative competence. Also, the performance of FI ones was found to be better than FD ones in all respects. Some studies indicated that males were more FI than females.

The present study is significant because, to the best knowledge of the authors, no similar study has investigated the interaction between gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, proficiency level and field-independency/dependency of different proficiency levels of EFL learners and instructors at language institutes. The present study sets out to answer the following questions:

1-Does gender have any effect on the level of field dependency/dependency?
2-Is there a significant difference in the mean field-dependent and field-independent scores for males and females? If so, which ones seem to be more field-independent and which ones more field dependent?
3-Does status have any effect on the level of field dependency/dependency?
4-Does age have any effect on the level of field dependency/dependency?
5-Do years of EFL learning have any effect on the level of field dependency/dependency?
6-Does proficiency level have any effect on the level of field dependency/dependency?
7-Is there any relationship between gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, proficiency level and field-independency/dependency?

5. Method

5.1. Participants

This study was conducted with 144 randomly selected EFL learners (both males and females) and instructors between the ages of 12-39 from three different English Language Institutes. These participants were selected from the adult’s level from Bu-Ali Sina, Ariyan, and Sohrevardi language Institutes, Yazd, Iran. The participants constituted 79 (54.9%) elementary and 51 (35.4%) intermediate learners totaling 130. All the 14 (9.7%) instructors were at the advanced level. The reason for selecting these participants was to find out whether gender has any effect on the field-dependency and field-independency of different proficiency levels of EFL learners and instructors at Language institutes.

5.2. Instrument

To investigate the interaction between gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, proficiency level and field-independency/dependency of different proficiency levels of EFL learners and instructors at Language institutes, a triangulation of two methods was used: A background
questionnaire, and a field independent/dependent checklist adopted from Wyss (2002). The background questionnaire obtained demographic data about the participants such as students’ and instructors’ age, gender, status, and years of EFL learning, and proficiency level. The field independent/dependent checklist was in Likert type scale (1-Strongly agree, 2-Somehow agree, and 3- No idea) containing 12 items aimed at measuring field independency/dependency of the participants (see Appendix). The background questionnaire and the field independent/dependent checklist were translated into Persian to be comprehensible enough for low level elementary and intermediate EFL learners at language institutes.

5.3. Procedure
In the summer, 2012, the investigator conducted the questionnaire in respective private language institutes. The background questionnaire and the field independent/dependent checklist were translated into Persian in order to be comprehensible for all even low level elementary and intermediate students. The background questionnaire along with the field independent/dependent checklist were distributed randomly among elementary and intermediate students and their respective instructors. The investigator was present in the classroom for the sake of clearing doubts, if any. The participants were encouraged to ask questions in the case of any difficulty and, if so, enough help was provided. The administration of the test took 5 minutes, which was completed in just one phase.

The background questionnaire obtained data about the participants' age (1- teenager and 2-adult), gender(1-male and 2-female), status (1-teacher and 2-student), years of EFL learning (1-less than one year, 2- one to two years, 3- two to three years, 4-three to four years, 5- four to five years, and 6-more than five years), and proficiency level(1-elementary, 2-intermediate, and 3-advanced). The field independent/dependent checklist adopted from Wyss (2002) was used in a modified version. While the original checklist contained 6 double-set-of-items questions, the right ones indicating field dependency and the left ones indicating field independency, the investigator, for the ease of administration, divided each set into two questions resulting in 12 questions, the odd ones of which indicated field dependency and the even ones revealed field independency. The resulting 12 questions were in Likert type scale (1-Strongly agree, 2-Almost agree, and 3- No idea). Based on the checklist, choices 1 and 2 were considered as indicators of field dependency and field independency, while choice 3 was not taken into consideration in the analysis. In the odd question numbers, choices 1 and 2 indicated field dependency while choice 3 indicated field independency. The reverse pattern was indicative of the even question numbers.
6. Results

In order to answer the research questions, first of all there was a need to compute a mean score of items representing field dependence and independence. The following bar graph shows the percentages of males and females in each category.

![Bar graph showing percentages of males and females in field dependence and independence categories.]

**Figure 1**

*Percentage of the Total FD/FI EFL Learners and Instructors by Gender*

### 6.1. Effect of gender on field dependency/independency

To obtain the effect of gender on field dependency/independency of EFL learners and instructors, two one-way between-groups ANOVAs were computed. The obtained results are as follows:

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of gender on field dependency scores of EFL learners and instructors. A statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in field dependency scores was obtained: $F_{(1,128)} = 16.94$, $p=0.02$. The actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.11. In particular, males ($Md=12.00, n=61$) were found to be more field dependent than females ($Md=10.00, n=69$) although such a superiority did not turn out to be significant. On the other hand, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance conducted to explore the impact of gender on field independency scores of EFL
learners and instructors did not reach a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level: $F_{(1,126.63)} = 2.56, p=0.11$.

**6.2. Difference in the mean field-dependent/independent scores for males and females**

Two independent sample t-tests were conducted to see whether there was any difference in the mean field-dependent/independent scores for males and females separately. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the field independent scores for males and females. There was no significant difference in scores for males ($M=11.75, SD=1.87$) and females ($M=12.26, SD=1.87$; $t_{(133)} = -1.60, p = .11$ (two-tailed)). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference=-.50, 95% CI: 1.13 to -1.20) was very small ($\eta^2$=0.01). On the other hand, an independent-samples t-test conducted to compare the field dependent scores for males and females resulted in a significant difference in scores for males ($M=12.11, SD=2.47$) and females ($M=10.53, SD=1.89$; $t_{(130)} = 4.05, p=.000$ (two-tailed)). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference=1.57, 95% CI: 0.80 to 2.35 ) was moderate ( $\eta^2$=0.11). Males ($Md=12, n=61$) were found to be more field dependent than females ($Md=10, n=69$).

**6.3. The effect of status on field independency/dependency**

To see whether status has any effect on the field independency/dependency of the students and their instructors, two independent-samples t-tests were computed respectively.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the field independent scores for students and instructors. There was no statistically significant difference in field independent scores for students ($M=11.94, SD=1.83$ ) and instructors, $M=12.84, SD=1.77$; $t_{(131)} = 1.69, p=0.9$ (two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean difference=0.9, 95% CI: -1.15 to 1.96) was very small ($\eta^2$=0.02). In contrast, the results of an independent-samples t-test to compare the field dependent scores for students and instructors showed a statistically significant difference in scores for students ($M=11.45, SD=2.35$) and instructors, $M=9.69, SD=1.03$; $t_{(28.84)} = -4.9, p=.0005$ (two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference=-1.86, 95% CI: -2.49 to -1.02) was large($\eta^2$=0.15). Students ($Md=11, n=130$) were found to be more field dependent than their instructors ($Md=10, n=14$).

**6.4. The effect of age on field independency/dependency**

Two independent-samples t-test were conducted separately to compare the field independent-dependent scores for the two age groups of teenagers and adults. There was no significant difference in field independent scores for teenagers ($M=11.98, SD=1.88$) and adults, $M=12.09, SD=1.77$; $t_{(128)} = -.27, p = .78$ (two-tailed). On the other hand, there was a significant
difference in field dependent scores for teenagers ($M=11.71, SD=2.31$) and adults, $M=10.27, SD=1.90$; $t_{(125)}=3.21, p=.002$ (two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference= 1.44, 95% CI: 0.55 to2.32) was moderate (eta squared=0.07). Teenagers ($Md=12, n=94$) were more field dependent than adults ($Md=10, n=33$). It may be due to the fact that as age increases, field dependency decreases.

6.5. The effect of years of EFL learning on field independency/dependency

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore whether years of EFL learning of students and their instructors had any effects on their total field independent scores as measured by totFI. Subject were divided into 6 categories according to the years of their EFL learning (1- less than one year, 2- one to two years, 3- two to three years, 4= three to four years, 5= four to five years, and 6= more than five years). There was not a statistically significant difference at the $p>0.5$ level in field independent scores for the 6 groups: $F_{(5,125)}=1.56, p=.17$.

On the other hand, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance conducted to explore whether years of EFL learning of students and their instructors had any effects on their total field dependent scores as measured by totFI resulted in a statistically significant difference at the $p>0.5$ level in field dependent scores for the 6 groups: $F_{(5,122)}=2.89, p=.01$. The actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was not small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.10. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for category 3 ($M=10.16, SD=2.11$) was significantly different from Category 5 ($M=13.14, SD=3.23$). No other categories (Category 1($M=11.84, SD=2.57$); Category 2($M=11.16, SD=1.83$); Category 4($M=11.37, SD=2.02$); and 6($M=10.72, SD=1.80$)) were significantly different from the Categories 3 and 5 nor from each other. Those with 4-5 years of EFL learning ($Md=13, n=8$) were more field dependent than those with 2-3 years of EFL learning ($Md=10, n=24$). The following figures illustrate the effect of years of EFL learning on field independency/dependency of EFL learners and instructors.
6.6. The effect of proficiency level on field dependency/independency

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore whether students’ proficiency levels of elementary, intermediate, and their instructors’ advanced proficiency level has any effects on their total field independent and field dependent status as measured by totFI and totFD respectively. While there was no statistically significant difference at the $p$.05 level in totFI scores for the three proficiency groups: $F(2,130) =2.02, p=.134, \text{ there was a statistically significant difference at the } p<.05 \text{ level in totFD scores for the three proficiency groups: } F(2,127) =3.83, p=.02. \text{ Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in the mean scores between the groups was small. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was small (0.05). Post-hoc comparisons for the field-dependency using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for elementary group ($M=11.70, SD=2.40$) was significantly different from advanced group($M=9.81, SD=0.98$). The intermediate group ($M=11.01, SD=2.25$) did not differ significantly from either elementary or advanced group. The elementary group ($Md=11, n=75$) and the intermediate group ($Md=11, n=49$) were found to be more field dependent than the advanced group ($Md=10, n=14$). The following figures show the effects of proficiency level on field dependency/independency of EFL learners and instructors.
6.7. Relationship between gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, proficiency level and field-independency/dependency

Standard multiple regression was used to assess the ability of 5 variables (age, gender, level, status, and years of EFL learning) to predict field dependency of EFL learners and their instructors. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The total variance explained by the model as a whole was 44.9 %, $F_{(5,119)} = 6, p<.0005$. In the model, only two independent variables (gender, beta=-3.69, $p<.0005$ and age, beta=-.21, $p<.0005$) were statistically significant. The other three variables did not make significant contributions to predict field dependency (level, beta=-.12, $p=.26$; years of EFL learning, beta=.07, $p=.41$, and status, beta=.07, $p=.51$). Males (Md=12, n=61) were found to be more field dependent than females (Md=10, n=69). Teenagers, however, (Md=12, n=94) were more field dependent than adults (Md=10, n=33).

Another standard multiple regression was used to assess the ability of 5 variables (age, gender, level, status, and years of EFL learning) to predict field independency of EFL learners and their instructors. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The total variance explained by the model as a whole was 6.9 %, $F_{(5,122)}=1.81, p>.0005$. None of the variables in our model were statistically significant.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The area of field independence/dependence has emerged as one of the most researched areas of L2 inquiry in recent years. It shows another aspect of individual differences and learning styles distinguishing one from another.
The present study which aimed at investigating the effects of gender, age, status, years of EFL learning, and proficiency level on the field-independency/dependency of EFL learners and instructors in a comprehensive way, led to some significant and new results.

The results of this study revealed that gender has an effect not on field independency but just on field dependency indicating that males are more field dependent than females.

Status does not have any effects on the field independency of EFL learners and instructors. It cannot make an EFL learner or instructor more field independent. On the other hand, it has an influence on field dependency. In this sense, students are more field dependent than their instructors.

Also, age does not seem to have any effects on the field independency but on field dependency of EFL learners and instructors. Teenagers are more field dependent than adults. It may be due to the fact that as the age increases, field dependency decreases.

Furthermore, years of EFL learning has an effect on the field dependency of EFL learners and instructors, with more years of EFL learning resulting in more field dependency. Field independency does not seem to play a role here.

Moreover, considering the proficiency level of EFL learners, we can say that, as the results of this study indicated, the less proficient the students, the more field dependent they are. On the other hand, the more proficient they become, the lower their field dependency gets. However, the degree of field dependency decreases as the proficiency level increases, field independency does not seem to be under the influence of proficiency level.

Gender and age could predict an EFL learners and instructors’ field dependency. Males have been found to be more field dependent than females. Teenagers are more field dependent than adults indicating that as the age increases the level of field dependency decreases.

In order for the study to be generalizable, the limitations of the present study need to be taken into consideration. Of limitations, we can mention the insufficient number of advanced EFL practitioners in comparison to the number of the ones in the elementary and intermediate groups. Also, the advanced group consisted of just the instructors. If some advanced students could be found for this study, it would be more uniform in terms of subjects.

The results of the present study are consistent with those of Witkin & Berry’s study (1975) in terms of the effects of gender on field dependency. Both findings indicate that males were found to be more field dependent than females. On the other hand, these results are in contrast with the findings of Maghsudi’s study (2007) in which no significant interaction between students’ learning styles and gender was obtained.
Considering this study’s implications, we should note that learning styles can help students facilitate their learning. If students’ learning styles are put into consideration, their learning can be more effective. When their learning styles are matched with appropriate approaches in teaching, then their motivation, performances, and achievements will increase and enhance. In fact, teachers, educators, and organizers should try to provide an encouraging EFL learning atmosphere to facilitate and foster an effective learning by allowing students to learn in accordance with their own preferred learning styles. Hence, students need to be provided with the opportunity that they desire.

References


**Appendix**

**FIELD INDEPENDENT/DEPENDENT CHECKLIST**

Dear instructor/student,

Please read the following 12 statements and kindly check (√) the box that best describes you.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Completely agree</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>No idea</th>
<th>No idea</th>
<th>Somehow agree</th>
<th>Completely agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-I have no problem concentrating amid noise and confusion.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4-I enjoy analyzing grammar structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-I feel I must understand every word of what I read or hear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-I think classroom study is the key to effective language learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-I prefer working alone to working with other people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-Receiving feedback from other people really doesn't affect my learning at all.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-I need a quiet environment in order to concentrate well.</td>
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<td>3-I find grammar analysis tedious and boring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-I don't mind reading or listening in the L2 without understanding every single word as long as I 'catch' the main idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-I think communication is the key to effective language learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-I really enjoy working with other people in pairs or groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-I find feedback useful as a means of understanding my problem areas.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>