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Foreword
Welcome to volume ten and the special sixth edition of 2014. We are happy to announce that our readership is increasing day by day. For a journal examining the topics of EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies, the growth and readership has been pleasing. Our bi-monthly Journal has attracted many readers not only from the Middle East but also from different parts of the world. In this special edition, we have presented forty articles, discussing different issues of EFL/ESL, literature and translation studies. In the first article of the issue, An Investigation of Discoursal Errors of Iranian EFL Learners is studied by Ali Akbar Khomeijani Farahani and Mahboobe Sadat Tabatabaie Far. In the second article of the issue, Kourosh Akef and Zainab Moosavi have studied Iranian EFL Teachers’ and Students’ Textbook Evaluation. In the third article of the issue, Tooba Mardani has presented Assessment of Marked thematic Structures in the Translated and Non-Translated Persuasive Texts. In the next article, Students’ Perception of Teachers’ Attitudes and Learning Environment and its Relation to Risk-taking is presented by Behzad Nasirpour and Elham Saed. In the fifth article of the issue, Akbar Azizifar, Ebrahim Fariadian and Hoda Gheitasy have presented Analysis of the content of different testing books Based on Iran M.A university entrance examination. The next article which is Manipulation in Translation: A Case Study of Milan Kundera’s Three Novels is done by Rajabali Askarzadeh Torghabeh and Ghazaleh Javad. In the seventh article of the issue; Kamran Shakiba Rad has studied Some notes on English Learning Anxiety in Classroom: an Iranian Study. In the eighth article of the issue ESP Students’ use of Reading Strategies and the Effects of Strategy Training on their Reading Proficiency is studied by Narges Sotoudeh. In the next article, Moslem Zolfagharkhani, Ehteram Tabasi and Omid Etemadi have presented Political Cognition and the Novel. In the tenth article, An Intercultural Rhetoric Investigation: The Effect of Linear and Non-Linear Paragraphs on Students’ Comprehension and Recalling is done by Mohammad Sadegh Tamri and Sajad Yaseri Moghadam.
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We hope you enjoy this special edition and look forward to your readership.
Title

An Investigation of Discoursal Errors of Iranian EFL Learners

Authors

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Biodata

Ali Akbar Khomeijani Farahani is an assistant professor of English and Linguistics in the English department of the University of Tehran, Iran. His research interests include discourse analysis and systemic functional linguistics. He has taught extensively in these areas at MA and PhD levels.

Mahboobe Sadat Tabatabaei Far is M.A graduate of Islamic Azad University, Tehran South Branch, and Iran. She has been teaching English for several years and her main interests are language teaching and linguistic.

Abstract

As most of the students and teachers are not fully aware of the common properties between target languages (TL) and their mother tongue, it is helpful if the teachers or materials developers have good knowledge not only of the learners’ TL but also of their mother tongue. As a result, the reviewing of two approaches, CA and EA, in order to reanalyze and investigate them and finally evaluate their predictive power, can be a vital help for both teachers and learners of a second language. So, the purpose of this study is to examine and evaluate the capacities of contrastive analysis and error analysis in prediction of English errors of Iranian learners. Besides, it was attempted in this study to determine the degree of the mother tongue influence on the TL learning among Iranian EFL learners. This
A qualitative study has been carried out to investigate the most common discoursal errors in writings of 60 Iranian English students from an institute in Tehran. As the results of this research shows, the most common errors of learners are caused by the mother tongue interference (interlingual), so it can be concluded that CA and EA can help both the teachers and the learners in the learning of a second language through the prediction of their probable discoursal errors.

**Keywords:** Contrastive analysis, Error analysis, Interference, Interlingual error, intralingual error

1. **Introduction**

One of the major problems in the process of learning a second language is the interference from the learners' mother tongue. Assuming interference from the first language as a preventing factor for learning a new language, many researchers and teachers are highly interested in the field of contrastive studies of the two languages; mother tongue and target language. Since, until the late sixties, the prevailing theory concerning the second language learning problems was behaviouristic, Contrastive Analysis theory became the ultimate help for the language teaching problems (Corder, 1981).

However, it has been mentioned by the majority of linguists like Filipovic (1975) that the full application of Contrastive Analysis in foreign language teaching can be obtained only if, it is combined with Error Analysis.

According to most studies, in any language learning situation, the learning strategy to reduce speech to a simpler system is employed by every learner and consequently the over-application of these generalization strategies causes the emergence of potential errors in learners' utterance (Richards, 1974).

As claimed by most of the researchers, the study of English learners' errors is a facilitator factor for teachers, researchers and learners in overcoming the existing problems in the learning procedure. In addition, as Corder (1981) observes, the learners' errors are indicative both of the learners' knowledge state and the ways which are applied to the learning the second language (cited in Richards, 1974). Besides, a survey of error analysis study of some oral interactions showed that the five common discoursal errors made by the learners were, preposition, question, article, plural form of nouns, subject-verb agreement and tense (Ting, Mahadhir & Chang, 2010).
The purpose of this paper is therefore to firstly determine the most common discoursal errors among Iranian EFL learners and then the percentage of discoursal errors which are related to mother tongue (Persian) and finally to investigate if the percentage of Iranian EFL learners' errors supports the claims of C.A for predictability of errors.

1.1. Statement of the Problem
The notion that learners' errors reflect some information about the learner’s knowledge of second language is strongly supported by the majority of researchers. According to Richards (1974), the study of the learners’ errors does throw light on the kinds of cognitive and linguistic developments of learners which are essential parts of learning process.

According to the existing situation of English learning in Iran it seems that conducting an investigation on discoursal errors of learners in order to find the most frequent errors made by them and finally discovering the most probable reasons for producing such erroneous utterances can make an effective change in the world of the second language learning. Besides, the learners’ errors suggest the strategies the learners employ to work out the rules of the new language and the rules they have developed at given stages of their language development (Richards, 1974).

Considering all these factors, it can be concluded that it is helpful if the teacher or the materials developers has good knowledge not only of the learners’ target language but also of their mother tongues, so contrastive studies on discoursal errors of English learners are providing these kinds of assistance for teachers and material writers in order to design syllabuses and prepare teaching materials (Fisiak, 1981).

1.2 Research Questions
To achieve the goals of the present study, the following questions were raised:
Q1: What type of discoursal errors are mostly made by advanced Iranian EFL learners?
Q2: What percentage of Iranian EFL learners' discoursal errors are related to the mother tongue interference
Q3: Does the percentage of Iranian EFL learners’ errors support the claims of CA for predictability of errors?

2. Review of the Related Literature
2.1 Contrastive Analysis
Until the late sixties, the most common theory concerning the problem of second language learning was behaviorism and it considered the learning as acquiring a set of new language
habits. So, as the result of maintaining of mother tongue habits in the new language, the errors were predicted. A major part of applied linguistic research was devoted to comparing the mother tongue and the target language in order to predict or explain the errors made by learners of different language backgrounds. So, the errors which could not be explained in this way were overlooked (Corder, 1981).

In the support of this idea we can refer to the work of Tushyeh (1985) who did a study on the role of language transfer in the acquisition of English as a second language as indicated in the production of relative clauses. Analysis of adult Arab students' written responses to a variety of test types revealed that firstly language transfer is a significant factor in second language acquisition; secondly, there is a distinction between inferencing transfer and non-inferencing transfer; and thirdly, in addition to strategies already known in the field such as transfer, simplification, and overgeneralization, the Arab students employ various perceptual and production strategies. The responses of these learners indicate that both interlingual and intralingual errors are found in their interlanguage. As a result, an adequate account of the process of second language acquisition has to include a multifactor approach in which the first and second languages, transfer, other production and perceptual strategies, and language universals play complementary roles (Tushyeh, 1985).

Finally, it should be taken into account that predictability of interference and errors is not the sole purpose of contrastive studies and it has never been claimed that interference is the only source of errors (James, as cited in Fisiak, 1981).

2.2 Interference

The Contrastive Analysis is based on the assumption that second language learners will tend to transfer the formal features of their L1 into their L2 utterances as Lado says, "Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (Lado, 1957, as cited in James, 1980).

Indeed he says that CA is effective in the diagnosis and remediation of learner's errors, if it focuses on areas of slight relative difference which may tempt the learner to transfer from L1 (Lado, 1957). Besides, George (1972) supports this view by claiming that approximately one third of all errors made by target language learners can be traced to native language interference. In other words the main rationale for the theory of C.A can be the phenomenon of transfer which refers to the hypothesis that the learning of a task is either facilitated (positive transfer) or impeded (negative transfer) by the previous learning task (Sridhar as cited in Fisiak, 1981). Considering both aspects of the L1-L2 relationship or positive and
negative interference, some studies attempt to investigate learners’ errors and finally concluded that in view of mixed research results and the limitations of existing knowledge, it is best to view L1 as a contributing factor in L2 development (Noor, 1994). Additionally, Lott (1983) says that mother tongue does not interfere though it does not give any guide to the learner and Nickel (1971) says that in some cases direct and indirect interferences can be distinguished from each other. Dulay and Burt (1974) define interference as the automatic transfer of the structures of the source language due to habit (as cited in Ranganayaki, 1984).

2.3 Significance of Errors
According to Corder, errors are significant and beneficial to teachers, researchers and learners. Keshavarz (2008), in line with Richards (1971), remarks that errors are beneficial to both linguists and psycholinguists. Jain (1974) also says that errors are significant for two reasons:
1) Understanding the process of second-language acquisition
2) Planning courses incorporating the psychology of second-language learning

3. Method
3.1 Participants
The respondents of this study include 60 advanced female Iranian English learners studying in some English institutes of Tehran. All had similar educational background, i.e., all in advanced level.

3.2 Instrumentation
In order to provide the quantitative data for the study, the students were requested to write compositions in their intended subjects. In order to show the real competence of students, they were unaware of details of this research study but after the writings were gathered, they were informed of the whole of the study, besides, before starting, the students were asked about their intention about taking part in the research study.

3.3 Procedure
As stated, the purpose of this study was to create a better understanding of the interplay between the mother tongue (Persian) and errors which are made by advanced Iranian learners in English. Such a focus leads to the gathering writings from some advanced learners in order to investigate their errors. The writings were collected from students of several institutes during a three-month period course. In order to instruct the teachers and then the learners about the research procedure, the researcher at first explained to the teachers what the study
The main and only material used in this study was the students' writings.

4. Results and Discussion

As the figure 1 shows, the highest percent of the learners' errors (58%) is allocated to the interlingual category. Moreover, it should be noted that since the main aim of this study is determining the amount of mother tongue interference on learners‘ errors, “transfer of training” as a source of errors, has been ignored intentionally.

![Figure 1: Sources of Errors](image)

As it is clear in the figure 2, most of the discoursal errors committed by advanced Iranian EFL learners are included in the local part (91/2%).
It can easily be found from the figure 3 that the most common interlingual errors produced by Iranian EFL learners are grammatical (49%) and the least common are the morphological ones (4%).

According to figure 4, the majority of intralingual errors are attributed to the overgeneralization (51%) and the ignorance of rule restriction (1%) allocates the least percent itself.
Figure 4: Intralingual and Developmental Errors

Regarding the figure 5, it is obvious that syntactico-morphological (70%) errors are the most prevalent and the lexico-semantic(30%) errors are the least common ones.

Figure 5: Linguistic Taxonomy of Errors

According to the figure 6, most of the discoursal errors are included in the “substitution”category (61%) and on the other hand the permutation or wrong ordering(2%) includes the least errors.
Figure 6: Processes of Errors

According to figures 7 and 8, the most common syntactic-morphological errors of learners are related to errors of prepositions (24/8%).

Figure 7: Syntactico-Morphological Errors (based on Frequency)

Figure 8: Syntactico-Morphological Errors (based on Percentage)
5. Conclusion
The view of the mother tongue interference in language learning has always inspired many teachers to take advantage of the learners' errors in the improvement of learning English. According to the result of this study and the previous ones as mentioned before, it can be concluded that CA and EA are still applicable in the field of predicting the learners' syntactic errors, as was studied on Iranian EFL learners. Since, these two approaches can predict errors to some extent, it can be said that error analysis and contrastive analysis can be a great help to learners, classroom teachers and test makers to design the syllabus and tests (Grauberg, 1971; George, 1972; Tran-Thi-Chau, 1974 as cited in Keshavarz (2008)).

Regarding research questions of this study, it was found that the most prevalent errors among learners were related to their mother tongue and were 58%. As the finding showed and another study conducted by Corder (1981) too, a large number but not all of the learners' errors are related to the system of the mother tongue.

In conclusion and in answering the third research question of this research, as Sanders claims, it can be said that contrastive analysis and error analysis can still be used in language teaching (as cited in Fisiak, 1981).

References


Title

Iranian EFL Teachers’ and Students’ Textbook Evaluation

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Biodata

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of the EFL textbook series ‘Passages Second Edition’, taught at EFL institutes in Iran. To this end, two textbook evaluation checklists, modified version of Alamri’s (2008), were submitted to 10 EFL teachers and 30 advanced learners in Mashhad to collect feedback on the content of the newly-written series. The researcher used three different types of computations to analyze the data statistically: a per-statement analysis, a per-category analysis, and a Mann-Whitney U test. The qualitative data obtained were analyzed for frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. The research findings demonstrated that both the teachers and the students were generally satisfied with the series, except for its design and illustration and some other sub-items. The results also revealed that the students and the teachers shared the same ideas about most areas and criteria related to the textbooks. Hopefully, the findings provide feedback for textbook developers, decision and policy makers about the textbooks and how they can be developed and modified.
Keywords: EFL, Textbook series, Evaluation, Checklists, Design and illustration

1. Introduction
English language teaching (ELT) textbooks play an important role in language classrooms. Textbooks not only represent “the visible heart of any ELT programme” (Sheldon, 1988, p.237), but also “play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful resource for both teachers and learners” (Çakit, 2006, p.4). Accordingly, a textbook is considered as a teaching material for the teacher and a learning material for the learner and is regarded as one of the essential aspects of the total teaching and learning process (Awasthi, 2006).

Another point leading to the significance of textbooks lie behind the notion Hutchinson and Torres (1994) have held:

The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in various countries...No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook. (p.315)

Cunningsworth (1995) takes us a step further related to the other roles that a textbook plays, viewing a textbook as an effective resource for self-directed learning, a support for less experienced teachers, an effective source of presentation of materials, a source of ideas and activities, a syllabus, and a reference source for students.

Therefore, the dominant role that ELT textbooks play in the learning of EFL learners proves the importance of evaluation and selection of an appropriate textbook. On the other hand, it is necessary for teachers to make an evaluation in order to discriminate between all the textbooks on the market and choose the most appropriate ones in language teaching. As Cunningsworth (1995) maintains that teachers should ensure “that careful selection is made and that the materials selected closely reflect the needs of the learners and the aims, methods and values of the teaching program” (p. 7). Awasthi (2006) extends this view stating, “it is through the evaluation of textbook a teacher knows the content of the book, the style in which it is written, and its strength and weaknesses” (p. 5). Consequently, it is essential that teachers carefully apply explicit and systematic criteria for the evaluation of a particular textbook (Burns, 2003).

2. Theoretical and Empirical Studies
One of the common ways to evaluate textbooks is through the use of checklists based on generalizable criteria (Mustapha, 2008). Such checklists have been designed to help teachers...
make more objective judgments about what Hutchinson (1987, p. 37) believes to be, "the single most important decision that the language teacher has to make" (as cited in Davies, 2006, p. 4). As Gearing (1999) puts it, “Numerous evaluation checklists have been designed to help teachers make a systematic selection of textbooks” (p. 122). However, these checklists, he goes on to say, “vary in the extent to which they can be adapted to meet specific circumstances” (Gearing, 1999, p.122).

Ur (1996) offered a checklist for textbook evaluation which was composed of 19 features. Although the checklist seems easy to follow, includes clear terms, and considers several important detailed points, it is not balanced in terms of the features of language items, skills, physical aspects of a book, etc.

Sheldon (1988) suggested another checklist which contained two main sections: factual details and factors. Factual details included the title, publisher, author, physical size, price, duration of the course, target learner, teacher, and skill. Factors contained 53 questions classified under 17 major categories: rationale, availability, user definition, layout/graphics, accessibility, linkage, selection/grading, physical characteristics, appropriacy, authenticity, sufficiency, cultural bias, educational validity, stimulus/practical revision, flexibility, guidance, and overall value for money. The checklist considered both detailed and major points which seemed to be a good source of ideas or a reference in writing materials or developing checklists. However, Peterson (1998) found numerous problems with Sheldon’s checklist. For example, the checklist is not objective because much of the information obtained is from the author’s rationale. In addition, most of her questions can be answered by just looking at the table of contents, or examining the author’s rationale at the beginning of the book.

McDonough and Shaw (2005) proposed a two-stage model for textbook evaluation: external evaluation and internal evaluation. The external evaluation includes an examination of claims made by the author/publisher on the cover of the students and teachers' book, introduction and table of contents statements with respect to the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context and presentation of language items, the author’s views on language and methodology. The external evaluation also covers the other factors:

- Are the materials to be used as the main core course or to be supplementary to it?
- Is a teacher’s book in print and locally available?
- Is a vocabulary list included?
- What visual material does the book contain?
- Is the presentation clear or cluttered?
• Is the material too culturally biased or specific?
• Do the materials represent minority groups and/or women in a negative way?
• The inclusion of audio/video material and resultant cost;
• The inclusion of test.

Following this is an in-depth internal investigation of the material, “to analyse the extent to which the aforementioned factors in the external evaluation stage actually match up with the internal consistency and organization of the materials as stated by the author/publisher” (McDonough & Shaw, 2005, pp.66-67).

A number of practical studies on ELT textbook evaluation have been done to check the suitability of English language textbooks. In the case study, Litz (2005) conducted an evaluation of “English Firsthand 2” in South Korea. The purpose of the study was to determine the pedagogical value and suitability of the textbook towards the language program. He developed a series of textbook evaluation questionnaires which were provided to eight teachers and 500 students. The questionnaires consisted of points about:

A. practical considerations
B. layout and design
C. activities
D. skills
E. language type
F. subject and content
G. overall consensus

One important point is that the questionnaires contain comprehensible items and examine various aspects. However, since the rating system is based on 10-point scale, the users are not able to judge the appropriateness of each.

Jahangard (2007) also conducted an evaluation to identify the merits and demerits of four EFL textbooks taught at Iranian public high schools. Jahangard examined the textbooks with regard to 13 common criteria extracted from 10 materials evaluation checklists. Although most items in the checklist consider valuable points, the rating system is descriptive and it is not possible to display the results graphically.

In addition to the studies mentioned above, Razmjoo (2007) also evaluated the textbooks of the Iranian high school and private institutes (the Interchange series) descriptively and inferentially to identify the extent to which these textbooks represented Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles. These materials were analyzed by 20 experienced teachers of the two domains, using an evaluation scheme adapted from a hybrid
of available textbook evaluation schemes. The analysis of data indicated that, in contrast to high school textbooks, private institute textbooks highly represent the CLT principles.

In his MA thesis, Özdemir (2007) carried out an evaluation study to find out how the fourth grade students in public schools and the fourth grade English teachers evaluated the English course book "Time for English 4". To fulfill this aim, two questionnaires were administered to both teachers and students, and an interview was held with six teachers. The results of the study showed that both learners and teachers were satisfied with the course book in general, and they found it effective in meeting their needs related to language learning and teaching. The findings also showed that students were more satisfied with the course book than the teachers were.

More relevant to the present study, Alamri (2008) evaluated the quality of the Sixth Grade English Language Textbook for Saudi Boy's Schools. A comprehensive questionnaire was adapted from other pre-existing checklists (Tomlison, et al., 2001; Ereksoussy, 1993; Thein, 2006; Al-Hajailan, 2003; as cited in Alamri, 2008) to elicit the viewpoints of English language teachers and supervisors in Riyadh Educational Zone about the textbook. The questionnaire consisted of 64 closed-ended questions grouped under 12 main categories:

a) the general appearance  
b) design and illustration  
c) accompanying materials  
d) objectives  
e) topic contents  
f) language contents  
g) social and cultural contexts  
h) language skills  
i) teachability  
j) flexibility  
k) teaching methods  
l) practice and testing  

The study found that the textbook satisfied teachers' and supervisors' expectations regarding its design and illustration, accompanying materials, objectives, topic appropriateness, language component, socio-cultural contexts, skills development, teachability, flexibility, and activities. The results also revealed that there were no significant differences between the means of teachers and supervisors except on the flexibility of the textbook.
It is necessary to indicate that although the present study took most items of the questionnaire from Alamri’s checklist, the present study is distinctive from different perspectives. A number of changes were done to make the questionnaire suitable for the actual context of the study. The number of the questions was reduced to 40 in the present study. Another important point about the present study is that it considered both teachers’ and learners’ attitudes towards the textbooks since the researcher agrees with Çakit (2006) as he states “since the primary users of textbooks are the instructors and the learners, evaluation should be carried out while both parties are using the textbook so as to get their opinions about how the textbook works in the teaching learning situation” (p. 7).

2. Purpose of the Study
This study aimed to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and suitability of a series of EFL textbooks, Passages (2nd edition), which is taught to the advanced students in EFL private institutes in Iran. This series has been written by Jack C. Richards and Chuck Sandy in 2008. The researcher hopes to raise ELT teachers' awareness of how to carry out the evaluation procedure in a systematic way. In other words, this study provides appropriate guidance for ELT teachers and program administrators to find out strengths and weaknesses in the textbooks, make use strong points, and adapt or substitute from other textbooks. By achieving these objectives, it is hoped that the quality of ELT textbooks can be improved based on the perceptions and suggestions of the teachers and the students. As such, the present study seeks answers to the following questions:

1) To what extent are Iranian EFL teachers and students satisfied with the Passages series (2nd edition)?

2) Is there any statistically significant difference between the attitudes of the teachers and students towards Passages series (2nd edition)?

3. Method
3.1. Participants
The participants were 10 EFL teachers, attending and teaching advanced-level classrooms at the time of the study, and 30 advanced-level students who had already experienced the series and seemed capable enough in understanding the items of the questionnaires. All of the advanced level teachers and learners in selected EFL institutes were participated in the study to provide relevant information required to evaluate the series.
Most of the teachers (80%) were in their thirties while only two of them (20%) were over forty. They had at least three years of experience of teaching the textbooks in question, and had more than eleven years experience in teaching English as a foreign language in language teaching centers in Iran. Nearly all (90%) of the teachers held an M.A. degree. All of the learners were female and their ages were ranged from 18 to 21. Gender and age variables were controlled, as they were not related to the purpose of this particular study.

3.2. Instrumentation
A questionnaire was administered to gather the perceptions of both teachers and students on the content of the textbooks. The questionnaire with a likert scale format, modified version of Alamri’s (2008), consisted of two main parts: Part A, and Part B. Part A obtained background information about the teachers and the learners. Part B included 40 items grouped under eight main categories: (A) General Appearance; (B) Design and Illustration; (C) Accompanying Materials; (D) Topic Contents; (E) Language Contents; (F) Social and Cultural Contexts; (G) Language Skills; (H) Exercises and Activities. The weighting system was based on a four-point scale ranging from one up to four where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree.

3.3. Procedures and Data Collection
The questionnaire was first piloted with five linguists and specialists and 15 advanced-level students to judge its validity. After receiving feedback from the participating teachers and students, the necessary modifications were made in order to provide more valuable, interpretable responses. Then, 40 copies of the revised questionnaire were distributed among the teachers and students by the researcher.

It should be mentioned that, before enumerating the results, in order to determine the reliability of the results for the questionnaire, the internal consistency method was used. One of the most commonly used statistical techniques to estimate internal consistency reliability is Cronbach’s alpha (α) (Pallant, 2001). According to Radhakrishna (2007), a reliability coefficient (alpha) of .70 or higher is considered acceptable reliability. Overall reliability of all the eight sections in the questionnaire was 0.75, which are suitable for conducting such a study.

Finally, the items were evaluated on a four-point scale and they ranged between strongly disagree to strongly agree. Since the distributed questionnaires consisted of eight distinctive sections, the results of each were considered independently. The researcher found
percentage, frequency, mean, and standard deviation for individual items of the questionnaire.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the analyses of the results of the study which aims to investigate teachers’ and learners’ attitudes towards the EFT textbook series, Passages Second Edition, designed for advanced students. The results of the study were statistically treated to identify the frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviation for individual statements separately from the overall sample, and the overall mean and standard deviation for the main categories of the questionnaire. In addition, this section indicated statistically significant differences in the attitudes of teachers and learners towards the Passages series (2nd edition).

4.1. The Results of the Questionnaire

This part provides a detailed analysis of the data obtained through the questionnaires in order to answer the first research question of the study.

5.1.1. General Appearance

A number of the scholars have highlighted the attractiveness of the physical appearance of the materials (Cunningsworth, 1995; Daoud & Celce-Murcia, 1979; McDonough & Shaw, 2005). Table 1 shows the results obtained from the perceptions of both students and teachers about the general appearance of the series.

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General Appearance

As indicated in table 1, the mean scores for the statements related to this category ranges from 2.70 to 3.35. Most of the participants either agreed or strongly agreed with the statements of this category. It should also be noted that the results concerning the related items are similar to Aqel’s (2009) study. Similar to this study, the results revealed that the participants agreed on the attractiveness of the general shape of the textbook.

4.1.2. Design and Illustration

Table 2 presents the results of both students' and teachers' perceptions about the design and illustration of the series.

Table 2: Students’ and Teachers’ Views about Design and Illustration
With regard to Design and Illustration, participants’ perceptions were negative, with a total mean of 2.44. The exception to this pattern was Statement 4, in which over 87% of the participants thought that the layout and design are appropriate and clear, and Statement 6, where over 52% of the participants agreed that the series has a complete and detailed table of contents. The lowest value in this category (M=1.88, SD=.723) belonged to Statement 5, where only 15% of the participants believed that there is enough white space to achieve clarity. However, Tomlinson, et al. (2001) put emphasis on the importance of having "enough white space to provide relief and clarity" (p.89).

4.1.3. Accompanying Materials

Table 3 summarizes the results of both students' and teachers' perceptions about the accompanying materials.

Table 3: Students’ and Teachers’ Views about Accompanying Materials

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Findings presented in Table 3 indicate that more than half of the participants (52.5%) believed that the workbook that accompanies the series includes suitable supplementary activities. An extremely high percentage of the participants (97.5%) also supported that CD-ROM that accompanies the series is suitable. The use of CD-ROM and cassettes is one of the interesting and effective ways in the current generation of language teaching materials since they provide “the learners with opportunities to listen to the language being used” (Tomlinson, et al., 2001, p.90).

4.1.4. Topic Contents
Table 4 presents the results of both students' and teachers' opinions towards the effectiveness of topic contents of the series.

Table 4: Students’ and Teachers' Views about Topic Contents

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Table 4: Students’ and Teachers' Views about Topic Contents

The mean scores of the items related to this category show that the participants were satisfied with the topic contents of the series. In this respect, many researchers have highlighted the issue of topic appropriateness of a textbook (Sheldon, 1988; Cunningsworth, 1995; Hemsley, 1997; Littlejohn, 1998).

4.1.5. Language Contents

The evaluation of language components has been stressed in many of the studies (e.g. Cunningsworth, 1995; Daoud & Celce-Murcia, 1979; Hemsley, 1997; Tomlinson, 2003; Ur, 1996). Table 5 summarizes the results of the section related to the attitudes of both students' and teachers' towards the language contents of the series.

Table 5: Students’ and Teachers' Views about Language Contents

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<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.744</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>.807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>.744</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Students’ and Teachers' Views about Language Contents

As Table 5 indicates, the mean scores for the items related to this category ranges from 2.10 to 3.45. One of the most striking findings of this study was that a majority of the participants (72.5%) did not believe that the series includes adequate material for pronunciation work. However, the vast majority of the participants (90%) supported the statement that grammar rules are presented with clear and simple explanations (M=3.45, SD=.677). According to Cunningsworth (1995), it is through effective teaching of grammar that learners are equipped with "the ability to create their own utterances and use language for their own purpose" (p.32).

4.1.6. Social and Cultural Contexts
The appropriateness of the social and cultural contexts is one of the mostly mentioned criteria in evaluating a textbook or a teaching material by several researchers (Griffiths, 1995; McDonough & Shaw, 2005; Williams, 1983). Table 6 presents the results of students’ and teachers’ responses related to the social and cultural contexts in the series.

Table 6: Students’ and Teachers’ Views about Social and Cultural Contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that the participants found the Passages series (2nd edition) very effective in terms of the social and cultural contexts (M= 2.87, SD=.578). The highest mean in this category (M= 3.03, SD=.698) belongs to Statement 27, in which 77.5% of the participants believed that the series expresses positive views of ethnic origins, occupations, age groups, social groups and disability.

4.1.7. Language Skills

Table 7 presents the results of the responses given to the language skill part of the questionnaire.

Table 7: Students’ and Teachers’ Views about Language Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is evident from the table above that that teachers’ and students' perceptions about the language skills of the series seemed to be positive (M= 2.82, SD=.454). It should be mentioned that evaluating language skills is essential for most scholars (e.g., Garinger, 2002; McDonough & Shaw, 2005; Ur, 1996). However, it is obvious from the results that the material designers ignored the importance of the writing activities. Unlike the present study, the results of Alamri’s (2008) study revealed that there was a complete consensus that writing activities are suitable in terms of length, degree of accuracy, and amount of guidance.

4.1.8. Exercises and Activities

Many authors like Garinger (2002), Grant (1987), and Skierso (1991), perceived exercises and activities very important in the materials evaluation and included items related to the
particular aspect in their criteria and checklists. Table 8 indicates the results obtained from the attitudes of both students and teachers towards exercises and activities of the series.

Table 8: Students’ and Teachers’ Views about Exercises and Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F%</td>
<td>F%</td>
<td>F%</td>
<td>F%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>.516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercises and Activities 2.88 .350

The mean values for the statements related to this category ranged from 2.23 to 3.22. As indicated in table 8, the highest mean value is for Item 36 (M=3.22, SD=.577), in which 92.5% of the participants believed that every exercise has a clear direction. The lowest value in the eighth category belongs to Item 40 (M=2.23, SD=.698), where most of the participants (67.5%) believed that the series failed to provide models for final achievement tests.

Generally, the results showed that the participants were satisfied with the presentation of the exercises and activities of the series (M=2.88, SD=.350).

4.2. The Differences between Students’ and Teachers’ Ratings

In order to test for differences between the responses of the teachers and students with respect to the eight main categories, Mann Whitney U test was conducted. Table 9 outlines statistically significant differences between the ratings of the two groups, teachers and students.

Table 9: Equality and Variance between Teachers’ and Students’ Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Rank</th>
<th>Mann-Whitney U</th>
<th>Z</th>
<th>Asymp.Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Appearance</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>23.22</td>
<td>696.50</td>
<td>68.500*</td>
<td>-2.630</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>12.35</td>
<td>123.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Illustration</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>19.12</td>
<td>573.50</td>
<td>108.500</td>
<td>-1.307</td>
<td>.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>24.65</td>
<td>246.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accompanying Materials</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>18.33</td>
<td>550.00</td>
<td>85.000*</td>
<td>-2.165</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>270.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Contents</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>21.38</td>
<td>641.50</td>
<td>123.500</td>
<td>-.838</td>
<td>.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>17.85</td>
<td>178.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Contents</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>21.15</td>
<td>634.50</td>
<td>130.500</td>
<td>-.619</td>
<td>.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>18.55</td>
<td>185.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Cultural Contexts</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>20.02</td>
<td>600.50</td>
<td>135.500</td>
<td>-.464</td>
<td>.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>21.95</td>
<td>219.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Skills</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>552.00</td>
<td>87.000*</td>
<td>-1.987</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>26.80</td>
<td>268.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises and Activities</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>19.88</td>
<td>596.50</td>
<td>131.500</td>
<td>-.583</td>
<td>.560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>22.35</td>
<td>223.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the Mann Whitney U test indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the three main categories between students' and teachers' ratings of the questionnaire since their probability value (p) is less than 0.05. These categories are General Appearance, Accompanying Materials, and Language Skills. Teachers rated the categories of the questionnaire more highly than the students, except for General Appearance, which the students rated more favorably than the teachers. The different needs, interests, and expectation of two groups might be the reasons behind these differences.

5. Conclusion

The study tried to evaluate the effectiveness of the Passages series (2nd edition) by considering both teachers’ and students’ perceptions. The results indicated that both of the groups were satisfied with the series at a very high level, except for its design and illustration. The results also showed that the students and the teachers seemed to share the same ideas about the series except on the three categories; namely, General Appearance, Accompanying Materials, and Language Skills. The present study has provided certain pedagogical implications. It is hoped that these suggestions would be a great help for EFL teachers, English textbook developers, publishers, educational administrators, and policy makers in the future development of teaching materials.

1. It is important for ELT teachers to become more aware of and familiar with how to make the most effective use of a textbook, and how to conduct materials evaluation and adaptation for materials since “Teaching materials have a direct influence on the process of learning and teaching” (Alamri, 2008, p.3). In addition, teachers must train their learners some of the learning strategies to take responsibility for their own learning and be independent learners. As Litz (2005) points out: the promotion of student self-directed and metacognitive learning is integral in allowing students to become increasingly aware of their own abilities to remember, learn, and solve problems and more strategic and reflective in their learning, thinking, and problem solving.(p. 14)

2. It is also recommended that workshop, programs, and seminars be held for EFL teachers in order to help them exchange experiences and increase their level of knowledge about teaching English language textbooks.

3. It is of crucial importance to carry out a detailed needs analysis before designing a textbook. Textbook designers must take into account teachers and students’ needs and
expectations in developing teaching materials. Teachers and students should be involved in the process of designing textbooks because “successful educational planning, curriculum development, syllabus design, materials development or most other educational decisions” depend purely on the involvement of teachers and learners (Oghli, 2009, p.58).

4. It is also of crucial importance to appreciate the teachers’ and learners’ views in all areas of education including the selection, production, evaluation, and adaptation of language teaching materials.

5. One of the major finding of the study was that in general the participants were negative about the design and illustrations of the series. Including a variety of attractive illustrations is crucial to stimulate creativity and facilitate students’ learning. Moreover, enough white space should be provided for the learners to achieve clarity.

6. Textbooks should be evaluated and reevaluated after being designed and instruction to make sure they meet the needs and interests of the students and teachers.

7. Collaboration between teachers and textbook designers should be made to maximize the students’ learning since “it’s the teachers who are closer to the students, and know better about the needs or the scarcity of the students” (Wang, 2005, p. 114).

Based on the interpretations of the findings of the present study, the following suggestions for future research can be made:

• Conducting a further study for Passages 1(2nd edition) that is designed for the upper-intermediate level in the series in order to observe the cohesiveness.
• Conducting evaluative studies on the other EFL textbooks, especially elementary, intermediate, or upper-intermediate, with a much larger number of students and teachers.
• Investigating the whole program for teaching English as foreign language in Iran.
• Considering the influence of other variables such as age, gender, situation, the teaching experience, cultural and language backgrounds.
• Conducting class observation and interview with learners and teachers.

References


Appendix

TEXTBOOK EVALUATION TOOL (TET)

Part A: Personal Information

Name/Surname (optional): ......................................... Age: ...........................................

1. Are you a student?         Yes         ....         No.........
   Length of studying English:
   a. Less than one year       b. 1-5 years       c. 6-10 years  
   d. 11-15 years           e. 16-20 years       f. More than 20 years

2. Are you an English teacher?   Yes ....         No.........
   Qualification:              a) PhD                b) MA                   c) BA
   English Teaching Experience:
   a. Less than one year       b. 1-2 years       c. 3-5 years  
   d. 5-10 years            e. 11-15 years           f. 16-20 years                      g. More than 20 years

Part B: Please read the statements below carefully and put a tick (√) next to the item which best reflects your view.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-General Appearance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The cover is informative and attractive.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The font type and size used in the series is appropriate for the learners.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Every lesson is given an appropriate title.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B- Design and Illustration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The layout and design is appropriate and clear.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>There is enough white space to achieve clarity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The series has a complete and detailed table of contents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The series has an appropriate glossary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The illustrations are varied and attractive.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The illustrations stimulate students to be creative.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The illustrations are functional.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The illustrations facilitate students' learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-Accompanying Materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The workbook that accompanies the series includes suitable supplementary activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The CD-ROM that accompanies the series is suitable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D- Topic Contents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The topics of the series are interesting and motivating to learners.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The topics encourage students to express their own views.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The series avoids potentially embarrassing or disturbing topics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The topics allow students to think critically.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Paragraph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The topics are generally realistic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td><strong>E- Language Contents</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Grammar rules are presented with clear and simple explanations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The series includes adequate materials for teaching vocabulary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>The series includes adequate material for pronunciation work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Pronunciation is built through different types of activities, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Language contents suit students’ language needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>The materials for teaching grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation are graded in an appropriate manner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>F- Social and Cultural Contexts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The social and cultural contexts in the series are comprehensible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Students can learn about the inner lives of the characters used in the series.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The series expresses positive views of ethnic origins, occupations, age groups, social groups and disability.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td><strong>G- Language Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>The four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are adequately covered.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>There is material for integrated skills work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Listening material is well recorded, as authentic as possible, and accompanied by background information, questions, and activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>There is sufficient reading material. (There is a range of varied and interesting reading text that can engage students cognitively and effectively.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>There is sufficient material for spoken English (e.g. dialogues, role-plays, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Writing activities are suitable in terms of length, degree of accuracy, and amount of guidance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td><strong>H- Activities and Exercises</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The series provides a variety of meaningful and mechanical exercises and activities to practice language items and skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>The series provides communicative exercises and activities that help students carry out their communicative tasks in real life.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Every exercise has a clear direction.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>There are a reasonable and appropriate number of exercises.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>The tests are valid and contain correct language.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>The series provides periodical revisions for diagnostic purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>The series provides models for final achievement tests.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Title
Assessment of Marked thematic Structures in the Translated and Non-Translated Persuasive Texts

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Abstract
The present study aims to investigate marked thematization strategies in the translated and non-translated persuasive texts. To this end, the translated versions of one of the leading newspapers in the United States, The New York Times, and the original versions of Hamshahri newspaper (an Iranian counterpart) were chosen. Based on the analysis of textual features and marked and unmarked themes of 12 translated and non-translated version of the opinion articles from The New York Times and Hamshahi (6 from each), this study aimed to find out how the translators organize their themes into marked themes and how these organizations are related to the non-translated versions. Marked themes were classified based on Grzegorek's (1984) classification. Furthermore, Chi-Square test was employed to compare and contrast the obtained frequencies to see the statistically significant differences. The results revealed that there were no significant differences between marked thematic structures of the texts. The results of the Chi-Square test revealed that marked thematic sentences similarly were realized in the translated and non-translated versions. Generally, topicalization was the most frequent types of marked thematic structure used in both kinds of texts. As a result thematic structure is a greatly useful and important tool in translating. Translators should have enough knowledge about marked thematic structures in the creation and interpretation of texts.
Keywords: Thematization Patterns; Marked Theme; Theme and Rheme; Systemic Functional Grammar, Translated and Non-Translated Persuasive Texts

1. Introduction
Theme/rheme plays a major role in organizing the message and in enabling it to be communicated and understood clearly (Halliday, 1994). Whatever is chosen to be the first place, will influence the hearer/reader's interpretation of everything that comes next in the discourse since it will constitute the initial textual context for everything that follows (Alonso, Belmonte & McCabe, 1998).

Theme and rheme analysis is an area that has attracted the attention of some translation scholars. The basic premise is that sentences consist of themes, which present known, context-dependent information, and rhemes, which present new, context-independent information. Because they represent new information, it is rhemes rather than themes which push text development forward.

Thematization is one of the subcategories of textual analysis. Textual analysis is the analysis of the text in terms of its textual features or its texture. Thematization strategies are what the writer chooses as the theme of the clause.

The results of Jallilifar's (2010) research on theme indicated overall similarities in both journals regarding different types of theme and patterns of thematic progression. But there were significant differences in the number and the context of the usage of different patterns of thematic progression in the introduction.

2. Objectives of the Study
The aim of this study, then, is to emphasize on the importance of Marked thematization patterns especially in newspaper discourse. The investigation also aims at comparing the translated and non-translated opinion articles with regard to the use of marked themes.

The study will focus on two primary objectives:
1. To determine the relationship between thematization patterns and newspaper discourse.
2. To indicate the degree of homogeneity between the translated and non-translated versions of persuasive texts with regard to the use of marked themes.

This study is devoted to characterize marked thematization patterns or theme/rheme organization in a sample of translations and non-translations in the field of newspaper discourse.
3. Thematization Patterns

According to Lotfipour-Saedi (1991), the texture of a text can be characterized by textual features of 1) thematization strategies, 2) schematic structure, 3) paralanguage and 4) cohesion (cited in Yarmohammadi, 1995).

Halliday writes: "the ‘textual’ component in language is the set of options by means of which a speaker or writer is enabled to create texts" (Halliday 1994, p. 161). One key choice in the textual configuration of discourse is that of what will appear in Theme position; indeed, for Halliday (1985, p. 53), "the textual function of the clause is that of constructing a message" and the Theme/Rheme structure is the "basic form of the organization of the clause as message". In the organization of discourse, then, an important concern is which participant, process or circumstance will be chosen as the ideational point of departure for the message.

According to Bell (1991), thematization patterns organize the initiation of the clause and acts to direct the attention of the receiver of the message to the parts the sender wishes to emphasize.

While explaining something to another person, whether in speech or writing, we try to organize what we say in a way that makes it easier for the reader to understand (Bloor and Bloor, 1995). The structuring of language as a message is realized in the thematic structure of the constituent clauses of a text.

Not (1996) asserts that thematic development is necessary for the construction of an optimally coherent and grammatically cohesive structured text. The investigation of thematization patterns in scientific texts were carried out by Dubois (1987) and by Nwogu and Bloor (1991). Both studies were based on naturally occurring data and found that the simple pattern and the constant pattern are frequent.

Thematization is the process of arranging theme, rheme patterns in a text. Angela Downing (2001) points that the essential nature of a text lies largely in terms of its semantic coherence and the reason for less than optimal coherence may be that the writer is simply not good at controlling the mass of new information that is successively accumulated as the text unfolds. This mass of information is mostly so extensive that the writer should make a choice, and this choice, is determined directly or indirectly by the selection of utterance Theme.

Grzegorek (1984) introduces four main types of thematization in English: (1) passivization, (2) clefts and pseudo-clefts, (3) topicalization, left-dislocation, focus
movement, and (4) presentation sentences with proposed expressions. She compares these thematization types with those existing in Polish. She says that thematization is governed by a variety of factors, most of which are of pragmatic rather than purely syntactic nature.

Halliday (1994) who is the main representative of the positional approach to the definition of theme characterizes thematization in English as the process of shifting various sentence elements to the initial position plus any grammatical changes within a sentence, which are caused by such a movement. According to Fries (1983) different discourse genres (i.e., narratives, descriptives, argumentatives, and so on) have different patterns of thematic progression. For example, an argumentative text can be characterized by high proportion of cross-reference from the rheme of one sentence to the theme of the text.

According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), coherence refers to the way a group of clauses or sentences relate to the context. A text is cohered when one part of a text follows another part of the text. The outcome of coherence is that each part of the text creates a context within which the next bit of the text is interpreted. Then, there is a relationship between what is said or written and what was said or written a moment ago. Reid (2000, p. 116) says that coherence means "to stick together". One way writers make a text cohesive is through ‘thematic’ organization (Halliday and Hassan, 1976). Halliday (1976) defined coherence as the probability of connecting what has been mentioned above. To ensure the successful development of a topic, the application of various techniques for cohesion is vital. Some forms of cohesion are realized through the grammar and others through vocabulary (Halliday, 1976). Cohesion contributes to coherence. Thematic progression is a kind of cohesion (Halliday, 1976). According to Danes, thematic progression means "the choice and ordering of utterance themes, their mutual concatenation and hierarchy, as well as their relationship to the hyperthemes of the superior text units (such as paragraph, chapter...) to the whole of the text and to the situation" (Danes, 1974, p. 114).

Halliday (1985, p. 67) explained that thematic progression is of crucial importance to the internal relation between sentences in the text. Thematic progression contributes to text coherence in that it lets us know what the text is about and where the text is going. By analyzing the thematic structure of a text, "we can gain an insight into its texture and understand how the writer made clear to us the nature of his underlying concerns".

4. Theme and Rheme
Theme and rheme analysis is an area that has been the center of some translation scholars’ attention (see Grzegorek 1984, Newmark 1988, Bell 1991, Baker 1992, Halliday 1994, among others).

Topic is a non-structural discourse category which describes what the text is about (Brown & Yule, 1983). Given information is the information that can be predicted or which belongs to that knowledge shared by both listener and speaker, whereas new information is that information which is contextually non-retrievable and says something about the given (Prince, 1981). According to Halliday (1994), the grammatical subject is the one that of which something is predicated. Also, Halliday (1994) distinguishes three different kinds of subject. Grammatical subject which is defined above, psychological subject which is the concern of the message and the logical subject which is the doer of an action. But Halliday (1994) used three equivalent terms for these expressions. He used theme for psychological subject, subject for grammatical subject and actor for logical subject.

Halliday believes that each clause conveys a message that has two parts, i.e., what comes first or the theme, and what comes last or the rheme. The theme usually constrains given information and the rheme, new information (1994).

In the English language, the theme includes the lexical items (up to and including the first participant, process or circumstance) taking first position in the clause. These lexical items signal what the message will be about (White, 2000). According to Bloor and Bloor (1995), theme in English is the idea represented by the constituent at the starting of the clause.

Fries (1983, p. 118) makes the point that "there are good and sufficient internal grammatical reasons to say that the beginning is special for some reason" and goes on to argue that "initial position in the sentence, or sentence level Theme, means ‘point of departure of the sentence as message’" (ibid, p. 119). Martin (1992) provides evidence which indicates that "point of departure does indeed mean something more than coming first" (p. 151).

The Theme is the first constituent of a clause (Thompson, 2004). White (2000, p. 153) describes it as the "angle or departure of a clause…[it] is what each utterance is ‘about’…" The Theme is the starting point of a clause and includes the first Participant, Process or Circumstance (White, 2000, p. 154). Additionally, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004 cited in Thompson, 2004, p. 143) explain the Theme as "that which locates and orients the clause within its context."
According to Fairclough (1994), the Theme is the text producer's point of departure in a clause, and generally corresponds to what is taken to be 'given' information, that is information already known or established for text producers and interpreters. For Brown and Yule (1983), Theme is not only the starting point of the message, but it also has a role of connecting to what has been said. They assume that it is the left-most constituent of the sentence which has two important functions:

1) It maintains a coherent point of view by connecting back and linking into the previous discourse.
2) It serves as a point of departure for the further development of the discourse (p. 133).

Halliday (1994) provides different definitions for theme which will be listed as follows:

"1. The theme is what is being talked about, the point of departure for the clause as a message.
2. The English clause consists of a theme and a rheme. The theme of the clause is the element which, in English, is put in the first position.
3. The theme is the statement which serves as the point of departure of the message.
4. Within that configuration, the theme is the starting point for the message; it is what the clause is going to be about" (Cited in Fries, 1995, p. 3).

For Strauss and Corbin (1990), the links between expressions and themes are "conceptual labels placed on discrete happenings, events, and other instances of phenomena". Themes, or categories, are the classification of more discrete concepts. "This classification is discovered when concepts are compared one against another and appear to pertain to a similar phenomenon. Thus, the concepts are grouped together under a higher order; more abstract concepts are called a category" (p. 61). Halliday (1970) refers to theme as a line of nails on the wall. The contents of the texts are carried along the nail line. He suggests that theme is "what the clause is about", and no matter what the author wants to talk about, he must arrange the relative information around this topic in a logic order, with the thematic structure arranged distinguishingly according to the specific genres and aims. In a word, thematic structure is one of the necessary conditions for creating discourse coherence.

5. Markedness

In linguistics, markedness refers to the way words are changed or added to give a special meaning. The unmarked choice is just the normal meaning. Gosden (1996) asserts that the
manipulation of Unmarked and Marked thematic choices is a means of achieving textual cohesion and coherence.

Marked theme is considered as a cover term consisting of different classifications like Topicalization, Left-dislocation, Cleft and Pseudo-cleft sentences. According to Grzegorek (1984), a thematic structure is communicatively marked when it does not follow the sequence from the old to the new information. It is obvious that an unmarked theme shows a grammatical subject that forms the point of departure while the marked theme employs a technique that fronts other information. The marked theme uses three main context frames for this purpose: Conjunctive/Modal adjunct and Conjunctions, Prepositional and Adverbal Phrases and Subordinate Clauses and Nonfinite Clause (Gosden, 1992). According to Eggins (1993) the term “Unmarked” simply means ‘most typical/usual’, while “Marked” means ‘atypical’/‘unusual’. Eggins further notes that Theme predication is another strategy to producing Marked Themes. To Eggins, all predicated Themes are in some sense Marked, since the subject of the original clause is made Rheme in the predicated version. She notes that skillful writers choose Marked Themes to add emphasis to their texts.

According to Halliday (1985), theme plays an essential role in the way discourse is organized. Theme is known and context-dependent information while rheme is new and context independent information. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 65) believe that "As a message structure, therefore, a clause consists of theme accompanied by a rheme; and the structure is expressed by the order- whatever is chosen as the theme is put first". Alice Davidson (1980) suggests the more marked the construction, the more likely that an implicated meaning will be that which the utterance is intended to convey (Cited in Brown & Yule, 1983).

Simply put, the unmarked member of any pair is the most natural, the most frequent, the simplest, the more basic, the logically prior, the more universal, the first learned, the one implied by the marked member; the one understood, unstated, taken for granted, ordinary, usual., etc.

Baker (1992) believes that the degree of markedness will depend on the frequency with which the element in question generally occurs in theme position and the extent to which it is normally mobile within the clause.

Based on Bell (1991) view, marked theme in English is signaled by predicting, proposing, clefting, or fronting of the theme and combinations of these options. It is the theme where the writer consciously or unconsciously affects the organization of the text by choosing something other than the subject for the starting point of their message. Fries
(1983) claim that marked themes are more truly thematic than non-marked themes. If 'theme' is everything located at the beginning of the sentence, as a result of choice, then markedness of theme or use of special resource to put complements, objects and verbs in initial position betrays a deliberate choice.

6. Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory, founded by Halliday views languages as a social semiotic resource people use to accomplish their purposes by expressing meaning in context.

Systemic Functional Linguistics or SFL concerns language as a system of meaning. This argumentation is in line with Halliday in Bloor and Bloor (2004, p. 2). "For SFL, a language is ‘a system of meanings’. That is to say that when people use language, their language acts, produce or, or more technically, construct meaning." According to Weil (1844 as cited in Wang, 2007), the theoretical principles underlying the study of theme and rheme are derived mainly from the Systemic-Functional Linguistics. "In the systemic functional approach to language study, each sentence encodes not just one, but three meanings simultaneously, and these meanings are related to the three different and very basic functions of language" (Butt et al., 2003 p. 6). Derewianka (2001, p. 256) says, "Halliday’s approach has been to develop a model of grammar which provides a clear relationship between functions and grammatical systems". Such an approach reflects Halliday’s belief that, "language is as it is because of its function in social structures" (Halliday, 1973, cited in Fairclough, 1992, p. 26).

Butt (2000, p. 29) says that SFG redefines traditional grammar to recognize that, "words have functions as well as class, and that how a word functions can tell us more than any description of words in terms of class can about the piece of language, where it occurs, the person who chose to use it in that function, and the culture that surrounds the person and the message".

Halliday (1985, p. xiv) defines systemic theory as "a theory of meaning as choice, by which a language, or any other semiotic system, is interpreted as networks of interlocking options". According to Martin, Matthiessen, and Painter (1997, p. 1) "Functional grammar is a way of looking at grammar in terms of how grammar is used".

Within SFL the clause is the main constituent by which language is communicated. "The clause is the fundamental meaning structure in our linguistic communication with each other" (Butt et al. 2003, p. 33). A clause can be described as "any stretch of language centered on a
verbal group "(Thompson, 2004, p. 17). In systemic functional grammar (SFG) (Halliday, 1994, 2000; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), texts are viewed as social processes and the context of a text is manifested through language, especially on the level of lexicogrammar. In the view of SFG, clause is the basic linguistic unit which can be divided into three constituent parts: (i) the process itself; (ii) participants in the process; (iii) circumstances associated with the process. These parts construct the frame of reference for interpreting our experience of happening, doing, sensing, meaning, being and becoming.

To Martin and Rose (2007), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a big multi-perspectival theory with more dimensions in its theory banks that might be required for any one job. SFL is called systemic because compared with other theories it foregrounds the organization of language as options for meaning and is also functional because it interprets the design of language with respect to ways people use it to live. A key concept in Halliday's approach is the "context of situation" which obtains "through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand, and the functional organization of language on the other" (Halliday, 1985, p. 11). According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), functional grammar tries to explain language in actual use and focus on text and their context. Systemic functional grammar concerns not only with structure but also how those structures construct meaning. The most prominent unit in functional grammar is clause rather than sentences. The principle unit of analysis in SFG is text, which is defined as any kind of passage, whether spoken or written that makes a unified whole. The term "unified whole" is described as texture which is claimed to be the distinguishing feature of texts (Eggins, 2004). According to Halliday (1999), systemic functional linguistics can be efficiently employed to help us analyze different types of texts and relate them to the original context in which they were produced as well as their general background—for whom it is written, what its angle is on the subject matter, and so on.

7. Previous research on thematization
Various scholars have in recent years contributed to the study of textuality of texts by analyzing their theme, thematic structure, and thematic progression in text across different languages to find out how academic texts unfold thematically. Hasselgard (2004) worked on thematic structures in 1200 sentences in English and their translation in Norwegian. She found that there were significant differences between these two languages regarding the grammatical structure of sentence openings.
Zhou (2006) worked on the theme construction of Chinese language showing some grammatical dissimilarity with English. Working on interpersonal metafunction, she tried to show whether advertisement texts in Chinese and English journals engender similarities in interpersonal metafunction. Results indicated that the modal themes were not prevalent across both corpora, and so the advertisement texts did not engender similarities in interpersonal metafunction across two languages.

Moreover, Jallilifar (2009) applied a research on *Thematic Development in English and Translated Academic Texts*. He investigates thematic development and progression in English academic texts and their translations in Persian. The corpus was selected from the first three pages of the first chapters of nine English applied linguistics books and their translation versions. Applying Halliday's (1994) thematic organization and McCabe's (1999) thematic progression, the study reveals significant differences in the original texts and their translations regarding thematic schemes. The study concludes that both authors and translators must be conscious of these tools in order to use them effectively and create more cohesive texts.

Jallilifar and Khedri (2011) scrutinized thematic development and progression in English academic texts and their translations in Persian. Applying Halliday's (1994) thematic organization and McCabe's (1999) thematic progression, they analyzed sample academic texts selected from the first three pages of the first chapters of nine English applied linguistics books and their translation versions that were representatives of applied linguistics books taught in the Iranian universities at undergraduate and graduate levels. Analyses of original texts and their Persian counterparts indicated that there were significant differences between the two text types regarding thematic development and progression especially in terms of unmarked and multiple themes.

8. Methodology
8.1. Materials
The data of this research came from the translations from the opinion column of an important newspaper: The New York Times, from the United States and the original versions of the Hamshahri newspaper. Of the 120 (60 from each) articles collected from the online archives of these newspapers, 12 texts (6 from each) were finally chosen for the analysis since there was a need to control the different variables involved in the writing of the texts and the translations. First, a careful selection was made among the texts collected from the
newspapers in order to choose those written by Iranians (as Native-Persian Speaking writers) and those translated by Iranians (as English-to-Persian translators). In order to have a focused analysis of the texts, and prevent the biased vision of the texts, the choice of topic was controlled in this research. The selected opinion articles cover the following topics: health issues; and environmental issue.

8.2. Procedure

The texts were analyzed for identification of marked thematization patterns in Persian newspapers and the English to Persian translations. Marked themes were analyzed to see the degree of homogeneity between the selected texts. In general, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis were employed in this study. Qualitative analysis was carried out in order to identify and categorize thematization patterns. Quantitative analysis, on the other hand, was conducted to determine the occurrences of marked themes in translated and non-translated versions of the mentioned newspapers. In order to carry out this study the following steps were taken: The first step was to choose the 12 (6 from each) persuasive texts among 120 (60 from each) articles. The articles were chosen based on specific topics (i.e., health issues, environmental issues). Then the articles from The New York Times were given to a professional translator to be translated, afterwards the translated versions were given to another professional translator to be revised. The next step was to read the original Persian newspaper texts and identify the sentences containing Marked thematic sentences. The next step was to read the Persian translations of The New York Times translated by Iranian translators to find the marked thematization patterns used in these texts. Halliday's (1960) SFG was used as the framework of the study. It is one of the most powerful models of grammatical theory that has been constructed for the purpose of text analysis. SFG refers to how messages are organized in relation to other messages to create coherence and cohesion. He classified themes into textual, interpersonal, and topical. Textual theme is concerned with theme and rheme and was the focus of the present study. The element of the clause which is in first position is known as the theme, and everything that follows is the rheme. The analysis of the selected texts was closely based on Grzegorek (1984) taxonomy of marked themes which are Topicalization, Left-Dislocation, Cleft and Pseudo cleft sentences. After identifying and categorizing marked thematic structures, a quantitative analysis was conducted to determine the frequency of marked thematic structures to find the differences between the four groups in this regard. Then, Chi-Square test was employed to compare and contrast the obtained frequencies to see the statistically significant differences. In sum, the data were analyzed using the SPSS (Statistics
Package for Social Sciences). The data calculated with computational analysis. In fact, the Chi-Square test was employed to see whether the differences between the two sets of data with regard to the occurrences of Marked themes were significant.

9. Results

This section elaborates the total frequency of classification of Marked thematic structures in the translated and non-translated versions of the two selected persuasive texts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marked thematic sentences</th>
<th>Non-translated versions</th>
<th>Translated versions</th>
<th>Chi-Square Test Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topicalization</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>66.97</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left-Dislocation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.76</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleft sentences</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.42</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-cleft sentences</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.84</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of marked thematic sentences</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 1, there are 109 cases of marked thematic structures in original versions of persuasive texts while there are 103 cases of marked thematic structures in the translated versions. Persian writers have applied TOP (66.97%) more than other classifications. They then have used LD (13.76%) and PCL (12.84%) more. Also, they have employed low frequency of the CL (6.42%). According to Table, the translators have applied Top (67.96%) more than other classifications. They, then, have used LD (15.53%) more. Furthermore, they have employed a low frequency of the PCL (10.67%). The least frequency of classification of marked themes refers to the CL (5.82%). TOP was at the highest level in both kinds of texts, 73 cases in the original persuasive texts and 70 cases in the translated persuasive texts. Chi-Square test was employed to compare and contrast the obtained frequencies to see the statistically significant differences between the translated and non-translated persuasive texts. As the Chi-Square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated, the value of .864 was larger than the alpha value of .05, so the
researcher concluded that the result is not significant. This means that there were no significant differences between the two versions. There was no association between them.

10. Discussion and Conclusion

As the Chi-Square test indicated, there were no significant differences between marked thematic structures of the translated and non-translated versions of persuasive texts. In other words, there was no association between the two kinds of texts. Therefore, Marked thematic structures similarly realized in the Persian original persuasive texts and the English to Persian translations of the same kind of texts.

The findings of this research were in line with Forey's (2002) study. He concluded that, theme plays an important role in organizing the text. The present research also emphasized identification of theme by translators in organizing the text and conveying the message to readers. Wang's (2007) research was in line with the present study.

This paper was an attempt to examine marked thematic structures in the translated and non-translated versions of persuasive texts. The results revealed that marked thematic structures were present in both kinds of texts. These findings contribute evidence to support the view that thematic structure is a greatly useful and important tool in translation. It increases the relationship and connection between ideas in the text.

Translators should get mastery over the grammar and structure of the target language, particularly in terms of thematic structure. They should try to convert information effectively, clearly and creating cohesive text. The cohesion in texts can be improved by concentration on thematic organization in texts.

Ventola (1995) contends that "the analysis of theme/rheme structures in the clauses and the thematic progression helps us to see whether the text is unsuccessful in its realizations"(p. 98). She adds that sometimes readers may find texts fuzzy since they consider some odd thematic structures that are not typical of the target language. The fault in these texts is very often placed on the author’s failures of argumentation and rhetorical skills; it is presumed that the author’s logic is not functioning well and his/her argumentation and rhetoric are seen to fail. But often the original argumentation is clear and well-structured rhetorically in the source text; it is the translation that fails and distorts the argumentative and rhetorical patterns (Ventola, 1995).

Translators can apply the results of this study in translating texts. The obtained results
can help them in translating process in terms of appropriate theme selection, conveying the message more clearly, developing cohesion in discourse, creating a cohesive text, helping them to avoid the use of odd thematic structures that are not typical of the target language and make the text fuzzy, and helping readers to comprehend the text effectively. It can be assumed that implications of this study will be helpful for translators as well as those who teach English grammar to Persian language. The findings of this study hopefully help the translators with a wider and more comprehensible view point about the process of translating to get familiar with the possible challenges in the translating process, preserve marked thematic structures, and convey the correct message.

References

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Title

Students’ perception of teachers’ attitudes and learning environment and its relation to risk-taking

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Abstract

Extensive research has been carried out on risk-taking. Most of the studies related to risk-taking have attempted to investigate the relationship between this personality factor and situational and individual factors as well as other personality factors. In the present study, the researcher wants to identify whether there is any relationship between Iranian second language learners’ risk-taking and their perception of teachers’ attitudes and learning environment. The researcher gathered data using three instruments. Results of the study revealed that there was a positive relationship between L2 learners’ perception of teachers’ attitude/learning environment and their risk-taking to speak English, in general. But there wasn’t a significant relationship between L2 learners’ perception of teachers’ attitude and learning environment. Providing positive learning environment in EFL classrooms to foster risk-taking was recommended. It was also recommended that EFL teachers should reduce threatening learning environment and promote L2 learners level of risk-taking through adapting different teaching strategies.
Keywords: perception of teachers’ attitude, perception of learning environment, risk-taking

1. Introduction

It is widely noticed that students may attain differing levels of achievement in second or foreign language (SL/FL) learning, even in the same learning situation. In order to understand this phenomenon, researchers have explored numerous factors that may affect language learning with focus on cognitive (e.g. language aptitude, cognitive ability, strategy use), affective (e.g. anxiety, motivation, self-confidence, risk-taking), personality (extroversion, locus of control), and/or demographic (e.g. age, gender) variables (Brown, 1987; Ehrman & Oxford, 1990, 1995; Gardner, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997; Zhang & Liu, 2008). Among these variables, risk-taking is the core of this study.

1.1 Students’ perception of teachers’ attitudes and learning environment

Perception includes all processes associated with the recognition, transformation and organization of sensory information (Little, 1999). When the student presents a non-evaluative perception, there is an opportunity for a clearer presentation. The assertion that student’s perception may hold value is a valid one. This perception of the student is a worthwhile point of departure for teacher development; for example research with college students has suggested that the perception of teacher competency is an indicator of future student achievement with their instructor (Myers & Bryant, 2004).

Students have distinct preferences for their professors for both professorial qualities such as classroom management and teaching styles (Beishline & Holmes, 1997) as well as personal qualities such as humor and approachability (Adamson, O’Kane, & Shevlin, 2005; Gurung & Vespia, 2007). However, professors and students have different perceptions of which behaviors an ideal professor should possess (Das & El-Sabban, 1996). Professors and students also disagree about which behaviors professors actually possess. So, the teachers should provide their students with a sense of security and encourage them to voice their opinion. Once the students are not afraid of being blamed and humiliated when they talk, they will take part in the class willingly and do well in second language acquisition.

Not a widely researched topic, teachers’ attitudes as perceived by students may have a drastic effect on students’ ability to learn, their self-esteem, and ultimately their academic success. An earlier study found that, students’ perceptions of support, interest, and respect
received from their teachers was the most influential element of academic motivation, effort, and achievement (Zimmerman, Khoury, Vega, Gil, & Warheit, 1995).

1.2 Risk-taking behavior

Breakwell (2007) defined risk in terms of two dimensions, probabilities and effects. Risk is the probability of a particular adverse event occurring and the extent of the harm associated with that event. Yates and Stone (1992) proposed that risk constructs are “(a) potential losses, (b) the significance of those losses, and (c) the uncertainty of those losses” (p. 4). Moreover, Beebe (1983) defined risk-taking as “a situation where an individual has to make a decision involving choice between alternatives of different desirability” (p. 39).

Beebe (1983) held that L2 learning involves taking the risk of various kinds, which can include in-classroom risks: a smirk from classmates, a bad grade, and fear of looking ridiculous; and outside classroom risks: fear of alienation, fear of miscommunication, and the worst of all, fear of identity loss. Additionally, L2 learners’ perceptions of the risk of looking foolish is greater in the presence of peers from their own country than when with native speakers of English. They know they cannot compete with native speakers of English in speaking, but they are afraid of being compared among their peers. He carried out a comprehensive research on the relationship between risk-taking and interviewer ethnicity, accuracy and avoidance. She found that all these situational factors could affect risk-taking level of the interviewees.

The classroom is a critical place for student interpersonal and educational development (Pierce, 1994). As Krupa-Kwiatkowski (1998, p.133) claimed, ‘interaction involves participation, personal engagement, and the taking of initiative in some way, activities that in turn are hypothesized to trigger cognitive processes conducive to language learning’. Since oral participation is the most observable behavior, much research has focused on it and its relationship with students’ English proficiency or performance (Ely, 1986; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Spada, 1986; Swain, 1985; Tsou, 2005). Though many second/foreign language (SL/FL) learners, especially Asian language learners reported a desire to be active and independent learners and to be involved in interpersonal interactions in the target language (Liu & Jackson, 2011; Littlewood, 2000), in numerous SL/FL learning situations, learners, especially Asian learners, have been observed to be quiet in language classrooms, rarely responding to teachers’ questions, or actively taking part in classroom interactions (Liu, 2006; Saito & Ebsworth, 2004; Tsui, 1996; Zou, 2004). These behaviors are frequently interpreted by teachers and researchers as a lack of motivation, cultural differences, low proficiency in target language, pursuit of perfection, peer pressure, fear of losing face, habit,
lack of confidence, and so on (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Flowerdew, Miller, & Li, 2000; Liu, 2006; Zou, 2004). Meanwhile, it has been found that students’ actual participation is closely related to a series of variables such as willingness to communicate, motivation, anxiety, self-esteem, self-confidence, and global personality traits (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2003; Yashima, 2002; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004).

Learners’ attitudes support their motivation to learn language which promote second language achievement (Gardner, 2000; Gardner, Lalonde, & Moorcroft, 1985). Learners with high motivation to achieve are moderate risk takers according to Atkinson (1964). Contrary to low achievers who tend to take high risks, high achievers prefer to control the probability of success depending on their skills and knowledge, and they don’t take high risks.

Brown (2001) states that “many instructional contexts around the world do not encourage risk-taking; instead, they encourage correctness, rights answers, and withhold "guesses" until one is sure to be correct” (p. 63). Clifford (1990, as cited in Jonassen & Grabowski, 1993) found that students chose more difficult problems when the number of points offered increased with the difficulty of the problem and when a risk-taking task was presented within a game or practice situation.

2. Review of the Related Literature
Shelton, Lane, and Waldhart (1999) explored the perceptions of second-year and above college students in regard to educator roles in the classroom. Some of the more commonly occurring responses in regard to the expectations of teachers were respect, fair treatment, preparedness, and guidance. Data collected in this study were “rich with student perceptions about the…classroom…grounded in practical experience as…students” (Shelton, Lane, & Waldhart, 1999, p. 408). These researchers further emphasized the importance of perception in their study because of the interactive nature that is often overlooked in perception, in-class behaviors were reported by students as important in regard to positive and negative teacher perception. In one study, teacher control, student equity, comfortability in the classroom, and supportiveness (Frymier & Thompson, 1992) were among the behaviors that ranked high on students’ lists. In another study, negative behaviors such as being easily distracted, giving unclear lectures, being disorganized, being unresponsive to students’ questions, unfair testing, unfair grading, being boring, not knowing the subject matter, and showing favoritism (Kearney, Plax, Hays, & Ivey, 1991) were noticed by both the instructors and the students.
Failure by both teachers and students to recognize the interdependence of roles in the classroom puts both parties at a disadvantage. Considering this assertion, the integration of student perception into teacher evaluation becomes increasingly vital.

Nelson-Smith (2008) examined how African American students’ learning styles and their perceptions of teachers’ attitudes toward them and the learning environment influenced their decision to become high truants. Additionally, the study sought to find if selected demographic factors had any relevance to the truancy rate of African American students. The researcher used several assessment instruments to measure the variables being tested. The sample included 166 9th grade African American students enrolled in freshmen English classes in a public school located in a low socioeconomic inner-city in the southern region of the United States. The results from the analysis suggest that students with low grade point averages; those who had siblings who left school without receiving a high school diploma; those who had been in legal troubles; those who were not involved in clubs/organizations; and gender in relation to females were more likely to be truant.

Kiany and Pournia (2006) investigated the effects of risk-taking on language learners' tendency to complexity or accuracy in descriptive and expository writing tasks. For this purpose, 185 EFL students took a TOEFL, wrote two compositions and filled out a risk-taking questionnaire. Out of this number, 118 subjects were almost at the same level of language proficiency. The researchers divided these subjects into three subgroups of low, moderate and high risk-takers. Analysis of Variance was used to investigate the relationship between risk-taking, syntactic complexity and grammatical accuracy in both writing tasks. The results did not show any significant relationship between risk-taking, syntactic complexity and grammatical accuracy in the writing tasks. However, in both writing tasks low risk-takers tended to be more accurate than others. Moreover, the moderate and high risk-takers tended to write more complicated structures than the low risk-takers.

In a study by Maeda (2010), the possible associations between application of word emphasis and risk-taking behaviors of adult Japanese English language learners (ELLs) in the scope of foreign accent modification was investigated. The researcher compared 30 adult Japanese ELLs’ first readings of a scenario with 30 age- and gender-matched native American-English speakers. The ELLs received an instruction to apply emphasis in their first and second readings and scored for a risk-taking questionnaire. They recorded readings of the speakers surveyed for vowel duration. The results showed that there were no significant differences in vowel duration fundamental frequency and intensity of the pre-determined target words between ELLs and native American- English speakers’ first readings. Also, no
correlation was found between changes the ELLs made and their scores on the risk-taking questionnaire.

Beebe, in 1983 presented data from Puerto Rican bilingual (Spanish–English) children. The children were interviewed on four occasions, once by a monolingual English interviewer, once by a bilingual (Spanish dominant) interviewer, once by a bilingual (English dominant) interviewer, and once, in groups of three children, by all three interviewers. He operationally defined risk taking in terms of a number of factors, among them, number of attempts to use particular grammatical structures, avoidance, amount of talk, and amount of information volunteering. The results showed that risk taking was greatest with the monolingual interviewer. This suggests that learners’ willingness to take risks may depend on the situation, not just on their general type.

In short, what clearly appeared through this survey is the effect of different variables on both students’ risk-taking & students' perception of general and specific areas of language learning. However it has to be mentioned at this point that compared with studies conducted in this area, few research has been conducted to investigate the relationship between perception of two different areas of language learning and the effect of them on the students’ degree of risk-taking to speak English.

3. Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the present study are:
* Investigating whether L2 learners have a more positive level of perception of either teachers' attitudes or learning environment?
* Investigating to what extent Iranian second language learners’ perception of teachers’ attitudes and learning environment affect their level of risk-taking.
* Investigating whether high achiever L2 learners differ from low achiever L2 learners in perceiving teachers’ attitudes /learning environment and taking risk to speak English.

The sub-objectives are:
* Investigating whether male and female L2 learners differ in perceiving a more positive/negative level of teachers’ attitude or learning environment.
* Investigating to what extent Iranian L2 learners take risk to speak English in an English class.
* Investigating to what extent individuals/males and females differ in language class risk-taking.
4. Statement of research questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the present study tries to answer the following questions:
1. Do L2 learners have a more positive level of perception of either teachers’ attitudes or learning environment?
2. Do male and female L2 learners differ in perceiving a more positive/negative level of teachers’ attitude or learning environment?
3. How far does L2 learners’ perception of teachers’ attitudes and learning environment affect their language class risk-taking?
4. To what extent Iranian L2 learners take risk to speak English in an English class?
5. To what extent individuals/males and females differ in language class risk-taking?
6. Do high achiever L2 learners differ from low achiever L2 learners in perceiving teachers’ attitudes /learning environment and taking risk to speak English?

5. Theoretical framework of the study

Students’ perception of teachers’ attitudes can be detected by Nelson-Smith’s questionnaire (2008). Nelson-Smith developed the survey based on Walberg’s model of the learning process, developed in 1976, which suggests students’ learning involves students’ perceptions acting as intermediaries in the learning process (as cited in Koul & Fisher, 2006), and also Walls’ (2003) belief that school environment has a direct impact on truancy and dropouts. Koul and Fisher (2006) also advocated the use of Walberg’s model to determine students’ perceptions to assess environments because students seemed quite able to perceive and weigh stimuli and to render predicatively valid judgments of the social environment of their classes; therefore the researcher has selected the theory of perception, as the theoretical framework for this study. According to Carr (1918) the perception theory defines perception as images which exist where and when the mind perceives them. He believes images are not the whole reality of what is seen, but reality is duration, and the images are a selection within this duration. Perception, on the other hand, is derived throughout this period of reality. Perception is an external awareness of two objects, the mind and an absolute space at that moment, thus what students see in a given time, sends messages to their mind that what they have seen is the truth.

6. Method
6.1 Participants

The participants of the study were randomly selected from male and female students enrolled in “Management and Technology Institute”. All students were adults. Participants consisted of 83 students (46 males and 37 females) of English as foreign language (EFL) studying at advanced levels (9-12). The reason for selecting advanced students was that they were more obliged to take risks in class in comparison with the students of lower levels. All students were native speakers of Persian and ranged from 20 to 27 years in age.

They constituted a representative sample of Iranian EFL learners in that they learned English as College/Institute text subject for academic purposes. The participants were not chosen on the account of their academic scores, intelligence, sex, racial segregation, etc. Therefore, from each six intact classes they were randomly selected and all the participants in each class received the questionnaires.

For the second phase, from the six intact classes seven top students (high-achievers) and low-achievers on the score-sheet were selected. The selection was based on their marks listed on their Master Cards in three successive terms in 2013. By observing the normal probability curve of the marks, mean, and standard deviation, the researcher skipped the cases that were piled up in the middle and selected those who were piled up at the two sides. They were all interviewed (SPRI).

6.2 Instruments

The researcher gathered data using three instruments, a questionnaire of Students’ Perceptions of Teachers’ Attitude and Learning Environment (SPTALE), a Risk-Taking Questionnaire (RTQ) followed by the researcher made Semi-structured Self-report Perception/Risk-taking Interview (SPRI).

The first instrument was Students’ Perceptions of Teachers’ Attitude and Learning Environment (SPTALE) questionnaire which was partly based on and adopted from Nelson-Smith’s survey developed in 2008 and partly adopted from Aker’s survey developed in 2000. The questionnaire used in Nelson-Smith’s survey had 15 items from which 10 items tap students’ perceptions of teachers’ attitude. The questionnaire used in Aker’s survey was a classroom environment questionnaire which was an attitudinal questionnaire to find out the students’ perception toward the classroom environment. The questionnaire was divided into the following domains:
1-Affiliation, 2-Classroom interaction, 3-Cooperation, 4- Task orientation, 5-Individualization, 6-Teacher control
Therefore, the first instrument of this survey was a combination of the two questionnaires mentioned above. It had 22 items. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested through Cronbach’s Alpha. The reliability index for the questionnaire obtained through this method as a whole was 0.847 which was quite a high reliability index.

The second questionnaire was a Risk-Taking Questionnaire which consisted of 10 combined questions. The six questions a, b, c, d, f, and g were slight adaptations of a previously published questionnaire (Ely, 1986). These six questions indicated the degree of students’ risk-taking regarding the usage of grammar. In addition, three questions from another published questionnaire (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, developed by Eysenck in 1972) and modified by Shepherd (2009) were selected (questions I, j, k). These three questions indicated the degree of students’ risk-taking regarding their personality traits. Question h is adopted from a study of ELLs’ pronunciations (Huang, 2010) which indicated the degree of students’ risk-taking regarding pronunciation. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested by the researcher through Cronbach’s Alpha. The reliability index for the questionnaire was obtained through this method was 0.625 as a whole which was an acceptable reliability index.

The Semi-structured interview consisted of 6 questions and was held after the questionnaires administration. The researcher made a self-report perception /risk-taking Interview (SPRI) (appendix C). Accordingly, items 1, 2 and 3 were indicative of relationship between students’ perception of teachers’ attitude and risk-taking; items 4 and 5 identified the relationship between students’ perception of learning environment and risk-taking, and item 5 identified students’ preferred learning environment.

6.3 Data collection procedure and analysis

The data were collected in two consecutive weeks in the mid-autumn 2013. All the data collection was carried out by the researcher herself with the cooperation of the English teachers. The nature and purpose of the research were explained to the students by the researcher as well as their English teachers. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of the results and the advantages of the study. After the required data were collected they were put into spreadsheets and analyzed using SPSS version 16.0. The descriptive statistics were calculated for the data to determine the participants’ perception of teachers’ attitude as well as learning environment and its relation to their degree of risk-taking in an English class. Later, inferential statistical procedures were run on the data which will be reported in the next section. Analysis was performed using SPSS software. At the P < .05 level of significance, the result was accepted.
7. Results and discussion

7.1 Results of Students’ Perception of Teachers’ Attitude and Learning Environment

The result of the descriptive statistics analysis showed that the total mean for participants’ perception who were inclined toward either teachers’ attitude or learning environment was 3.73 ($SD=0.43$). The mean scores of participants’ perception of teachers’ attitude and learning environment fell at high level which showed a great inclination among L2 learners toward the perception of teachers’ attitude or learning environment. The highly frequently used perception was “students’ perception of teachers’ attitude” which showed a high mean of 3.80 with regard to “students’ perception of learning environment” with another high mean of 3.68. As illustrated in Table 1 and it was mentioned above, all of the students' perception of this study fell within high range of use. The higher frequently used students' perception was “students’ perception of teachers’ attitude” with a mean of 3.80; they assigned some 55.4% of the participants using this type of perception. The next highly frequently used perception was “students’ perception of learning environment” with a mean of 3.68.

In order to see the frequency and percentage of students’ perception, frequency distribution and percentage in SPSS were run. The results presented in Table 1 are indicative of the fact that the highest frequency belongs to the participants who were highly inclined toward “the perception of teachers' attitude” which is running at about 55.4%. As illustrated in Table 1, 42.2% of the participants in this study were inclined to benefit from “the perception of learning environment”. Seemingly, only 2.4% of the participants cut both ways expressing the same tendency toward either of teachers' attitude or learning environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>The frequency and percentage of students' perception of teachers' attitude and learning environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Students’ perception of teachers’ attitude</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ perception of learning environment</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal for both pathways</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to see the relationship between students’ perception of teachers' attitude and their learning environment the researcher ran correlational analysis to find Pearson correlation.
The correlation coefficient along with its p-value. The researcher determined how the results of students’ perception of teachers' attitude corresponded to the results of their learning environment. As it is evident in Table 2, the correlation coefficient is .501 and the p-value is .000. Thus, it can be concluded that there is not a very high correlation between the two means.

Table 2 Pearson correlation between students' perception of teachers' attitude and their learning environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teacher Attitude Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Learning Environment Pearson Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Attitude</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.501**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
<td>.501**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

7.2 Results of gender difference in Students’ Perception of Teachers’ Attitude and Learning Environment

In order to see whether there was a significant difference between male and female language learners in using a certain type of perception, the researcher ran independent sample t-test and two-way ANOVA. Each perception as well as the total index was run respectively.

Table 3 Results of Independent Samples Test: Gender difference in students' perception of teachers' attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>students' perception of teachers' attitude</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.850</td>
<td>.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>79.25</td>
<td>.693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident in Table 3, the significance is .695 that is larger than 0.05 so the differences between male and female benefiting from “students' perception of teachers' attitude” were not significant.
Table 4
Results of Independent Samples Test: Gender difference in students' perception of learning environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>students' perception of learning environment</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>-2.414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-2.394</td>
<td>74.53</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same can be seen regarding students' perception of learning environment. As it is obvious in Table 4, the significance is .018 which is smaller than 0.05 so the differences between male and female using “students' perception of learning environment” were significant.

Table 5
Results of Independent Samples Test: Gender difference in both students' perception of teachers’ attitude and learning environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Mean</th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.373</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>-1.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-1.193</td>
<td>75.89</td>
<td>.237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident in Table 5, the significance level is .234 that is larger than 0.05 so the differences between male and female using both “perception of teachers' attitude” and “perception of learning environment” were not significant.

7.3 Correlational analysis between Students’ Perception and their Risk-taking

To observe the relationship between variables – namely the participants’ perception and their risk-taking – the researcher ran correlational analysis to find Pearson correlation.
coefficient along with its p-value. The researcher determined how the results of “Students' Perception” corresponded to the results of “Students' Risk-taking”. As it is evident in Table 6, the correlation coefficient is .284 and the p-value is .009. As a result, it can be concluded that the correlation coefficient is significant; however, there is not a very high correlation between the means.

Table 6
Pearson correlation between Students' Perception and their Risk-taking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students' Perception</th>
<th>Students' Risk-taking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' Perception</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.284**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' Risk-taking</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.284**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

7.4 Results of Students’ Risk-taking
In order to see the frequency and percentage of students’ risk-taking, frequency distribution and percentage in SPSS were run. The results presented in Table 7 are indicative of the fact that the highest frequency belongs to the participants who were moderate at “risk-taking” which is running at about 61.4%. As it is evident in Table 7, only about 36.1% of the participants in this study took advantage of a desirable risk-taking. Some 61.4% of the participants were moderate and 2.4% of the participants were not benefited. It depicts that more than the half of the participants (51 out of 83 participants) claimed the moderate use of risk-taking in simultaneous processing.

Table 7
The frequency and percentage of Students’ Risk-taking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good at risk-taking</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate at risk-taking</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>97.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak at risk-taking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 Results of gender difference in Risk-taking
In order to see whether there was a significant difference between male and female language learners in risk-taking, the researcher ran independent sample t-test. As it is evident in Table 8, the significance is .398 that is larger than 0.05 so the differences between male and female in risk-taking were not significant.
Table 8 Results of Independent Samples Test: Gender difference in Risk-taking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig. t df</td>
<td>Mean Difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>.398</td>
<td>-1.480 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumed</td>
<td>-1.507</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>.14318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.6 Results of interview

The result of researcher made Self-report Perception/Risk-taking Interview (SMRI) shows that there were significant differences between high and low achievers in their perception of teachers’ attitude, perception of learning environment, and the degree of risk-taking in an English class. Since students’ expectation and perception of their teachers’ attitude and learning environment in which they study might be different in an English class, these factors can lead them to change into high-achievers or low-achievers and take different levels of risk to speak English.

Table 9
The result of Self-report Perception/Risk-taking Interview (SPRI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>High achievers</th>
<th>Low achievers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Would you perform better in English class if you thought your English</td>
<td>Definitely Yes</td>
<td>Definitely Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher cared about you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tell me about your favorite teachers. Why were they your favorites?</td>
<td>Almost all of them liked good-tempered and friendly teachers. They liked</td>
<td>86% of them liked teachers who asked students many questions and made them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teachers who respected and cared about students.</td>
<td>talk, Others liked teachers who were fair when dealing with different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tell me about the teachers you learned a lot from (what did they do</td>
<td>Almost 86% of them learned a lot when teachers were more knowledgeable and</td>
<td>Almost 60% of them learned a lot from the teachers who did not blame them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that helped you learn?).</td>
<td>focused on a specific area such as vocabulary, writing, etc. Others learned</td>
<td>for making mistake, 40% of them learned a lot from those teachers who asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a lot when they themselves studied more!</td>
<td>students many questions and made them study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tell me about a class in which you were comfortable enough to speak</td>
<td>Almost all of them were comfortable in a class that had a friendly environment</td>
<td>Most of them (about 72%) felt comfortable in a class where neither teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English.</td>
<td>and all the</td>
<td>nor students made fun of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(What made you feel comfortable?) classmates had good relationships with each other. them or blamed them for making mistakes. Others liked classes which were not too crowded.

5. Tell me about a class in which you were not comfortable enough to speak English. (What made you feel uncomfortable?) Most of them (about 86%) were not comfortable in a class where they were not familiar with other students or their classmates were not friendly. One of them claimed that there was not any class in which he did not feel comfortable. Almost all of them were not comfortable in a class where either teacher or students made fun of them or blamed them for making mistakes. They also did not feel comfortable when the teacher did not pay enough attention to them and did not ask them to talk.

6. What kind of learning environment would you prefer to study English in? All of them liked to study English in a friendly environment where all the students are involved in different activities and there are lots of chances for the students to speak English. Some low achievers mentioned that they would like to be asked to speak by the teacher.

### 8. Discussion

In order to see the frequency and percentage of students’ perception, frequency distribution and percentage in SPSS were run. The highest frequency belongs to the participants who were highly inclined toward “the perception of teachers' attitude” which is running at about 55.4%. 42.2% of the participants in this study were inclined to benefit from “the perception of learning environment”. Seemingly, only 2.4% of the participants cut both ways expressing the same tendency toward either of teachers' attitude or learning environment.

The result of the descriptive statistics analysis showed that the total mean for participants’ perception who were inclined toward either teachers’ attitude or learning environment was 3.73 (SD= 0.43). The mean scores of participants’ perception of teachers’ attitude and learning environment fell at high level which showed a great inclination among L2 learners toward the perception of teachers’ attitude or learning environment. As it was mentioned above, all of the students' perception of this study fell within high range of use, which means Iranian L2 learners have a generally positive perception of both teachers’ attitude and learning environment. As it is evident in Table 4.5, the significance level is .234 that is larger than 0.05 so the differences between male and female using the overall “perception of teachers' attitude and learning environment” were not significant. To observe the relationship between variables – namely the participants’ perception and their risk-taking – the researcher ran correlational analysis to find Pearson correlation coefficient along with its p-value. The researcher determined how the results of “Students' Perception” corresponded to the results of “Students' Risk-taking”. As it is evident the correlation coefficient is .284 and the p-value is .009, and the p-value is smaller than .05 (p <.05). As a result, it can be concluded that the correlation coefficient is significant; however, there is not a very high correlation between the means, that is, there is a positive and moderate
relationship between the two variables. Therefore one can conclude that the better and more positive perception of teachers’ attitude /learning environment L2 learners have, the more likely they would be to take risk to speak English in an English class and vice versa. The result of the descriptive statistics analysis showed that the overall mean score for Risk-taking Questionnaire was 3.37 (SD=.44) considered as moderate. The mean scores of participants’ risk-taking fell at moderate level which showed a fair inclination among L2 learners toward risk-taking.

In order to see the frequency and percentage of students’ risk-taking, frequency distribution and percentage in SPSS were run. The results are indicative of the fact that the highest frequency belongs to the participants who were moderate at “risk-taking” which is running at about 61.4%. As it is evident only about 36.1% of the participants in this study took advantage of a desirable risk-taking. Some 61.4% of the participants were moderate and 2.4% of the participants were not benefited. It can be concluded that most of the Iranian L2 learners are moderate risk-takers in speaking English. This result could be in agreement with that of Brown (2001) who stated that many instructional contexts around the world do not encourage risk-taking; instead, they encourage correctness, right answers, and withhold "guesses" until one is sure to be correct. Also there was a research which proved that in numerous SL/FL learning situations, learners, especially Asian learners, have been observed to be quiet in language classrooms, rarely responding to teachers’ questions, or actively taking part in classroom interactions (Jackson, 2001, 2002; Liu, 2006; Saito & Ebsworth, 2004; Tsui, 1996; Zou, 2004). As it is evident in Table 4.8, the significance is .143 that is larger than 0.05 so the differences between male and female in risk-taking were not significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no difference between individuals/males and females in language class risk-taking.

The results (see Table 4.9) for the Self-report Perception/Risk-taking Interview (SPRI) confirm that there are significant differences between high and low achievers in their perception of teachers’ attitude, perception of learning environment, and therefore the degree of risk-taking in an English class. Both high achievers and low achievers reported that their teachers’ care and attention would have an extremely important effect on their performance in an English class. In this study almost all of the high achievers liked good-tempered and friendly teachers. They liked teachers who cared about and respected students. But 86% of low achievers reported that they liked teachers who asked students many questions and made them talk. Based on what L2 learners reported one can conclude that low achievers are less likely to take risk to speak English in an English class. They prefer not to take risk to speak
in an English class unless they are asked to speak by the teacher. Low achievers do not have
tolerance for taking risk of making errors that make them look foolish. They learn more when
they have teachers who do not blame them for making mistakes. One can also conclude that
high achievers have a more positive perception of their teachers’ attitude which helps them to
take more risk to speak in an English class (as it was proved to answer the third question in
this study). Low achievers tend to put the blame on their teachers when they are not satisfied
with the level of their own risk-taking in an English class. They claim that they don’t speak
because their teachers don’t ask them to speak or blame them for making mistakes. On the
contrary, high achievers mostly put the blame on themselves and claim that they do not
perform very well in an English class when they do not study enough. Almost all of the high
achievers were comfortable in a class that had a friendly environment and all the classmates
had good relationships with each other; likewise, most of them (about 86%) were not
comfortable in a class where they were not familiar with other students or their classmates
were not friendly. One of the high achievers claimed that there was not any class in which he
did not feel comfortable. On the other hand, most of the low achievers (about 72%) felt
comfortable in a class where neither teacher nor students made fun of them or blamed them
for making mistakes. Others liked classes which were not too crowded; likewise, almost all
of the low achievers were not comfortable in a class where either teacher or students made
fun of them or blamed them for making mistakes. They also did not feel comfortable when
the teacher did not pay enough attention to them and did not ask them to talk. It can be
concluded that high achievers have a much more positive perception of learning environment
in comparison with low achievers. Therefore, the more comfortable L2 learners feel in an
English learning environment, the more likely they are to take risk to speak. Ely (1986) also
suggested similar results that language class discomfort was seen as decreasing both
language class risk-taking and language class sociability. Both high achievers and low
achievers liked to study English in a friendly environment where all the students were
involved in different activities and there were lots of chances for the students to speak
English. Some low achievers mentioned that they would like to be asked to speak by the

teacher.

9. Conclusions and Implications of the Study
As it was shown, the level of learners’ perception of teachers’ attitude and learning
environment has some effect on their level of risk-taking to speak in an English class. So it
might be helpful if teachers take into consideration the students’ perception as a serious issue,
and try to help L2 learners have a more positive perception of their teachers’ attitude and
learning environment using some strategies and techniques, so that students feel comfortable enough to take risk to speak English. Therefore, carrying out studies that present various strategies for EFL teachers to improve learners’ perception of teachers’ attitude or learning environment is required. Besides, EFL teachers should take into consideration the individual differences among students and their different level of risk-taking. EFL students who are considered as low achievers should be helped to overcome their negative feelings about their teachers, classmates, and learning environment and should be given more attention and chance to talk by the teachers. Average levels of risk-taking to speak English of students should be given a serious consideration and remedy. According to the results of this study all L2 learners like to study English in a friendly environment where all the students are involved in different activities and there are lots of chances for the students to speak English; therefore EFL teachers and English institute managers are required to provide such a learning environment in which all L2 learners feel comfortable to take risk to speak English in class.

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willingness to communicate and second language communication. *Language Learning, 54*, 119-152.


Title

Analysis of the Content of Different Testing Books Based on Iran M.A University Entrance Examination

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Abstract

In Iran university entrance examination, some books are presented as sources of examination for teaching English branch. For language testing like linguistic, some books are presented. The writer in present study has tried to investigate some books of teaching language tests to identify if there is any difference between these books which volunteers of entrance exam have to study and how these books are related to each other, and to clarify if it is necessary for learners to read these different books for mentioned examination. To do so, six books of writing English language tests were analyzed according to both topics they teach and techniques they use to present knowledge. The finding of the study reveal that there are some items which are common in all books and many information which presented in these books but the way information are presented and the amount of information about each item are different. Present study suggests that although
all of these books are testing books but the information presented in each book is from the point of view of its writer, and different writers have different ideas, so they are represented differently and can help learners to repeat and practice information, and result to meaningful learning of materials.

**Key words**: Material, Knowledge, Repetition of content

1. Introduction

Source books of testing are very important for students who want to entrance the post graduate education in Iran, because testing is one of the main topics of entrance exam. Teaching is a necessary aspect of learning language as well, and evaluate language is something necessary because it relates to judgment, and make decision about something. The learner may use it in real situations in future and it may affects life of many people. For example, test students for their future work or next level of education.

Evaluation can develop teachers own awareness, so he/she can understand how well his/her study has been, and how well students learn material. By evaluation the teacher can understand if material presented are enough to teach current knowledge, or if he/she must change his course book to another one to teach material from another source and point of view, as Nunan (2003, p.226) says " A course book is a learning tool shared by teachers and learners that can be used in systematic and flexible ways". Sometimes by change books and material, good learning takes place.As for what we have said about testing and its significant in learning language and sometimes in whole life, the teacher cannot use only one source of information and knowledge. So the teacher at first phase and the learners at second phase have to acquire different sources and organize these materials in logical sequences and use them to acquire meaningful knowledge. Organization of materials is of central importance for learning from a number of materials available but, what is clear here is that, by just organizing material, one cannot achieve its purpose to understand all of knowledge. Exercise and repetition of current material is advices by experts. Chastain (1988, p.134) says" Practice is a crucial factor in second language learning because students willingness to practice determines whether they consider it to be beneficial".

Exercise and repetition is significant in learning language. Some materials need to be repeated and exercised to full comprehension. Repetition of materials from different learning sources is more informative than repetition of the same material from the same source. "A common pitfall of inexperienced teachers is to repeat the same material in the same type of
activities. Such repetition of identical activities fails to attain the desired objectives and usually results in serious motivational problems in the class” (Chastain 1988, p.329). Feedback is obtained by repetition of information in present time. Feedback is essential to effective learning and students can expect to receive appropriate and timely feedback on all assessment. As a student you have a responsibility to incorporate feedback into your learning; make use of the assessment criteria that you are given; be aware of the rules, policies and other documents related to assessment; and provide teachers with feedback on their assessment practices (Kleinsasser, 2006).

Some studies have been done by scholars about analysis of the books in English. A research by Anne Marie Heim (2006)”A comparative Analysis of two English text books used in upper secondary school” tries to compare some aspects of two English textbooks. The writer begins by asking the students about their experiences, and opinions of the books. The writer explores how the two textbooks dealt with pre-reading activities and the students experiences with such exercises. According to what this writer says the teacher should be familiar with these activities and include them in his teaching. A pre-reading activity should include actual activity, not merely some back ground information.In a study by Oreizi, Hamid-Reza (Ph. D.), and Aabedi, Ahmad (2008)”Analysis of the content of elementary school books based on the achievement motivation constructs”, the content of text books in primary school have been analysed, with respect to the construct of advancement motivation and its indexes. The study reveals that Mathematics and Experimental science books have to high extent paid attention to advancement motivation construct; Farsi literature, Religion, and Quran text books have to some extent paid attention to this matter; and Social Studies text books have been weak in paying attention to this matter.

Research about course books, have been done everywhere to develop learning and teaching the materials. The chief aim of this study is to investigate six books of test writing, which are the main sources of Iran post graduate university entrance examination for English teaching branch.

**The main question:** Are all of above mentioned books necessary for university entrance examination in Iran, or just study one of them is sufficient for this purpose?

2. **Methodology**

2.1. **Data**
In this study six books of teaching language test which are sources of Iran university entrance examination were analyzed according to their chapters, topics which they presented, and the amount of information presented about the topics in each book. Investigated books are:

1- Writing English language tests by J.B Heaton.
2- Testing for language teachers by Arthur Hughes.
3- Testing language skills from theory to practice by Dr. Hossein Farhady and Dr. Abdoljavad Jafarpur and Dr. Parviz Birjandi.
4- Fundamental consideration in language testing by Lyle F. Bachman
5- Techniques in testing by Harold Madsen
6- Language testing in practice by Lyle F. Bachman and Adrian S. Palmer

2.2. procedures

In the first book; Writing English language tests; the writer gives some explanation about the topic and tries to motivate learners. At the left side of each page, there is a subtopic which the writer gives some explanation about it in a paragraph next to it. These subtopics help learners to pay attention to the main topic of the present paragraph. The chapters discussed in this book are:

Table 1 Writing English language Tests by: J.B Heaton. New edition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction to language testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Approaches to language testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Objective testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Tests of grammar and usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Testing vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Listening comprehension tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Oral production tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Testing reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Testing the writing skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Criteria and types of tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Interpreting test scores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second book; Testing for Language Teachers; the writer has tried to discuss the topics briefly, and gave some information about each topic. At the end of every chapter he presented some activities for learners to compel them to read more about the topics. This book has tried to teach how to test all skills of language.

Table 2 Testing for language teachers by Arthur Hughes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Teaching and testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Testing as problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Kinds of tests and testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Validity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Reliability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third book; Testing language skills from theory to practice; writers who are Iranian writers, have tried to teach all of the topics in a simple way, they used an easy, fluent and understandable language to teach topics. They gave some examples for each topic, and examples contain Iranian names that are familiar for learners. As Adrian Doff (1990) suggest if we give explanations, to increase students chances to understand a topic it is usually best to give them in a way which are familiar for students and near to their own language. At the end of every chapter the writers presented some activities for learners about content.

Table 3 testing language skills from theory to practice by: Dr. Hossein Farhady, Dr. Abdoljavad Jafarpur, Dr. Parviz Birjandi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Preliminaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Functions of language tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Forms of language tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Basic statistics in testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Test construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Characteristics of a good test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Theories of language testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Testing vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Testing structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Testing pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Testing listening comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Testing oral production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Testing reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Testing writing ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Cloze and dictation type tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Functional testing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The forth book; Fundamental consideration in Language testing; the writer has tried to present complete explanation for each topic, he divided each topic in subtopics and gave information about it. At the end of every chapter the writer presented a summary of each chapter and gave discussion question at the end of each chapter to involve learners in the topics.

Table 4 Fundamental consideration in language testing by Lyle F. Bachman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Use of language tests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fifth book; Techniques in Testing; consists of two parts, the first part is about how to teach words, grammar, and pronunciation. The second part is about how to teach communication skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This book classified the material and gave information about it. The writer presented an example after each topic to practically teach the learner.

For every topic the writer presented some limitations and advantages. At the end of every chapter he gave some practical activities to students to learn in practice. And also, at the end of every chapter the writer presented some questions and their answers for students to evaluate themselves.

Table 5 Techniques in Testing by: Harold s. Madsen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Vocabulary tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Grammar tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Reading tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Writing tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Listening tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Speaking tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sixth book; Language testing in practice; the writer gave more comprehensive information for every topic. At the end of every chapter, the writer presented a summary and exercises for students to use. At the end of the book the writer represented development projects for learners as a model for preparing different tests.

Table 6 language testing in practice by: Lyle F. Bachman, Adrian S. Palmer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Objectives and expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Test usefulness: qualities and language tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Describing tasks: language use in language tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Describing language ability: language use in language tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Over view of test development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Describing, identifying and defining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Developing a plan for the evaluation of usefulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Identifying, allocating and managing resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Operationalization: developing test tasks and blue prints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Preparing effective instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Scoring method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Language test administration and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Illustrative test development projects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Results
According to what has shown in the procedure part, investigated books have tried to teach testing from the point of view of different writers. Each book has tried to present some information about testing, some used examples after their explanation about materials, so inductive and deductive techniques were used to teach testing which results to good understanding of material. A course book is a tool which presents its information from points of view of its writer, investigated books are written by different writers, they present material from different views and at the same time result to repetition them from different sources, and more learning takes place. By organize the above mentioned books, the learners have different sources of knowledge about the same thing, and it is the learners task to choice extensive, intensive, scanning, skim techniques to read material. Some books include more and complete information, but it is sometimes hard work for students to understand all presented materials, and some of books are presented in a brief way and easy for learners to understand, but it does not cover complete information, and two books are in complementary mood.

4. Discussion

Every book presents its knowledge in its way, but all try to improve motivation in learners. They use examples, content activities, summary of the chapters to improve motivation to more learning. Chastain (1988) suggest that there are some ways that can improve motivation: It should be clarify for the students what is the goal of the course and the class and assist students to achieve goal of the class. Give the students feedback as to their progress and summarize important content of each class and inform students to focus on what they should learn, use resumes and review sessions to help students learn new material through what they already know, and use appropriate tests and grades for students to motivate them to do better work academically and finally participate students in a classwork that requires the use of previously learned material.

All mentioned books introduced their goal, all try to prepare students to writing tests. All books use examples in different ways, summarize content of the books to make interest in students. Interest in the content rises to a level of importance higher than that of linguistic complexity because no reading will take place if readers are not interested enough to continue reading. However, if they are really interested in knowing what the author has to say, they will make every effort to understand the reading (Chastain, 1988).

The purpose of reading will clarify how to use reading. In all above books different knowledge presented, so the learner must determine what technique of reading is suitable for
read which book to get the good results. Whether the learner must read a book intensively or read another book just by scan it. We are not the passive receiver of the text, when we read a text we use our own knowledge of the world and of language to guess what the text will say next (Adrian Doff, 1990).

5. Conclusion
As the present study reveals, all above mentioned books are appropriate books for teach testing. Presented knowledge in each book is different according to the way knowledge is presented and according to chapters they contain and according to how much of knowledge are represented. Each book teach necessary knowledge for testing which may not presented in another book because number of chapters and the amount of knowledge about chapters is different. This study suggests that mentioned books complete each other in teach testing, and reading all of them is suggested to full comprehension. The learner can achieve the best results by reading all of these books, and by reading just one of these books one cannot achieve the same results.

References
Title

Manipulation in Translation: A Case Study of Milan Kundera’s Three Novels

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Abstract

Translation is not a neutral and value free act and could not be considered out of its social context. Every society has peculiar worldview, ideologies and norms which are different from the other societies. This study examines the effect of imposed dominant ideologies and norms of a community on conscious manipulation of a text in the process of translation in that community and also on reproducing a modified image of the author in target text which is different from what is reflected in source text. The Present study was located within the framework of Lambert and van Gorp (as cited in Munday, 2001) scheme. In an attempt to find answers to the research questions, selected novels were examined in both macro- and micro levels with regard to paratexual materials that surround translations. The result of these examinations show that the translators intentionally manipulate texts based on imposed dominant ideologies and norms of their societies and consequently the author personality which is reflected in target text is different from source text. It could be concluded that, whenever books’ contents are in contrast to target dominant ideologies, be it cultural,
political or religious, the translators prefer the latter and apply different manipulation strategies to conform translation to target norms.

**Keywords:** Manipulation, Conscious Manipulation, Unconscious Manipulation, Ideology, Strategy

1. **Introduction**

In today’s world translation has become one of the most practical branches of human sciences, since our world is getting smaller and smaller each day due to mass media development. In fact we are facing a global village. It means we live beyond boarders of our country. We are all interested in listening to the latest news of the world, watching movies and reading prize winning books. But not all of these resources are produced in our mother tongue. Here is when translation comes to the scene. But although it is necessary for a translator to master both source and target languages, knowing language is never enough for translating. Every language represents a society and different societies have different worldviews, ideologies and norms. Thus according to Álvarez and Vidal (1996) translators are:

Constrained in many ways; by their own ideology, by their feeling of superiority or inferiority towards the language in which they are writing the text being translated; by the prevailing poetical rules at that time; by the very language in which the texts they are translating is written; by what the dominant institutions of ideology expect of them; by the public for whom the translation is intended. (p. 6)

So translation is not a neutral act of replacing a word by its target equivalent since every translator “is influenced by his own cultural values and his ideology, which cause him/her to ‘manipulate’ the source text by making some additions, omissions, adaptations, and so on” (Sertkan, 2007, p.7).

Polysystem theory which was first developed in the 1970s by Itamar Even-Zohar followed this idea. According to polysystem theory translated text should not be studied alone but in relation to other ideological constraints of target society. It means according to Even-Zohar (as cited in Venuti, 2004, pp.162-163) translated literature operates as a system in two ways: “(a) in the way their source texts are selected by the target literature… (b) In the way they adopt specific norms, behaviors, and policies – in short, in their use of the literary repertoire – which results from their relations with the other home co-systems”.

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Toury continued works of Even-Zohar. He “focused on developing a general theory of translation” (Munday, 2001, p. 111). Toury (as cited in Munday, 2001) believes, “translations first and foremost occupy a position in the social and literary systems of target culture, and this position determines the strategies that are employed” (p. 112). So Toury (as cited in Munday, 2001, p. 112) proposed a methodology for what was called descriptive translation studies.

Manipulation School of translation which is a branch of descriptive translation studies (DTS) could be divided into two types as Farahzad (1999) suggests:

The conscious process leads to conscious manipulation intentionally carried out by the translator because of various social, political, and other factors. The unconscious manipulation is mostly a psychological phenomenon, and occurs under the influence of psychological factors. (p. 156)

What will be focused on, in this study is conscious and intentional manipulation of a text by a translator due to imposed dominant ideologies, norms and cultural, religious and political values of target society. By doing so, the translator tries to reproduce a picture of a source text according to his/her society’s ideologies and norms which might be sometimes much different from what is reflected in the source text.

2. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to show how dominant ideologies and norms and also political, religious and cultural values of a community may result in conscious manipulation of a text in the process of translation in that community and also in reproducing an image of a source text which is not the same as the original, and nor consequently, the author personality that is known by the readers, literature scholars and critics in source society.

Findings of this study will show the degree of manipulation, if there is any, in translation of some novels with controversial subjects in Iranian-Islamic culture and also translators’ applied strategies.

2.1 Research Questions

Q1: Does manipulation occur in selected translations?
Q2: In which level manipulative shifts mostly have been made?
Q3: What are the different strategies and norms applied by various translators?

2.2 Theoretical Framework
Theoretical framework of this study is based on Lambert and van Gorp (as cited in Munday, 2001) scheme presented in a paper called ‘On describing translations’ in 1985.

At that time there was a strong need for “the exact methodology for the case studies” and Lambert and van Gorp scheme becomes a basis for “comparison of the ST and TT literary systems and for the description of relations within them” (Munday, 2001, p.120).

In this model selected pieces of literature are examined in four steps as Lambert and van Gorp (as cited in Munday, 2001, p.120) suggest:

1. **Preliminary data**: information on title page, metatext (preface, etc.) and the general strategy (whether translation is partial or complete). The results should lead to hypotheses [general ideas] concerning levels 2 and 3.

2. **Macro-level**: the division of the text, titles and presentation of the chapters, the internal narrative structure and any overt authorial comment. This should generate hypotheses [general ideas] about the micro-level (level 3).

3. **Micro-level**: the identification of shifts on different linguistic levels. These include the lexical level, the grammatical patterns, narrative, point of view and modality. The results should interact with the macro-level (level 2) and lead to their ‘consideration in terms of the broader systemic context’.

4. **Systemic context**: here micro- and macro-levels, text and theory are compared and norms identified.

The researcher tends to explain that in micro-level only changes in lexical level have been taken into account. Also manipulation cases (manipulative shifts) found in this level are categorized based on two criteria: a) Type of manipulation strategy, b) The manipulated subject.

Since Kundera’s works are originally written in Czech or French, I would like to refer to Farahzad (1383(2004)) theory of intertextuality as a justifying theory in this research. According to this theory, each translated text could be considered as a source text as well since it shares the core concepts with the original and might not be identical to it in some aspects.

**2.3 Data Collection**

The corpus of this study consists of six books, three English novels and their three Persian translations. So the total number of pages equals to 607 English pages and 899 Persian pages. The source texts are English versions of three novels written by Milan Kundera. These novels are: *Slowness*, *The Joke* and *The Unbearable Lightness of Being.*
With regard to Lambert and van Gorp (as cited in Munday, 2001) scheme, in the first step the title pages, introductions and prefaces of Persian translations were examined carefully. Moreover, in second step (marco-level) the division of the text, titles and presentation of the chapters and the internal narrative structure were taken into consideration. Then in order to find manipulative shifts implanted in lexical level (micro-level) selected novels and their Persian translations were compared line by line and those parts including any type of conscious manipulation were selected. The collected data were then presented in the forms of tables, and strategies type and subject of each manipulated item, and also their frequency were determined. In last step, based on findings of the study translators’ applied strategies and norms were described.

2.3.1 Preliminary Data

As Lambert and van Gorp (as cited in Munday, 2001, p.120) suggest in this section information on title page and metatext (preface, etc.) will be studied and the general strategy (whether translation is partial or complete) will be specified.

2.3.2 Information on Title Pages and Covers of the Persian Translations

All target texts are presented and accepted as translations. The names of Persian translators and the author as well as the English titles are printed on the copyright pages of all three target texts.

Although two books *The Joke* and *Slowness* are translated via an intermediate language into Persian, the name of the English translator is only published on the title page of the Persian translation of *Slowness*. The Persian translator of *The Joke*, Forough Pouryavari, had written a thank you note on a separate page to one French language expert Mr. Jamshid Arjmand for comparing the translated text with original French text as well as editing it. The third book *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is translated directly from French into Persian. The fact that the books are translations is not stressed in the Persian translations of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and *The Joke*. However it is indicated on the front cover of the Persian translation of *Slowness* that it is the first translation of this book in Iran and the translator quotes comments from reviews in the US on the first page of the book which is placed before copyright page.

2.3.3 Information on Metatext (Preface, Introduction)

*Slowness*

The Persian translation of *Slowness* includes comments from reviews in the US on the first page of the book and it also includes a preface written by the publisher. Farzad (the publisher) in the preface of *Slowness* translated by Jahed (1384(2005)) writes a biography
about Milan Kundera and his worldview. He emphasizes how Kundera influenced Czech writing style and literature. He also gives a list of Kundera’s works and a list of the prizes he has won during last 30 years. But what is important for the researcher is what Farzad quotes from one of his intellectual friends. (Kabir as cited in Jahed, 1384(2004), pp.15-16):

Finally, what should be noted here is revolution and recognition of his [Kundera] story characters which are formed and dominant through dates, scattered speaking and romantic relationships. Unfortunately according to abundant moral excuses, proper or improper, the Kundera which is known via translation by Persian speaking [readers] is someone totally different from real Kundera. (My translation)

Farzad continues that in the eye of many French readers, Kundera is known as a homosexual, abortive person whose sexual roots of his stories may originate from these problems.

**The Joke**

The Persian version of *The Joke* translated by Pouryavari(1385(2006)) includes a short preface written by the Persian publisher followed by author’s own introduction. In this short preface, the publisher gives a brief overview about Milan Kundera’s life and his works and also represents the historical perspective of author’s country at that time. But what caught the attention of the researcher immediately was the declaration of the publisher to manipulating of the target text, written in the last two paragraphs of the preface. The publisher (as cited in Pouryavari, 1385(2006), p. 6) writes:

According to duty and professional integrity, I would like to confess that although we did our best to keep translation fidelity , we had to manipulate some sentences of the text and also we had to omit section four of chapter five totally due to author’s audacity in describing every single scene of a date…Although we are not satisfied with this defalcation and we again confess that such “patchworks” would ruin the originality of a worldwide reputed piece of literature, but we hope that while reading the book, you uphold our motivation for publishing *The Joke* with these defalcations. (My translation)

The short preface is followed by author’s own introduction which is directly translated from English with no major omission and addition. Kundra in the introduction of *The Joke* translated into English by Heim(1982) writes that in 1968 and 1969 *The Joke* was translated into all European languages as well as English. He (as cited in Heim, 1982, p. xv) suggests that “I was appalled by the British edition” since the numbers and orders of the chapters were different and a complete passage was also deleted. He wrote a letter of protest
to The Times Literary Supplement, asking the readers not to accept the English version of The Joke as his novel. The publisher apologized but about the same time a more simplified English version was published in the USA. Kundera (as cited in Heim, 1982, p. xv) suggests that he was powerless since “contact with the outside world was becoming more and more difficult in occupied Prague”. Although Kundera was not aware but a young American professor of literature had translated the most important censored parts and had published them in an American journal. As Kundera continues the same professor of literature [Micheal Henry Heim, Translator of the English book] “has done the first valid and authentic version of a book that tells of rape and has itself so often been violated”. Kundera (as cited in Heim, 1982, p.xvi) also writes that he reworked the original French version since he discovered its’ style didn’t present his. In the last part of this introduction Kundera writes an impressive paragraph about how ideological manipulation (let it be cultural, religious or political,) may “prevent a work of art from telling its own truth in its own words”. As he (as cited in Heim, 1982, p. xvi) believes:

Habent sua fata libelli. Books have their fates. The fate of the book called The Joke coincided with a time when the combined inanity of ideological dictatorship (in the Communist countries) and journalistic oversimplification (in the West) was able to prevent a work of art from telling its own truth in its own words. The ideologues in Prague took The Joke for a pamphlet against socialism and banned it; the foreign publisher took it for a political fantasy that became reality for a few weeks and rewrote it accordingly.

The Unbearable Lightness of Being

The Persian Translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being translated by Homayounpour (1384(2005)) includes three different prefaces written by the Persian translator. First one is translator’s preface on first publication, second one is translator’s preface on second publication, and third one is translator’s preface on fourth publication.

In the first preface, he provides information about Milan Kundera’s worldview by describing characters of his story. Homayounpour (1384(2005), p.8) writes that:

From the beginning, philosophical conception and pervasive language of the book, face the reader with fundamental issues of human being and lead him to think.

Novel’s characters demonstrate human situations in front of our eyes by expressing their emotions, thoughts and dreams. (My translation)

Then he analyzes story characters one by one, tries to give the readers an overview about the novel they are going to read.
One year after first publication, the translator writes another preface on second publication of the book. In that preface, he mainly focuses on Kundera’s characters with the hope that it would prevent prejudice about Kundera and his works by the readers, since there was some rumor around regarding unethical content of the novel after first publication of the Persian translation. In the last paragraph he (1384(2005), p. 13) admits that, “his [Kundera’s] works should be read and reread with a poetic taste, away from any prejudice and in complete intellectual independence” (My translation).

The third preface which is written on fourth publication of the book is started with this claim of translator (1384(2005), p.15) that “republishing of Burden of Being for the fourth time proved that Kundera’s most famous novel has arisen, interest and praise of Persian readers…” (My translation). He (1384(2005), p.15) continues that “simplistic criticisms and interpretations make the valid perception of Kundera’s thoughts, very difficult” (My translation). Then he gives an overview about Kundera’s worldview and also his insight about role and purpose of the novel in general. Finally he writes about Kundera’s latest novel ‘Immortality’ and compares characters of these two novels together. In this preface the translator tries to picture Kundera’s thoughts and opinions for the Persian readers as much as possible.

3. General Translation Strategy

Although all Persian books are supposed to be complete translations of the English texts, the researcher has found that many words, sentences, paragraphs and sometimes even complete chapters were omitted in Persian translations.

Considering Persian translation of Slowness, seven complete chapters are missing. Let alone, words, sentences and paragraphs which are omitted in some parts of the book.

In Persian translation of The Joke, section 4 of chapter 5 is not translated according to what editor calls “author’s audacity in describing every single scene of a date”.

Although Persian translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being, includes less deleted parts compared to other translations, in some parts of the Persian book, one, two or even more pages are not available.

Based on these findings, one could conclude that more manipulative shifts may be found in next two steps: macro- and micro-levels.

3.1 Macro-level
As Lambert and van Gorp (as cited in Munday, 2001, p.120) suggests, this section looks at questions like the division of the chapters, titles of the texts and also any overt authorial comments.

3.1.1 Titles

The Persian titles of The Joke (شوخی) and Slowness (آهستگی) reflect the same meaning of the original but Persian title of The Unbearable Lightness of Being tells a different story. It is translated as ‘بار هستی’ which literally means ‘Burden of Being’ in Persian. It doesn’t include the paradoxical meaning that exists between the words ‘unbearable’ and ‘lightness’. Homayounpour ((1384(2005), p.15), the Persian translator of this book writes a footnote in his preface on fourth publication of Persian translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being, trying to justify his motivations toward the translation of title as ‘بار هستی’ (Burden of Being):

In some readers’ opinion title ‘بار هستی’ (Burden of Being) is not precisely equal to ‘The Unbearable Lightness of Being’. It is true that meaning of ‘heaviness’ rather than ‘lightness’ is concealed in ‘بار هستی’ (Burden of Being) while ‘The Unbearable Lightness of Being’ reminds us of only ‘lightness’. The translator however prefers ‘بار هستی’ (Burden of Being), according to its grace and familiarity in Persian language, the significance of concise title, and also because ‘بار هستی’ (Burden of Being) could be considered light too. (My Translation)

3.1.2 Presentation of Chapters

The division of chapters in all three translations of The Joke, Slowness and The Unbearable Lightness of Being are the same as English texts. The translators didn’t intentionally change the order of the chapters as it was once happened to the first English Translation of The Joke published in London. (It was noted earlier that first English translation of The Joke has gone under severe appropriation strategies. The translator had changed the sequences of chapters and had put them in chronological order to make it appropriate and easy for target reader to understand).

However in Persian translation of Slowness the numbers of chapters are different from English text from chapter 28 to the end of the book. Since the translator once omitted one complete chapter, then four whole chapters and finally complete two chapters. Consequently, not only numbers of chapters are different from English text but also the total number of them is not the same. While English book includes 51 chapters, the Persian translation includes only 44.

3.1.3 Internal Narrative Structure
Generally the internal narrative structures in English texts and Persian translations were the same. Yet the researcher found that point of view of some sentences was changed, sometimes pronouns were replaced by their antecedents and occasionally sentences’ types were different in Persian translations.

**Instances:**

*Table 1. Instance is taken form translation of Slowness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revolt against the human condition we did not choose (p. 79)</td>
<td>شورش بر علیه شرایطی که انسان آن را برنگزیده است. (101)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the example shows, pronoun *we* is translated as انسان (human). It should be rather translated as شورش بر علیه شرایط انسانی که ما آن را برنگزیده ایم.

*Table 2. Instance is taken form translation of The Joke*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But now I see his wife sitting in front of me ... (p.168)</td>
<td>اما من حالا هلنای را می بینم... (275)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example *his wife* is replaced by هلنای ‘Helena’ which is the name of mentioned woman.

*Table 3. Instance is taken form translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They can make it hard for anybody... (p.14)</td>
<td>یا کی تسویه حساب نمی کنند؟ (56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is clear from above example the English sentence is a declarative sentence, and is expressed by certainty but it is translated as an interrogative sentence in Persian translation which may or may not be true.

Based on findings of last two steps, including publisher’s declaration of manipulating some parts of *The Joke* in translation, excessive omissions of complete chapters in translation of *slowness* and translated modified title of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, more shifts on linguistic levels are expected in micro-level.

### 3.2 Micro-level

This level is the identification of shifts on different linguistic levels including the lexical level, the grammatical patterns, narrative, point of view and modality. (Lambert and van Gorp as cited in Munday, 2001)
Here it should be noted again that in micro-level the focus of this study is on manipulative shifts in lexical level. Because considering the grammatical patterns, narrative, point of view and modality will make the study too broad to be a MA thesis.

In this step, first gathered data are categorized based on Zauberga (as cited in Dukāte, 2007) typology of ideological manipulation.

Then manipulated subjects are divided into three groups based on Nitsa’s (2000) definition of ideological manipulation.

3.2.1 Manipulation Strategies

According to Zauberga (as cited in Dukāte, 2007, p. 54) ideological manipulation can take the following forms:

- Deletion (omission)
- Substitution
- Addition
- Attenuation (softening)

3.2.2 Deletion

Deletion is one of the most frequently used manipulation strategies in translational process. It occurs when a word, sentence, phrase or even a whole chapter is omitted from the target text. By using this strategy the translator cuts off the problematic part and clings together the former and later sentences. It may affect the meaning of next sentences, especially if there is a reference to other parts of the text in deleted part. So the readers may feel a vagueness and lack of clarity that might then contribute to negative evaluation of the act of translation. All three translators applied this strategy to a great deal in Persian translations of three selected novels and one of them (the Persian translator of Slowness) went so far that she has omitted seven complete chapters of the book. Among total number of 159 cases of deletion, 55 cases were found in Persian translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being, 54 cases in Persian translation of Slowness and 50 cases in Persian translation of The Joke.

Instances:

Table 4. Case of Deletion in translation of Slowness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 34(pp. 115-120)</td>
<td>(129) -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example taken from Slowness the Persian translator (Hamideh Jahed) deleted whole chapter of original book which is description of an unmarried couple’s swimming without leaving any signs for the readers.
Table 5. Case of Deletion in translation of The Joke

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;What’s so special about your virginity? Who are you saving it for?&quot; No answer. &quot;Say something!&quot; (p.99)</td>
<td>(166)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above mentioned sentences which are said to hero’s girlfriend by the hero himself while she refrains from having any sexual relationship with him is omitted from the Persian translation because losing virginity before marriage is a big taboo in target culture.

Table 6. Case of Deletion in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karenin made the homecoming easier by jumping up on him and licking his face. (p. 19)</td>
<td>کارنین در بغل او پرید و لحظه دیدار را اسان ساخت. (65)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the phrase *licking his face* is not translated. It should be noted that Karenin is a dog and according to target society’s religious beliefs dogs are unclean and people shouldn’t have direct contact with them or keep them inside their houses.

3.2.3 Substitution

It can refer to a type of manipulation strategy in which a word, phrase, sentence or paragraph is replaced by a more acceptable or familiar word, phrase, sentence or paragraph in target culture while meaning of the original is somehow modified in target text. A total number of 126 out of 343 cases of substitution were found in the corpus. Among them Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness Being*, had the most frequency with 51 cases of substitution and Persian translation of *The Joke* had the least frequency with 26 cases. Persian translation of *Slowness* included 49 cases of substitution.

Instances:

Table 7. Case of Substitution in translation of Slowness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two other whiskies (p.84)</td>
<td>دو لیوان دیگر (104)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example the word *whisky* is replaced by *لیوان* which means ‘glass’ in Persian. It is a general term and doesn’t refer to any special kind of potable. So it is not obvious for the reader that what kinds of drink the glasses include. The translator is applying this strategy because drinking alcoholic beverages such as whisky is strongly prohibited either by religious beliefs or authorities of target society.
Table 8. Case of Substitution in translation of The Joke

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...out for a fling to escape from her husband. (p.161)</td>
<td>...و برای فرار از بیحوفصلگی برون می زند. (264)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above mentioned example the word *husband* is translated as بیحوفصلگی which means ‘boredom’ in Persian. In fact here the truth that the woman is married is not stressed in Persian version because it is not only unethical but also illegal for a married woman to have an affair in target culture.

Table 9. Case of Substitution in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…and her soul lay somewhere at the level of the stomach or pancreas (p. 23)</td>
<td>...و روح در درون ش خفته بود. (76).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the translator manipulates the English text by translating *at the level of the stomach or pancreas* as درون ش ‘inside her’ due to religious considerations of target society about the significance of man’s soul.

3.2.4 Addition

Addition which is one of the less common manipulation strategies occurs when the translator adding a word, phrase, sentence or paragraph to the source text, trying to explain something which may be unfamiliar to the target readers. Of 343 cases of manipulation, 6 cases were addition which 5 of them belonged to Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and 1 to Persian translation of *Slowness* and none to Persian translation of *The Joke*.

Instances:

Table 10. Case of Addition in translation of Slowness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t give a damn what you detest! (p.110)</td>
<td>دیگر اهمیت نمی دهم که چه هستی! تو یک زن بی عاطفه هستی! (124)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example the translator adds the sentence دیگر اهمیت نمی دهم که چه هستی! تو یک زن بی عاطفه هستی! to Persian version in order clarify previous sentence which is not translated properly. As it is obvious form this example, using one type of manipulation strategy may result in using other types of it as well.

Table 11. Case of Addition in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A mass happened to be in progress (p. 57)</td>
<td>همان وقت به یاد دادفا شدن خون و کن عیسی مسیح دعا می</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As it is clear from the above example, the phrase به یاد فدا شدن خون تن عیسی مسیح is added in Persian translation in order to clarify the meaning of mass for target readers.

3.2.5 Attenuation (softening)

Attenuation is another manipulation strategy in which the translator tones down the strong language of the original that may be considered too harsh, blunt or unacceptable in target language. By applying his strategy, the meaning of the original text is somehow kept but more innocuous, indirect and inoffensive words are used. Among the total 343 cases of manipulation, 52 cases of attenuation were found. The Persian translation of Slowness had 21 cases of attenuation and Persian translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being had 16 cases and Persian translation of The Joke had 15 cases of attenuation.

Instances:

Table 12. Case of Attenuation in translation of Slowness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mistress (p.104)</td>
<td>خواهان (118)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the example shows, the Persian translation has manipulated the English text via attenuation. Here the word mistress is translated as خواهان to avoid the direct mention of what is unacceptable in target culture meanwhile the meaning of original is not significantly changed.

Table 13. Case of Attenuation in translation of The Joke

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was common knowledge that she slept around. (p.108)</td>
<td>همه خبر دارند که اینطرف و آنطرف می پرد (183)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see in this example, the Persian translator attenuates the phrase that she slept around by using a Persian phrase which is not precisely equal to that but somehow shows woman’s lack of loyalty as the original phrase does.

Table 14. Case of Attenuation in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between the whores’ world and God’s world (p. 56)</td>
<td>میان دنیای روسپی ها و جهان کلیسا (138)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the example shows God’s world is translated as جهان کلیسا ‘church word’ since God’s world is compared to whores world in the original text and this comparison is too
offensive in Islamic beliefs of target society. The translator used the word ‘church’ which indirectly refers to ‘religion’ and ‘God’.

Up to now all types of manipulation strategies applied by the translators were defined and exemplified. Frequency of manipulation strategies in each translation will be discussed based on the related charts.

**Chart 1: Frequency of different types of manipulation strategies in translation of Slowness**

The total number of manipulation strategies in Persian translation of *Slowness* translated by Hamideh Jahed (1384(2005)) was 125 cases. Among them 54 cases (43%) were deletion, 49 cases (39%) were substitution, 21 cases (17%) were attenuation and only one case (1%) was addition. As it is obvious from this information, the dominant manipulation strategy in this translation is deletion. Persian translation of *Slowness* also includes most deleted pages among all three examined translations.

**Chart 2: Frequency of different types of manipulation strategies in translation of The Joke**

The total number of manipulation cases found in Persian translation of *The Joke* translated by Forough Pouryaveri (1385 (2006)) was 91 cases. In this translation, deletion was dominant manipulation strategy with a number of 50 cases (50%). Cases of substitution found in this translation were 26 (29%). There were 15 cases(16%) of attenuation and no case of addition was found in this translation.

**Chart 3: Frequency of different types of manipulation strategies in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being**
The Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which was done by Parviz Homayonpour (1384(2005)), is the translation with the most (127) cases of manipulation. It contained 55 cases (43%) of deletion, which is again the most frequent manipulation strategy in this translation. There were also a number of 51 cases (40%) of substitution, 16 cases (13%) of attenuation and 5 cases (4%) of addition. This book has the most cases of addition (5 cases) compared to other examined translations which had (2 cases) and (0 case).

*Chart 4: Frequency of using different manipulation strategies in translation of the novels Slowness, The Joke and The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

The frequency of using each type of manipulation strategy is shown in above chart to facilitate the task of comparison and discussion. As it is obvious from the chart, the most frequently manipulation strategy adopted in examined translations is deletion with a number of 159 cases out of 343 cases. Next to it is substitution with a number of 126 cases. Attenuation occupies the third place with a number of 52 cases. And the least frequently applied manipulation strategy is addition. only 6 cases of which was found in whole corpus which 5 of them belonged to Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and 1 case to Persian translation of *Slowness* and zero case to Persian translation of *The Joke*.

4. Manipulated Subjects
According to Nitsa (2000, p.43) ideological manipulation is “any interference with the text, be in cultural, religious, or political, imposing modifications that are not textual constraints, for the purpose of indoctrination”.

What follows in this section are definition of each manipulated subject and also some examples collected from corpus.

4.1 Cultural

One of the subjects have been mostly manipulated in examined translations are cultural subjects. This group includes moral issues and cultural mismatches between two languages. Among the total 343 cases of manipulation, 300 cases were cultural subjects which 107 of them belonged to Persian translation of Slowness, 89 of them to Persian translation of The Joke and 104 of them to Persian translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being.

Instances:

**Table 15. Manipulation of cultural subjects in translation of Slowness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 28 (pp. 95-97)</td>
<td>(115)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is clear from this example, chapter 28 is totally omitted from Persian translation due to abundant moral excuses.

**Table 16. Manipulation of cultural subjects in translation of The Joke**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...Vlasta had long since lost her virginity. She wasn't strictly entitled to the symbol of the garland. (p.128)</td>
<td>...البته ولاستا از خیلی وقت بیش چندان سزاوار نماد حلقه گل نبود. (215)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is clear from above example, the first part of the sentence which talks about bride’s virginity is omitted in translation because of cultural mismatch between source and target societies on this issue.

**Table 17. Manipulation of cultural subjects in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You used to say you wanted to sleep with me. (p. 38)</td>
<td>تو می خواستی یا من باشم. (102)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example what is considered inappropriate in target culture to sleep with me is substitutes with a more acceptable phrase 'to be with me'.
4.2 Religious
Among subjects being manipulated in examined translation are religious subjects. This group includes issues which are against Islamic beliefs of the target society.
A total number of 34 cases of manipulation of religious subjects were found in examined corpus. The Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* had 18 cases and Persian translation of *Slowness* consisted of 14 cases and in Persian translation of *The Joke* 2 cases were found.

**Instances:**

*Table 18. Manipulation of religious subjects in translation of Slowness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The latest of her lovers is particularly worshipful. (p.52)</td>
<td>اخرین معشوق او با سایرین متفاوت است. (71)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the example shows the words *particularly worshipful* in the English text are replaced by *با سایرین متفاوت* (different from others) in translation. The reason is that worshipfulness belongs only to God according to target society’s religious beliefs and its attribution to human being is considered atheism.

*Table 19. Manipulation of religious subjects in translation of The Joke*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now, if God's masons built real walls, I doubt we'd be able to destroy them. But instead of walls all I see is backdrops, sets. And sets are made to be destroyed. (p.6)</td>
<td>تازه اگر بناهای خداوند دیوارهای واقعی بسازند، فکر نمی کنم ما بتوانیم آن را خراب کنیم. (24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example, the first part of English sentence which stresses man’s inability towards God is clearly translated. But the second part of English text is completely omitted from translation because it includes an insulting action to God.

*Table 20. Manipulation of religious subjects in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What she had unexpectedly met there in the village church was not God; it was beauty. (p. 57)</td>
<td>چگونه که ناگهان در کلیسا با آن مواجه شد، نوعی زیبایی بود. (140)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the English phrase *was not God* is regarded offensive in target religious beliefs, so it is not translated at all.
4.3 Political

Political subjects are occasionally manipulated in translated texts. Although selected books include severe criticisms of Communist regime, the number of political subjects being manipulated is low. The situation will not be the same, if the book is published in a country under the rule of a Communist government like China or Cuba.

Among 343 cases of manipulation, 9 cases were political. 4 of them belonged to Persian translation of *Slowness* and none to Persian translation of *The Joke*. Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* included 5 cases of manipulation of political subjects.

**Instances:**

*Table 21. Manipulation of political subjects in translation of Slowness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparatchik of Eroticism (p.2)</td>
<td>صاحب منصب اروتیکالیسم (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above example, the English word *apparatchik* conveys a political meaning ‘a member, esp. an official of a Communist Party’ (Webster New World Dictionary, 1995, p.65). But it is translated as صاحب منصب (official) which is a neutral word.

*Table 22. Manipulation of political subjects in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English version</th>
<th>Persian version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…the students were going out on strike demanding the departure of the Russians… (p. 34)</td>
<td>…، دانشجویان در حال اعتصاب بسر می‌برند. (ص 94)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, the English sentence *demanding the departure of the Russians* is not translated in Persian version due to target society’s good political ties with Russia.

Up to now all of manipulated subjects were defined and exemplified. Frequency of manipulated subjects is each translation will be discussed based on the related charts.

*Chart 5: Frequency of different types of manipulation strategies in translation of Slowness*
The total number of manipulation of cultural, political and religious subjects in Persian translation of *Slowness* by Hamideh Jahed (1384(2005)) was 125 cases. As it is clear from the chart, 86% of these manipulations applied for cultural subjects, which are 107 out of 125 cases. The number of manipulation within the religious subjects in this translation was 14 cases (11%) and this number for political subjects is 4 cases which is only 3% of the whole manipulation.

**Chart 6: Frequency of different types of manipulation strategies in translation of The Joke**

In Persian translation of *The Joke* done by Forough Pouryavari (1385(2006)), there was not any political subjects manipulated. Among total number of 91 cases of manipulation, 89 (98%) of them were cultural subjects and only 2 cases (2%) were religious subjects.

**Chart 7: Frequency of different types of manipulation strategies in translation of The Unbearable Lightness of Being**

In the above chart again, the most portion related to cultural subjects. Of the total 127 cases of manipulation in Persian translation of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* translated by Parviz Homayonpour (1384(2005)), 18 cases (14%) belong to manipulation of religious subjects, 5 cases (4%) were within the political subjects and the remained 104 case (82%) were manipulation of cultural subjects.

**Chart 8: Frequency of manipulated subjects in translation of the novels Slowness, The Joke and The Unbearable Lightness of Being**
This chart is a general outline of the above discussion about the manipulated subjects. The frequency of manipulation strategies applied under the cultural, political and religious subjects is shown in the chart for each translation in order to facilitate the task of comparison and discussion. As the above chart shows the most commonly manipulated subjects in examined translations are cultural subjects with the frequency of 300 cases out of 343 cases of manipulation. Religious subjects stand next with the frequency of 34 cases in defined corpus. Political subjects are the least manipulated subjects with frequency of 9 cases in all three translations.

5. Systemic Context

Here micro- and macro-levels, text and theory are compared and norms identified. (Lambert and van Gorp as cited in Munday, 2001).

Three selected novels of Milan Kundera which are Slowness, The Joke and The Unbearable Lightness of Being and also their Persian translations were examined based on last three steps. First Persian translations’ title pages, introductions and prefaces were examined and general translation strategy was determined. In macro-level general choices made by the translators were taken into account. It was found that the title of one book The Unbearable Lightness of Being is translated as بار هستی (Burden of Being) which made the researcher more cautious about more possible manipulation strategies being applied in the body of the text. The translators tried to keep the presentation of the chapters as close as possible to English texts except for one book, the translation of Slowness which changes in micro-level (unmarked deletion of seven complete chapters) had lead to mismatch between chapter numbers of English and Persian texts. The researchers didn’t notice big differences between internal narrative structures of English texts and Persian translations except for some sentences with different structure or different point of view.

From these findings certain generalization can be proposed concerning the translation norms: in all translations the same norm is at work. All three translators adopt target text-
oriented translation strategy, modifying lexical items of English texts via substitution or attenuation, omit problemmatic parts, even complete chapters, and change titles of the book and division of chapters. It could be concluded that, whenever books’ contents are in contrast to target dominant ideologies, be it cultural, political or religious, the translators prefer the latter and apply different manipulation strategies to conform the translations to target norms.

6. Discussion and conclusion

Based on the results of this study we can draw the following conclusions:

1. Based on gathered information from examined books, it was proved that all three translations have gone under some degrees of manipulation.

2. The data provides support to the fact that although manipulative shifts happened in both macro- and micro- levels, most of the changes are made in micro-level.

3. The dominant type of manipulation strategy applied by all three translators was deletion which is the most severe manipulation strategy among others.

4. The most subjects being manipulated in examined corpus were cultural subjects including moral issues and cultural mismatches between two languages.

5. Generally speaking, in all translations the same norm was at work. All three translators adopted target text-oriented translation strategy, modified lexical items of English texts via substitution or attenuation, omitted problemmatic parts, even complete chapters, and changed titles of the book and division of chapters.

6. The number of additions was not so significant in all of the translations.

Having a general overview on the issues of translation and manipulation, one can observe the outstanding role of society and power relations in translation and in the way a text is manipulated.

The results of this study show, how dominant ideology, norms and cultural, religious and political values of target society result in conscious manipulation of a text by the translator.

Manipulative shifts are implanted in both macro-and micro- levels. In macro level it was found that Persian title of The Unbearable Lightness of being has been translated as بارهستی which is a modified equivalence of the English title. Persian translation of Slowness lacked 7 complete chapters comparing to English text and consequently chapter numbers of English and Persian texts were different from chapter 28 to the end of the books. The internal narrative structures of English texts and Persian translations were somehow the same.
although the researcher found some sentences in Persian translations with different structure or different point of view. In micro-level English texts and Persian translations were compared line by line and 343 cases of manipulation were found. These cases were categorized based on types of manipulation strategies and manipulated subjects.

According to chart 4.4 it can be claimed that the most frequently manipulated strategy applied by all three translator is deletion. Although deletion cases consist of unmarked and marked, more than 95% of cases are manipulated through unmarked deletion which is the strongest manipulation strategy among others since this may cause readers to feel inconsistency in the whole text and thus reliability of the translator can be questioned. Consequently, the act of manipulation, as the application of the translation strategies, ought to be practiced as professionally as possible in order to skip such feeling of doubts. Maybe applying milder strategies such as marked deletion and attenuation could help in this area of concern.

Of course one could claim that cases of manipulation in translated texts could be decided by authorities and publishers, translators seem to be the first agents that face them and have the opportunity to select their approach toward them in the act of translating.

According to chart 4.8 it can be said that the most manipulated subjects are cultural subjects (including moral issues and cultural mismatches). It was somehow expected because Kundera, the author of these books, is famous for writing bare and open texts with regard to describing sexuality scenes while speaking about such issues in target culture is a big taboo.

The point here is that, the translator wandered between two sharp edges: If he/she chooses ‘adequacy’, trying to be faithful to the original author, then no conscious manipulation including deletion, substitution, addition and attenuation is allowed. In this way he/she will be doomed for being unaware of ideologies, norms and cultural, religious and political values of his own society if the book gets the permission of authorities to be published at all. In case he/she chooses ‘acceptability’ trying to take care of dominant ideologies of target culture and its norms and its cultural, religious and social values, he/she will be criticized in terms of author’s right in his work. So both cases seem to be unjust anyway. Maybe our translators need to be trained regarding manipulation strategies and have enough information of these two sharp edges of transferring message between languages. Whenever necessary they may be able to use moderate strategies with the highest degree of efficacy and the lowest degree of loss.
To conclude the study I would like to quote Lefevere (1992) that, “on every level of translation process, it can be shown that, if linguistic considerations enter into conflict with considerations of an ideological and/or poetological nature, the later tend to win out” (p.39).

**References**


**Persian References**


Some Notes on English Learning Anxiety in Classroom: An Iranian Study

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Abstract

Considered to be an important affective variable, anxiety has been found to be correlated with English-learning achievement among different groups of people in various contexts. In order to explore high school students’ English learning anxiety in Iranian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms, this study surveyed and analyzed 115 students from a high school in Tehran, Iran. The results indicated that students indeed had comparatively high anxiety in English learning. Males have higher anxiety of English classes than females. And it was also found that high anxiety plays a somewhat debilitative role in high school students’ language learning. Finally, the possible causes leading to such findings were discussed, and some suggestions for reducing students’ anxiety in classrooms were proposed for teachers.

Key words: English learning anxiety, High school students, Gender.

1. Introduction

It has been observed that some students in English classrooms experience anxiety that results in stuttering and fast heart-beating. These phenomena, all of which are attributed to a psychological state - anxiety - have been the research focus of many linguists and psychologists in recent years. Anxiety has been regarded as one of the most important affective factors that influence second language acquisition. Much research (e.g., Bailey,
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. In Iran, similar research has also been conducted with different groups of people. 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. In this paper, the author endeavored to bridge this gap to find out the situation of this neglected group’s English classroom anxiety through a study conducted in a key middle school of Tehran.

2. Literature Review

Anxiety, simply speaking, is a kind of troubled feeling in the mind. It is a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system (Horwitz, 1986). Usually anxiety is classified into trait anxiety, state anxiety and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety, as Scovel (1978) noted, refers to “a more permanent predisposition to be anxious” while state and situation-specific anxiety are usually experienced in relation to some particular event or situation (Brown, 2001). Language anxiety, the research target of this paper, belongs to the last category, which refers to the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993).

With the shifting of research focus from teachers to learners in SLA (Second Language Acquisition), affective factors, such as attitudes and motivation, were thought to account a lot for language learning outcomes. Anxiety, as a very important affective factor, has been considered very important, and many studies have been undertaken to explore it since the 1970s. The major concern of the earlier studies was the causes of language anxiety. As early as 1983, Bailey, through the analysis of the diaries of 11 learners, had found that competitiveness can lead to anxiety. Besides, he (1983) found that tests and learners’ perceived relationship with their teachers also contributed to learners’ anxiety. These three aspects that Bailey identified were supported in subsequent studies, especially in Young’s study. According to Young (1991), there are six potential causes of language anxiety which include personal and interpersonal, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures and language
tests. From this list we can see that Young, in fact, identified the causes from three aspects, that is, the aspects of learners, teachers and instructional practice, to which Bailey’s findings also complied. However, to date, findings by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) have been the most influential. They identified three causes of language anxiety, that is, communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Based on these three components they also designed a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale including thirty-three items. This scale was later widely used by researchers to measure foreign language learners’ anxiety and examine the effect of anxiety on learning indifferent contexts.

When we explore the effect of anxiety on learning, an important insight to which we can refer, is the distinction between debilitative and facilitative anxiety (Alpert and Haber, 1960). Up to now most studies have shown a negative relationship between anxiety and language achievement, that is to say, anxiety is a debilitator in language learning. Krashen (1985) once held in his affective filter hypothesis that high anxiety will prevent input that learners receive in the classroom from reaching the language acquisition device. Horwitz (1986) also asserted that language anxiety can cause students to postpone language study indefinitely or to change majors. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), based on a study of 97 college students that learn French, concluded that compared with more relaxed learners, those with anxiety find it more difficult to express their own views and tend to underestimate their own abilities. They also found that in the three stages of language acquisition, that is, input, processing and output, anxiety and learning achievement are negatively correlated. Moreover, there have also been some studies conducted to find the negative correlation between anxiety and four aspects of language learning, especially speaking and listening. For example, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) found that speaking is by far the main agent of anxiety-arousal, and that students with high anxiety perform worse than those with low anxiety. However, there have been some studies which found neutral and positive relationships between anxiety and second language achievement. Also, in Bailey’s (1983) study of competitiveness and anxiety, it was found that facilitative anxiety was one of the keys to success, and closely related to competitiveness. In Zhang Baoyan’s (1996) study of English learners in Taiwan, the results showed that there was no relationship between anxiety and learning achievement. So, from these studies it can be seen that the relationship between anxiety and achievement is probably not a simple linear one. It may be influenced by some other factors, such as culture and learners’ proficiency.

3. Methodology
3.1. Subjects
The subjects of the study were 115 second-year high school students (56 males and 59 females). They were from a science class and an math class of a high school in Tehran. Their average age was 16. They all had 5-8 years of experience of English learning.

3.2. Instruments
Two instruments were used for this study. They were a questionnaire assessing students’ anxiety level and an achievement test.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. One was intended to collect personal information of the participants, such as their name, age, gender, etc. The other was a version of FLCAS that was designed by Horwitz (1986). This questionnaire consists of 33 statements, of which 8 items were for communication anxiety (1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32), 9 items for fear of negative evaluation (3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33) and 5 items for test anxiety (2, 8, 10, 19, 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 1 (“strong disagreement”) to 5 (“strong agreement”). The test used to assess students’ English achievement was the final exam administered at the end of the semester. The test paper included five parts: multiple choice, cloze, reading comprehension, error correction and writing, which were intended to assess students’ overall ability in language use. All testing items were drawn from a test bank, which ensured there liability of test paper.

3.3. Data Collection
The questionnaire was administered to 60 science students and 60 math students. 119 copies were collected back and 115 replies were found statistically valid. Only the students from the science class supplied their English scores of the final exam.

3.4. Data Analysis
SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) 13.0 was employed to analyze the data. Firstly, descriptive analysis was performed to compute the means and standard deviations for each item and each kind of anxiety to see the general situation of high school students’ anxiety in English classrooms. Secondly, t-tests (t distribution tests) were employed to see if there were any differences in language anxiety between male students and female students. Then correlational analysis and t-tests were conducted to find out the effects of anxiety on English achievement.
4. Results & Findings

4.1. The general situation of high school students’ anxiety in English classrooms

The results of the descriptive analyses showed that there were 16 items whose means were above 3.00. And of all the statements the 9th one had the highest index of 3.6579. The mean of the anxiety indices of all the subjects in English classrooms, as Table 1 shows, was 2.9310 which indicated that the high school students indeed had the feeling of anxiety in their English classrooms. Moreover, through the computation of means and standard deviations of each kind of anxiety, it was found that students’ fear of negative evaluation, the mean of which reached 3.1828, was especially serious. Among the 16 items whose mean values were higher than 3.00 there were 7 statements concerning it, especially item 3, the mean of which was as high as 3.6579.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Apprehension</td>
<td>2.8865</td>
<td>.48557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Negative Evaluation</td>
<td>3.1828</td>
<td>.76055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Anxiety</td>
<td>2.7737</td>
<td>.71570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety of English Classes</td>
<td>2.7412</td>
<td>.66185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Classroom Anxiety</td>
<td>2.9310</td>
<td>.60911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. The comparison of males and females’ English classroom anxiety

Table 2 shows that in terms of either the general English classroom anxiety or each specific kind of anxiety, males’ means were always higher than females, which indicated that males may experience more anxiety than females in English classrooms. But the results of t-tests (Table 3) showed that there were no significant differences between males and females in most anxiety variables except that of English classes (p=0.026<0.05).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety Variables</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Apprehension</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.1899</td>
<td>61061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.0386</td>
<td>.66748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Negative Evaluation</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.2137</td>
<td>83637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.1535</td>
<td>68776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Anxiety</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.9055</td>
<td>69587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.6508</td>
<td>71784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety of English Classes</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.8838</td>
<td>65992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.6061</td>
<td>64037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Classroom Anxiety</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.0119</td>
<td>62022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.8580</td>
<td>.59556</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3. The relationship between anxiety and English achievements

The results of the correlation analysis indicated that anxiety and English achievement were only correlated in terms of test anxiety. And they were negatively correlated (−.277, \( p=0.039<0.05 \)). It was noted that the coefficient of anxiety for English classes was -0.232 which approached the significant level of -0.25. Therefore, the students from the science class were divided into two groups according to their English scores in the final exam. A t-test was then employed to see if there were any significant differences in the anxiety of English classes between these two groups. The results of the analysis supported the hypothesis that was proposed above. It was found that anxiety of English classes indeed affects high school students’ English achievement (\( p=0.037<0.05 \)).

5. Discussion

5.1. The existence of language anxiety in English classrooms

Similar to the findings of Tang’s study (2005) among college students, this study indicated high school students indeed had the feeling of anxiety in their English classrooms. And they experienced more fear of negative evaluation. The reasons for such results can be explored from two aspects. One aspect is closely related with high school students themselves. The other mainly deals with some external factors. In the aspect of students themselves, the existence of anxiety should firstly be attributed to their English proficiency, which was not high enough to allow them to communicate with others freely, express themselves adequately in class and answer teachers’ questions properly. So, in English classrooms where much communication is needed, high school students are more anxious than in other classes.
Secondly, it is the cultural tradition that Iranian people care much about their faces, so they don’t like to receive low evaluations or criticism about themselves. This is the reason why they experienced more fear of negative evaluation than any other kind of anxiety. Moreover, during high middle school, the stress of the national examination for college entrance and the serious competition among students also causes some students to pay more attention to others’ strong points and their own weak points, which results in the arousal of anxiety. As for the external factors, the reasons should first come from the large context of English learning in Iran. Most English learners, especially high school students, seldom have opportunities to communicate with native speakers of English. Thus, high school students tend to experience more anxiety in English classrooms. Moreover, most Iranian teachers in middle schools overwhelmingly emphasize reading and writing, while paying less attention to listening and speaking. The existence of anxiety in English classrooms can also be ascribed to classroom atmosphere (Wang, 2003). In most Iranian EFL classrooms, teachers play the role of controller or dominator. Students usually feel nervous or oppressed. Consequently, they lack a free, relaxed environment for English learning. Finally, another factor that cannot be overlooked is the high expectations of Iranian parents for their children. Such high expectations usually do not encourage students, but often result in more anxiety.

5.2. Males have more anxiety of English classes than females.
In general, females are thought to be more adept in language learning than males. Female students usually score higher than male students in English exams. Therefore, it is not hard to imagine that females are more confident in their abilities to learn a new language well. Once they gain faith in their capabilities, they will be more ready to “approach threatening situations” (Dörnyei, 2001) in English classrooms. On the contrary, males, who have higher frequency of language learning failure, are inclined to attribute their bad performance in English classes to their low ability. Consequently, they are more anxious about English classes. However, as English is a compulsory testing subject of the college entrance exam in Iran, students all exert themselves to study it. Though males show less aptitude for English than females, great effort helps to make up a lot for it. Moreover, now in English classes teachers try to provide equal opportunities to students. More experience of English use will reduce their anxiety about it. Therefore, generally the gap between males and females is not very large now. In many English tests the highest scores were attained by some male students. That is the reason why no significant differences were found between them, though males’ means were a little higher than females.

5.3. Anxiety plays a debilitative role in language learning.
According to the results of the study, test anxiety and anxiety of English classes were significantly correlated with high school students’ English achievement. In terms of the other factors, although the relationship was insignificant, the coefficients were all negative. Thus, it can be said that anxiety plays somewhat a debilitative role in language learning. Actually, the finding of the negative role of anxiety has been noted in many previous studies, e.g., Horwitz (1986), MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), Tang (2005). Usually, high anxiety can make learners get discouraged, lose faith in their abilities, escape from participating in classroom activities, and even give up the effort to learn a language well. Therefore, the learners with high anxiety often get low achievement. And low achievement makes them more anxious about learning.

Another notable finding of the study was the significant correlation between English achievement and test anxiety, anxiety of English classes. In Iran, high school students usually spend most of their time on English learning in classrooms. Each student usually has 6-8 English classes each week. Moreover, compared with college students, they usually take more English tests. A high school student usually takes a test every three units. And in each term they at least have two large-scale exams – a mid-term exam and a final. Therefore, some students with poor English achievement were anxious about, or even discouraged by English classes and tests.

6. Conclusion

This paper presented some findings of high school students’ anxiety in Iranian EFL classroom. It was found that most students experienced anxiety in classrooms, especially the fear of negative evaluation. Male students were found to have higher anxiety of English classes than females. Moreover, it was also found that anxiety is a debilitator in language learning, especially anxiety of tests and English classes.

Given the situation that anxiety is prevalent in Iranian high school English classrooms, teachers must pay more attention to it. Besides preparing properly for teaching, teachers should take the affective factors of students into consideration (Zhang & Chang, 2004). First of all, they can try to create a relaxed atmosphere for students, which can make them feel safe to speak or express their views. Secondly, teachers should avoid negative evaluation of students in classrooms and comment on students’ behaviors with more encouragement. Thirdly, teachers, together with our schools, should take some measures to relax students’ attention on exams, such as eliminating the ranking of students by their test scores. Finally, teachers can also explicitly tell students the inevitability of the existence of anxiety in English
learning and let them know that anxiety can be reduced through the self-regulation of their thinking and study. Although teachers can make use of the above-mentioned means to help students to overcome their anxiety in English classrooms, teachers should not try to help students get away from anxiety completely. Much research indicates that adequate anxiety plays a positive role and can motivate students to maintain their efforts on learning. Therefore, the teachers’ real job is to help students keep adequate anxiety, neither too high nor too low. As the study was only conducted in one school, more research is needed to support the findings and to find more about high school students’ anxiety in English classrooms.

References


Appendix
English version of FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale)

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2. I don’t worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I’m going to be called on in language class.
4. It frightens me when I don’t understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5. It wouldn’t bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11. I don’t understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12. In language class, I can get so nervous when I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14. It would not be nervous speaking in the foreign language with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don’t understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I’m going to be called on in language class.
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.
22. I don’t feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak the language better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
25. Language class move so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
28. When I’m on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don’t understand every word the language teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared in advance.
Title
ESP Students' Use of Reading Strategies and the Effects of Strategy Training on Their Reading Proficiency

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Biodata
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Abstract
This study aims to investigate ESP students' use of reading strategies and its effects on their reading proficiency. Since the 1970s, researchers have addressed the need for strategy training in response to lack of students’ awareness of the cognitive tools and strategies available to them. For achievement to goals of this study, a Persian questionnaire including 18 multiple-choice questions was designed based on Nunan's (1999: 265) list of reading strategies. 2 out of 18 questions evaluated students' level of reading proficiency and fluency and the rest analyzed their use of strategies. The designed questionnaire was filled by ESP students of agricultural engineering in Isfahan University of Technology. The results of this analysis show that the students' use of most reading strategies is at an average level and consequently their reading proficiency is affected by such insufficient knowledge and use of strategies.

Keywords: Strategy, Strategy training, Reading strategy, Reading comprehension

1. Introduction
Strategies, according to Nunan (1999), are defined as the mental and communicative procedures learners use in order to learn and use language. Nunan (ibid) also believes that every learning task is based on at least one underlying strategy, of which most learners are unaware.
Knowledge of strategies is important, because if students have greater awareness of what they are doing, they will learn more effectively. The research results also show that the learners who know the process underlying their learning are more highly motivated than others. Oxford (1990) also defines strategies as "tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence." She believes that the learners who develop appropriate learning strategies have greater self-confidence and a more successful learning.

This study which aims at analyzing agricultural engineering students' awareness and use of reading strategies is an attempt to show how important the strategies are in ESP learners' success in language learning. Like every other task, language learning needs special tools and instruments, which are strategies. If one knows how to do a work, a task, or an activity, s/he can do it better, faster, and easier. Strategies thus seem to help learners elaborate language confidently, putting less time and energy.

2. Review of literature

There is considerable research to show that reading comprehension is strongly influenced by instruction that emphasizes use of multiple strategies while students try to comprehend texts. Such instructions involve teaching of several strategies while students are reading and comprehending a text. Grabe (2004) reviews two approaches to combined-strategies instruction that improve reading comprehension: Transactional Reading Instruction (TSI) and Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI). Both approaches provide frameworks for strategic comprehension instruction, but incorporate comprehension instruction activities that go beyond strategy development. Both approaches also engage students in all aspects of strategic reading instruction. Anderson (1999) and Cohen (1998) both discuss the effectiveness of direct teacher modeling of strategies for reading. And Stoller (2004) believes that carefully planned and developed content-based approaches offer a potential framework for effective reading instruction.

Assessing the needs for strategy training, Cohen notes that ‘the ultimate goal of strategy training is to empower students by allowing them to take control of the language learning process’ (1998). He thus outlines three major objectives of strategy training: to develop the learners own individual strategy systems, to promote learner autonomy, and learner self-direction and self-evaluation, and to encourage learners to take more responsibility for their own language learning.
3. Aims of the study

This study aims at expressing the significance of reading strategies for ESP students, evaluating ESP students' level of reading proficiency, their use of reading strategies, and its effects on their reading proficiency.

4. Significance of the study

Most textbooks written for ESP students contain a considerable number of reading passages developed around various topics relating to the students' majors and fields of specialty. Most students read these books, not to learn them, but to pass their exams. They do not understand the overall meaning of the texts, but they only put the meaning of words together to make sentences equivalent to the English ones. Sometimes they hate reading, ESP classes and textbooks, and the whole English language, since they do not enjoy learning it. They are afraid of language learning, because they do not know its nature. If ESP students learn how to learn English, they will reconsider their ideas about it. Strategies are keys for opening the texts, entering their world and seeing its beauties. Knowledge of strategies makes language learning easy and ESP courses like other course, understandable, learnable, and even enjoyable. This study is an attempt towards evaluating ESP students' use of reading strategies and its relationship with the students reading proficiency, in order to show the importance of strategies in the students' process of learning.

5. Methodology

5.1. Participants

The participants in this study include thirty agricultural engineering students studying English for specific purposes (ESP) in Isfahan's University of Technology. Their ages range from 18 to 23, and they are all female students passing their first to ninth term of university education. Their participation in this study filling the research questionnaires was voluntarily.

5.2. Instruments

The instruments in this study include a questionnaire designed by the researcher based on Nunan's list of reading strategies. The questionnaire consists of eighteen multiple-choice questions, two of which evaluating the students' level of proficiency and fluency, and the rest examining the students' use of different reading strategies. Some of the questions in this questionnaire have four choices and some five, since the questions are of two different types.
The questions with four choices are those testing the students' real knowledge, and the questions with five choices, are those testing students' beliefs and attitudes towards something.

5.3. Data collection

The data needed for this study were collected by means of a questionnaire so far elaborated. The questionnaire has eighteen items, each of which investigating the participants' use of just one strategy reading ESP books. The questionnaires were handed out to agricultural engineering students studying English for specific purposes in Isfahan University of Technology. They were asked to answer the questions as carefully and honestly as possible, since they were not supposed to write their names, but their age, gender, major, and the number of terms they have passed. Then the filled questionnaires were collected and analyzed.

5.4. Results

As mentioned beforehand, the questionnaire used for data collection in this study includes eighteen questions in Persian investigating the ESP students' use of reading strategies. For the purpose of analyzing the data collected, each question was investigated separately and the results were quantified to see how often each strategy is used by students, and then the effects of strategy use on ESP students' reading proficiency were analyzed.

Now the analysis of the questions:

1. How do you evaluate your proficiency in reading English texts?
   a) very good      b) good        c) average      d) weak        e) very weak

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>very good</th>
<th>good</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>weak</th>
<th>very weak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Number</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>43.33%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question evaluates the students' level of proficiency in reading English texts. As shown in the table, none of the students is very good in reading English texts and just one of them is very weak in this skill. Most of the students think that their reading proficiency is at a good or average level and this is acceptable for agricultural engineering students.

2. How fast do you read English texts?
   a) very fast      b) fast        c) average      d) slow       e) very slow

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very fast</th>
<th>fast</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>slow</th>
<th>Very slow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.66%</td>
<td>86.66%</td>
<td>6.66%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading fluency of almost all of the students is at an average level, regarding their own choices, and just four of them (13.32 %) are more, or less fluent than the average level; none of them is able to read too fast, and none reads very slow.

3. How many English texts (short or long) have you read during last week?
   a) more than ten texts  b) five to ten texts  c) less than five texts  d) no text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>more than ten texts</th>
<th>five to ten texts</th>
<th>less than five texts</th>
<th>no text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>36.66</td>
<td>56.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy evaluated: Frequency of reading English texts

The students' answers to this question show that the students' frequency of reading English texts is very low. More than half of the students had read no English text during the previous week, and the rest had studied less than five texts. This is likely because they do not have enough time to read English texts, they do not need to do so, or they do not have interest in reading these texts. This is while reading frequency is one of the most effective strategies for acquiring reading fluency; i.e. the more, the better. But only 2 of the students (6.66 %) had read an acceptable number of English texts during the week before participation in this study.

4. What was your purpose for reading the English texts?
   a) acquiring information and knowledge           b) doing university assignments
   c) doing daily affairs or entertainment               d) other purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>acquiring information and knowledge</th>
<th>doing university assignments</th>
<th>Doing daily affairs and entertainment</th>
<th>other purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53.33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy evaluated: having a purpose for reading

Nunan (1999) believes that "it is important for students to have clear purposes and to keep in mind what they want to gain from the text." Obviously, it is the nature of human beings in general that they do not do anything without a purpose or justification, and this purpose gives them the required motivation to attempt to achieve their goals.

The purpose of more than half of the participants in this study (53.33 %) for reading English texts had been doing university assignments, which shows that these are mostly teachers and university professors who can prompt students to have some study in English, if not caring for marks.

5. Do you preview English texts before reading them carefully?
   a) always        b) often         c) sometimes       d) seldom        e) never
Evaluated strategy: previewing

The students' answers to this question show that almost half of the students most of the times preview English texts, and about half of them do not care for this strategy too much. The strategy evaluated by this question, which is 'previewing', means "conducting a quick survey of the text to identify the topic, the main idea, and the organization of the text", according to Nunan (ibid). It is also believed that this strategy plays an important role in students' success in understanding and comprehending texts.

6. Can you find general idea of English texts when you skim them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>always</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>seldom</th>
<th>never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: skimming

"Skimming" which is looking quickly through the text to get a general idea of what it is about, is another reading strategy important in reading comprehension (Nunan, 1999: 265). More than half of the students recorded that they use this strategy at an average level. While 7 students (23.33 %) said that they use the strategy a little or very little, none of them use it so much and 6 of them (20 %) use it much.

7. Can you locate specific information by scanning English texts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>56.66</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: scanning

Looking quickly through a text in order to locate specific information is another strategy called "scanning" (Nunan, 1999: 265). In this case like the previous one, 50 percent of the students use the strategy at an average level, 20 percent use it much, 20 percent a little and 10 percent very little.

8. Can you predict what is to come when reading English texts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluated strategy: predicting

The ability of the students to use the strategy "predicting" that is anticipating what is to come, is again at an average level. More than 50 percent of the students recorded that they use the strategy at an average level, more than 30 percent use it a little or very little, 10 percent use it much, and no one use it very much.

9. How do you read English texts?
   a) word-by-word  b) clusters of words as units  c) clause-by-clause  d) fluently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choices</th>
<th>word-by-word</th>
<th>clusters of words as units</th>
<th>clause-by-clause</th>
<th>fluently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: avoiding bad habits and clustering

Avoiding bad habits such as reading word-by-word is another reading strategy mentioned by Nunan (ibid). None of the students are fluent in reading English texts, but most of them (73.33 %) can read easily without having to focus on words one by one; they are able to read words in clusters which is considered a kind of fluency in reading.

10. Do you ask yourself questions when reading English books?
   a) very much  b) much  c) average  d) a little  e) very little

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
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<td>Number</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. If you ask yourself questions when reading English texts, can you find their answers in continue?
   a) very much  b) much  c) average  d) a little  e) very little

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy in these two questions: reading actively

These two questions are both related to the strategy "reading actively", which is asking questions and then reading for answers (Nunan, 1999: 265). Most students (50 % in question...
ten and 66.66% in question eleven) selected the third choice, which reveals that their use of this strategy is at an average level.

12. Can you infer the ideas not explicitly stated in English texts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: inferring

Inferring or identifying ideas that are not explicitly stated, which is the underlying strategy of this question is not used too much by the students. Only 6 (20%) students use the strategy much, but 11 (36.66%) of them use it a little or very little, and 13 students (43.33%) use it at an average level.

13. Can you identify sentence structure (subject, verb, object) when reading English texts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>36.66</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: identifying sentence structure

'Identifying sentence structure' that is identifying the subject and main verb, in complex sentences is a reading strategy used very much and much by 12 out of 30 students, i.e. about 40 percent of them, a little or very little by 10 students, i.e. 33.32 percent, and at an average level by 8 students, i.e. 26.66 percent.

14. Can you infer the meaning of unknown vocabulary and phrases using context?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
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<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
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<td>Number</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: inferring unknown vocabulary

'Inferring unknown vocabulary', which means using context as well as parts of words to work out the meaning of unknown words, is another reading strategy that is used by 12 students (40%) at an average level, by 7 students (23.33%) very much and much, and by 11 students (36.66%) a little or very little.

15. Do you try to look up every word when reading English texts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
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<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Trying to look up every word in dictionary is a very boring, time-consuming, and unessential work done by most of the students when reading English texts. But a strategy which can help them guess meaning of words is trying to understand the meaning of new words from the overall meaning of sentences and paragraphs and also using background knowledge. But about 17 out of 30 students (56.66 %) try to look up every word very much and much, not using this strategy, 9 students (30 %) check the meaning of words at an average level, and 4 (13.32 %) look up words a little and very little.

16. Do you summarize English texts after reading them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: inferring unknown vocabulary

Reviewing or looking back over a text and summarizing it, is another reading strategy cited by Nunan (ibid). Most of the students (66.66 %) use this strategy seldom or never, 7 (23.33 %) students use it sometimes and 3 (9.99 %), always and often.

17. Can you present English texts to others after reading them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>53.33</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluated strategy: reading to present

Understanding the text fully and then presenting it to others is a reading strategy called 'reading to present' (Nunan, 1999). 16 out of 30 students (53.33 %) use this strategy at an average level, 9 (30%) use it very much or much, and 5 (16.66 %) use it a little or very little.

18. Do you pay attention to key words when reading English texts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>very much</th>
<th>much</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluated strategy: attention to key words
Attention to key words which carry most of the meaning burden of texts play an important role in comprehending texts. This strategy is used very much and much by about 70 percent of the students, at an average level by 7 students (23.33 %), and a little by 4 of them (13.33).

6. Conclusion
This study which is an attempt to investigate ESP students' use of reading strategies is conducted based on a Persian questionnaire which was designed using Nunan's (1999) list of reading strategies (265-6). These strategies include: Frequency of reading, having a purpose, previewing, skimming, scanning, avoiding bad habits and clustering, predicting, reading actively, inferring, identifying sentence structure, inferring unknown vocabulary, reviewing, reading to present, and attention to key words. Each question which has an underlying strategy was investigated to evaluate the students' use of strategies. The results of this investigation are as follows (*, is the sign of the highest percent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Very much</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Very little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skimming</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>56.66</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>56.66</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading actively</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>14.99</td>
<td>58.33</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferring</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying sentence structure</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>36.66</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferring unknown vocabulary</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading to present</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>26.66</td>
<td>53.33</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to key words</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percent of students' use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than ten texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of reading</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percent of students' use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring information and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing university assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing daily affairs or entertainment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other purposes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in the tables, most strategies (scanning, skimming, reading to present, reading actively, predicting, and inferring) are used at an average level by about half of the participants. Some strategies, such as identifying sentence structure, inferring unknown vocabulary, and attention to key words, are used much by less than half of the students; and the strategy 'reviewing' is seldom used by near half of them. 'Previewing' is used always, often, and sometimes by about 64 percent of the students, and unfortunately, the reading frequency of 56.66 percent of students is at zero level, that is regrettable. 40 percent of students use the strategy 'avoiding bad habits and clustering', and try not to read texts word-by-word, but clusters of words as units. All students have a purpose for their reading, but more than 50 percent of them read English texts for the purpose of doing university assignments, i.e. this is the most simulating purpose for the students.

From the sum of students' answers to the first and second questions, it can be inferred that reading proficiency of the majority of the students is at good and average levels, and reading fluency of about 87 percent of them is also at an average level. The results of the evaluation of the students' use of reading strategies also reveal that most students use these strategies at an average level, so it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between the students' use of strategies and their level of proficiency and fluency; i.e. the more the strategy use, the higher the proficiency and fluency level. Without strategies students can not be independent and self-directed learners who can guide their own learning. Oxford (1990) argues that strategies are important for two reasons. First, strategies "are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence".

### Having a purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previewing</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strategies' use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percept of students' use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Word-by-word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding bad habits &amp; clustering</td>
<td>26.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

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From the sum of students' answers to the first and second questions, it can be inferred that reading proficiency of the majority of the students is at good and average levels, and reading fluency of about 87 percent of them is also at an average level. The results of the evaluation of the students' use of reading strategies also reveal that most students use these strategies at an average level, so it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between the students' use of strategies and their level of proficiency and fluency; i.e. the more the strategy use, the higher the proficiency and fluency level. Without strategies students can not be independent and self-directed learners who can guide their own learning. Oxford (1990) argues that strategies are important for two reasons. First, strategies "are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence".
Second, learners who have developed appropriate learning strategies have greater self-confidence and learn more effectively.

Now the question is why students do not use strategies, or use them insufficiently. There may be a plenty of reasons which can be considered in this regard. Students are likely not to be aware of the strategies, or perhaps they do not know how to use strategies or even when and where to use them. Introducing strategies in the classroom, among with giving some information about how, when, and where they can be used is thus of uppermost importance, especially for ESP students whose major is not English, and need special training in this respect.

7. Implications for teaching

Reading which, according to Flower et al. (1990), is a "goal-directed, context-specific behavior", is considered to be an essential skill for academic students. There are some purposes for which one reads in his/her daily life, and also some problems in achieving these purposes (e.g. Problems in understanding a text and making sense of it). But there are some strategies for solving these problems and for accomplishing the goals. When one knows the strategies needed for successful reading and solving its inevitable problems, s/he is a strategic reader who can communicate through reading and has communicative competence.

In order for learners to become good or strategic readers who can obtain meaning from texts, they need to be informed of different kinds of strategies, and the way they can handle these strategies to accomplish their goals. Thus they need some training and instruction in this regard, so that their reading problems will be solved and they will have a more comfortable and enjoyable moment when reading English texts, experiencing a convenient feeling rather than being sleepy and bored. But Grabe(2006: 316) believes that for strategy instruction to be effective, it should:

- Focus on establishing a purpose for reading.
- Extend over time.
- Be multi-componential, and focus on the teaching of multiple integrated strategies.
- Be different for different learners.
- Involve either explicit explanation or modeling of strategies by teachers for students.
- Focus on helping students understand when and where to use strategies.
- Teach students to monitor how they are doing in their strategy use.
- Include specific information about the benefits of the strategies being taught.
Teach strategy use in context, i.e. integrated into the curriculum and into the course content, rather than as a separate subject.

Teach students non-strategic knowledge along with the strategic knowledge on which their strategy use often depends.

References


Appendix

In the name of God

Term             Major            Age              Gender

Dear student this questionnaire is to study the strategies related to reading English texts. Since your exact answers will help us achieve the research aims, please fill the questionnaire carefully after the exact reading of the questions. I thank and appreciate your friendly cooperation.

1. How do you evaluate your proficiency in reading English texts?
   a) very good          b) good          c) average          d) weak          e) very weak

2. How fast do you read English texts?
   a) very fast          b) fast          c) average          d) slow          e) very slow

3. How many English texts (short or long) have you read during last week?
   a) more than ten texts  b) five to ten texts  c) less than five texts  d) no text

4. What was your purpose for reading the English texts?
   a) acquiring information and knowledge  
   b) doing university assignments
   c) doing daily affairs or entertainment
   d) other purposes
5. Do you preview English texts before reading them carefully?
   a) always     b) often     c) sometimes     d) seldom     e) never
6. Can you find general idea of English texts when you skim them?
   a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
7. Can you locate specific information by scanning English texts?
   a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
8. Can you predict what is to come when reading English texts?
   a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
9. How do you read English texts?
   a) word-by-word b) clusters of words as units c) clause-by-clause d) fluently
10. Do you ask yourself questions when reading English books?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
11. If you ask yourself questions when reading English texts, can you find their answers in continue?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
12. Can you infer the ideas not explicitly stated in English texts?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
13. Can you identify sentence structure (subject, verb, object) when reading English texts?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
14. Can you infer the meaning of unknown vocabulary and phrases using context?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
15. Do you try to look up every word when reading English texts?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
16. Do you summarize English texts after reading them?
    a) always     b) often     c) sometimes     d) seldom     e) never
17. Can you present English texts to others after reading them?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
18. Do you pay attention to key words when reading English texts?
    a) very much   b) much      c) average     d) a little    e) very little
Title

Political Cognition and the Novel

Authors

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Hakim Sabzevari University, Iran

Omid Etemadi (M.A)
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Biodata

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Ehteram Tabasi, M.A. graduate in TEFL. Her major research interests include: English language Learning, Techniques and methods in Teaching Literature, and CDA.

Omid Etemadi, M.A. student in English Language and Literature. His major research interests include: English Literature, Literary Criticism, Post Colonial Studies, and Discourse Analysis.

Abstract

“To be or Not to be?” that’s undoubtedly one of the greatest questions raised not only in the world of Shakespeare’s Hamlet but also in the real world in different ways. Here is the same question but in a different setting “To be powerful or Not?” From past to the present, people are graded in the hierarchy of power in each society from the most powerful to the least one. Speaking about power, interestingly, members of the first group of the most powerful rushes into mind are politicians- powerful ones whose means of exercising this power is “language”. As Thomas and Wareing (2000) state, power is often demonstrated through language; it is also actually achieved or ‘done’ through language. The related field of study by discourse is called ‘Discourse Analysis’ (hereafter referred to as DA). Davis Crystal (1987, p. 116) points that,“Discourse Analysis focuses on the structure of naturally occurring spoken language, as found in such
‘discourses’ as conversations, interviews, communications and speeches.” The relation between politics and discourse forms a very special kind of DA in which political aspect of language use is considered which is called Critical Discourse Analysis (hereafter referred to as CDA). In this regard, the base of discussion and analysis in this article is political discourse and political cognition studies by van Dijk in his *Power and Discourse* (2008). Here, this article explores the relation between the three concepts of ‘power, politics, and discourse’ in Llosa’s *The Feast of The Goat*, a dictator–historical novel set in Dominican Republic. It investigates different forms of power exercised by Dominican dictator through controlling discourse which in turn leads to cognition management.

**Key Terms**: Power, Critical Discourse Analysis, Political Discourse, Political Cognition, Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Feast of The Goat*.

1. **Introduction**

The Noble prize winner for his “cartography of structures of power and his trenchant images of the individual’s resistance, revolt, and defeat in 2010”, Jorge Mario Pedro Vargas Llosa, is one of Latin America’s most significant novelists and essayists. Some critics consider him to have had a larger international impact and worldwide audience than any other writer of the time. According to Cevallos’ (1991), from the political aspect, Llosa’s has been active throughout his career, among them running for the Peruvian presidency in 1990 with the center-right (FREDEMO) coalition, advocating reforms, and supporting moderate conservative candidates (pp. 270–271). Parker (2007) points that, Vargas Llosa’s style is a mixture of historical material as well as his own personal experiences and his writings are a demonstration of inadequacies of society through oppression and corruption of those in political power towards those who challenge this power (Para. 7).

*The Feast of The Goat*, published in Spanish in 2000 and in English in 2001, is one of the most brilliant Mario Vargas Llosa’s works. This novel is the history of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo’s dictatorship in Dominican Republic whose regime and his economic and social policies were basically progressive. The major themes in this novel are politics, lust of power, sex, violence, and oppression. The most remarkable feature of this novel which makes it different from other historical novels is the professional application of flashbacks and flash forwards to interweave the three story lines together in which the reader is guided by the third person narrator, but each part has its own story teller.
This is Urania Cabral whose story is the opening of the novel, a forty-nine year-old woman who has come back to her country after thirty-five years. She is the daughter of a very loyal senator and one of the victims of Trujillo’s sexual desire and his father’s lust of power at the age of fourteen. She starts telling her story for his crippled father and at the end of the story, she divulges the mystery of her long absence to her aunt and cousins. Here, Urania plays the role of a representative of all country and its people and their lost identity under Trujillo’s dictatorship. In the second frame of the story, Llosa depicts the last day of Trujillo’s life skillfully and uses this part as a mirror to reflect all the life of the dictator and his regime especially his personal characteristics, weak points, family, dictatorship, cruelty, and crime. Llosa explains in this part how Trujillo got the power, how he kept it by force, and how he misused his power to humiliate his allies by sexual damages. Trujillo assassinators, mostly loyal officers in Trijillo’s army, are the main characters of the third story line who are reviewing their memories about how Trujillo has changed them into a Trujillista and what Trujillo has done to them to convince them to kill him while they are waiting for the dictator whom they called the ‘Goat’ on the way of San Cristobal on Tuesday, 30 May 1961. They succeeded and killed the Goat, but almost all of them were arrested, tortured, and killed by Trujillo’s sons and brothers in a brutal revenge. It took time the end of Trujillo dictatorship to be announced officially and President Balaguer took the power for a short time till the official election was held.

2. Review of the Related Literature

“Power, as a term surfaced in people’s dialogues and speech or as a common word used here and there” (Zolfagharkhani, 2011, p. 1). Power, the most dominant concept in history and the locus of social science up to now, cannot be considered without relating it to the society. The term ‘discourse’ has become common currency in a variety of disciplines: critical theory, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology, and many other fields, so much so that it is frequently left undefined. It is used widely in analyzing literary and non-literary texts. Geoffrey Leech and Michael Short (1990) argue that:

Discourse is linguistic communication seen as a transaction between speaker and hearer, as an interpersonal activity whose form is determined by its social purpose.

Text is linguistic communication (either spoken or written) seen simply as a message coded in its auditory or visual medium. (as cited in Hawthorn, 1992, p. 189)
In terms of thinking about discourse as having effects, it is important to consider the factors of truth, power, and knowledge. Since it is because of these elements that discourse has effects, and it is Foucault who deals with these concepts in detail. Truth, for Foucault, is not something essential to an utterance; he sees truth as being something far worldlier and more negative. He (1979e) states:

Truth is of the world; it is produced there by virtue of multiple constraints. …Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is the types of discourse it harbors and causes to function as true: the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorized for obtaining truth: the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (p. 46)

Power is therefore a key element in the discussion of discourse. As Maleki and Navidi (2011, p. 97) point, “The dominating power imposes certain “Discourse” upon people, which they have to follow, since they need to attain an identity. In fact, everything which goes after this power, finds an identity. Even the truth, is truth only when it is in line with the power of a specific era”.

There are three different groups of linguists who have defined discourse in their own terms. The third definition of discourse is that developed by a group of linguists who use the term discourse in a slightly different way to the two previous definitions and to cultural theory as a whole. These linguists are broadly categorized as Critical Discourse analysts; that is those linguists who analyze texts from a political perspective. Because they argue that language is a central vehicle in the process whereby people are constituted as individuals and as social subjects, and because language and ideology are closely imbricate, the close systematic analysis of the language of texts can expose some of the working of texts and, by extension, the way that people are oppressed within current social structures. One of the greatest theorists in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is Teun A. van Dijk. He (2001) defines CDA in this way:

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality. (p. 352)

Fairclough and Wodak (1997, pp. 271–80) summarize the main tenets of CDA as follows:
1. CDA addresses social problems;
2. Power relations are discursive;
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture;
4. Discourse does ideological work;
5. Discourse is historical;
6. The link between text and society is mediated;
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory;
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

According to van Dijk (2008), CDA is specifically interested in the (critical) study of social issues, problems, social inequality, domination, and related phenomena, in general, and the role of discourse, language use or communication in such phenomena, in particular. As van Dijk (2008) states, Discourse Studies more specifically may be defined as ‘critical’ if they satisfy one or several of the following criteria, where ‘domination’ means ‘abuse of social power by a social group’:

- relations of domination are studied primarily from the perspective of, and in the interest of the dominated group;
- the experiences of (members of) dominated groups are also used as evidence to evaluate dominant discourse;
- it can be shown that the discursive actions of the dominant group are illegitimate;
- viable alternatives to the dominant discourses can be formulated that are consistent with the interests of the dominated groups. (p. 6)

This means that it is necessary to borrow or develop theoretical instruments of a more general nature, such as those of power, social structure, social groups, ideology, context, and other general notions involved in the study of discursive domination.

The analysis of power has created a great amount of different studies and research in several related disciplines, but they are not going to be reviewed or redone here. Since most of these works are done within the boundaries of sociology and political science, we have chosen a number of major properties of social power and have reconstructed them within the new theoretical framework. Using van Dijk (2008) elaboration, the properties of power that are relevant to our discussion may be summarized as follows:

1. Social power is a property of the relationship between groups, classes or other social formations, or between persons as social members.
2. At an elementary but fundamental level of analysis, social power relationships are characteristically manifested in interaction. Thus, we say that group A (or its members) has power over group B (or its members).

3. Except in the case of bodily force, power of A over B’s actual or possible actions presupposes that A must have control over the cognitive conditions of actions of B, such as desires, wishes, plans, and beliefs.

4. A’s power needs a basis, that is, resources that socially enable the exercise of power, or the application of sanctions in case of noncompliance.

5. Crucial in the exercise or the maintenance of power is the fact that for A to exert mental control over B, B must know about A’s wishes, wants, preferences, or intentions.

6. Total social control in contemporary western societies is further limited by the field and the scope of power of power agents. That is, power agents may be powerful in only one social domain—politics, the economy, or education—or in specific social situations, as in the classroom or in court.

7. The exercise and maintenance of social power presupposes an ideological framework.

8. It should be repeated that power must be analyzed in relation to various forms of counter-power or resistance by dominated groups. (pp. 29–30)

Because the notion of ideology is crucial for our argument about the role of discourse in the enactment or legitimating of power, it deserves a few remarks. According to van Dijk (2008), despite the variety of approaches to the concept of ideology, it is generally assumed that the term refers to group or class ‘consciousness’, whether or not explicitly elaborated in an ideological system, which underlies the socioeconomic, political and cultural practices of group members. Van Dijk (2008, p. 34) points out, “Classical Marxist analyses suggest, more specifically, that the dominant ideology in a given period is usually the ideology of those who control the means of ideological reproduction, namely, the ruling class.” He explains that this may imply that certain dominated groups or classes may develop biased conceptions of their socioeconomic position (‘false consciousness’), which in turn may lead them to act against their own basic interests. Conversely, the dominant groups or classes tend to conceal their ideology (and hence their interests), and will aim to get their ideology generally accepted as a ‘general’ or ‘natural’ system of values, norms, and goals. It should be noted here that ideology is not considered as the ruling institutions or practices, but it is assumed as a form of social cognition shared by the members of a group, class, or other social formation.
Perhaps more than with other areas of discourse, however, one needs at the outset to consider the reflexive and potentially ambiguous nature of the term ‘political discourse’. “The term” as Wilson states (1990, p. 398), “is suggestive of at least two possibilities: first, a discourse which is itself political; and second, an analysis of political discourse as simply an example discourse type, without explicit reference to political content or political context.”

Political discourse and political cognition can be considered as two major concepts in CDA. They are dealt with by different theorists separately, but there are not a good amount of studies on them as a unit. One reason may be that neither psychologists nor discourse analysts are interested in discourse and mind processing in order. According to van Dijk (2008):

The study of political cognition largely deals with the mental representations people share as political actors. Our knowledge and opinions about politicians, parties or presidents are largely acquired, changed or confirmed by various forms of text and talk during our socialization (Merelman, 1986), formal education, media usage and conversation. Thus, political information processing often is a form of discourse processing, also because much political action and participation is accomplished by discourse and communication. (p. 155)

Hence, discourse and politics can be related in essentially two ways: (a) at a sociopolitical level of description, political processes and structures are constituted by situated events, interactions, and discourses of political actors in political contexts; and (b) at a sociocognitive level of description, shared political representations are related to individual representations of these discourses, interactions, and contexts. In other words, political cognition serves as the essential theoretical border between the personal and the collective dimensions of politics and political discourse. According to van Dijk (2008), the study of political cognition focuses on various aspects of ‘political information processing’. It essentially deals with the acquisition, uses, and structures of mental representations about political situations, events, actors, and groups. Typical topics of political cognition research are: “the organization of political beliefs; the perception of political candidates; political judgment and decision making” (p. 158).

Language use in general, and the production and understanding of political text and talk in particular, may cognitively be analyzed in terms of the theoretical framework summarized above. Relevant for the discussion are (a) the relations between shared beliefs (political representations) on the one hand and personal beliefs (models), on the other hand; and (b) the relations of these social and personal representations with discourse structures.
What has here been summarized for the process of discourse production also applies to discourse understanding. Thus, a politician’s audience, as well as the readers of the text of his speech, understand what he says first through a complex process of decoding and understanding words and sentences, and ultimately by constructing their own models of what he is talking about. Also, if they agree with him, they would accept his models as essentially true or ‘correct’. If not, they may construct alternative models of the situation, depending again on their own personal knowledge of the current situation as well as on socially shared, group knowledge and evaluations. If recipients read or listen to many similar discourses of politicians or the mass media, and have no competing, alternative information, such models may in turn be generalized to socially shared, abstract representations about Muslims, minorities, English people and immigration, for instance in ethnic prejudices and nationalist or racist ideologies.

Generally speaking, language use and discourse reproduction is affected by different social factors such as race, class, gender, and etc. but what is mattered here is the power of access to discourse (re)production. This is social inequality of speakers brings in differences in controls the turn taking, style, and topic. Thus, it is not surprising to hear that powerful party can control discourse reproduction and cognition through controlling mass media and textbooks, two major informative sources in every society.

All in all, in this article we considered the aspects of political discourse and political cognition including knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and ideology in order to study Llosa’s The Feast of the Goat (hereafter referred to as FOG). To do so, we consider related CDA approaches, thus, the discussions are a combination of CDA and cognition studies. Furthermore, FOG is a merely political novel and considering all parts and sentences of this novel is something beyond the capacity of this article. Hence, first we focus selectively on the most important and crucial parts of the novel based on CDA and language, and then connect our discussion to political cognition.

3. Discussion and Analysis
Different ways of power enactment through discourse presented by van Dijk (2008) are the bases of the following discussions. According to him,

1. Direct control of action is achieved through discourses that have directive pragmatic function (elocutionary force), such as commands, threats, laws,
regulations, instructions and more indirectly by recommendations and advice. (p. 37)

Making law is not discussed in *FOG* specifically, but Llosa implies it very smartly in this excerpt.

An attorney who served as a constitutionalist, while still very young he [Henry Chirinos] had been, along with Agustín Cabral, the principal author of the Constitution ordered by Trujillo in the early days of the Era, and of all the amendments made since then. He had also composed the most important institutional and ordinary laws, and written almost all the legal decisions adopted by the Congress to legitimize the needs of the regime. There was no one like him for giving, in parliamentary speeches filled with Latin phrases and quotations that were often in French, the appearance of juridical necessity to the most arbitrary decisions of the Executive, or for refuting, with devastating logic, every proposal that Trujillo disapproved of. His mind, organized like a legal code, immediately found a technical argument to provide a veneer of legality to any decision made by Trujillo, whether it was a ruling by the Treasury or the Supreme Court, or a law passed by Congress. A good part of the legal web of the Era had been spun by the perverse skill of this great pettifogger. (chap. 8, p. 133)

It reveals first that the law is made according to the powerful party’s interests by the agents whom they choose. Second, decisions which are against or opposite to Trujillo’s decisions are rejected by law. Third, by making law, the politicians hide Trujillo’s decisions and legitimize his power and actions.

2. Persuasive discourse types, such as advertisements and propaganda, also aim at influencing future actions of recipients. (p. 37)

These two are among the most permeated modes of power exercise which lead to controlling public discourse, and consequently the management of their minds. Major institutions of power in every society are: the government, the parliament, the military, the church, and the institutions of education, each of which has its own discourse genre and style.

3.1. Urania’s Discourses

The only child and parent in *FOG* are Urania and her father, Senator Agusín Cabral. Urania’s life is divided into two main parts: the first fourteen years and the second thirty–five years. In her memories, she points to her conversations with her father as a fourteen–year girl in which whatever the father says is true and she accepts it without any question. The most important one is:
“My dear, there are things you can’t know, can’t understand yet. I’m here to know them for you, to protect you. I love you more than anything in the world. Don’t ask me why, but you have to forget about this. You weren’t at Froilán’s house. You didn’t see his wife. And certainly, certainly not the person you dreamed you saw. For your own good, sweetheart. And mine. Don’t repeat it, don’t tell anybody about it. You promise? Never? Not anybody? You swear?”

“I swore,” says Urania. “But not even that was enough to make me suspect anything.

(chap. 4, p. 59)

This excerpt is the words of Cabral in reaction to the news of Trujillo visit of Don Froilán’s wife given by Urania. Here, the meaning of the notion of cognition and political representation is very clear. Urania is not old enough to understand her surrounding’s events and she does not have any knowledge about political actions, so she is not doubtful about anything. Unlike her, Cabral knows exactly why Trujillo visits his minister’s wife while the minister is not at home and knows that one day it is his turn to accept such a scandal. This is his political cognition which makes him feel threatened. Wrong political representation of Urania is something dangerous for her and her father is fully aware of that. Her father knows Ramfis completely and his mental representation is entirely different from her young daughter.

The last serious and important conversation between Urania and her father is in 1961, when she is invited to San Cristóbal, on the Fundación Ranch. Here, Cabral makes her daughter decide about something which she does not know anything about and since Urania is not aware of political plays, decides to go there to help her father innocently. According to Llosa (2008, p. 321), “Why would she have misgivings about something her father approved? Instead, she felt hopeful that, as the senator said, the invitation might be the first sign of making amends, a gesture to let her father know that his calvary had ended”. She does not have a true political cognition so she relies on her father’s who is more powerful than her. This is true in a higher level for people in a society. If they do not have a true political representation in their mind, they accept the powerful decisions very easily.

She came back home after thirty-five years. She is not an ignorant young girl anymore. She has studied a lot and has constructed her own mental and context model. Now she has enough knowledge about politics and she has her own political cognition. Llosa shows that how her mental model about her father has changed too. In her conversation with her father or while remembering her memories in her loneliness, she uses offensive words and sometimes insults her father directly because now she is more powerful than him and he
is dependent on her for his life. Her developed political cognition also helps her to change her mental political representation about Trujillo and whatever is related to him.

“My apartment in Manhattan is full of books,” Urania continues. “Like this house when I was a gift. Law, economy, history. But in my bedroom, only Dominican books. Testimonies, essays, memoirs, lots of histories. Can you guess the period? The Trujillo Era, what else? The most important thing that happened to us in five hundred years. You used to say that with so much conviction. It’s true, Papa. During those thirty-one years, all the evil we had carried with us since the Conquest became crystallized. You’re in some of those books, an important figure. Minister of Foreign Affairs, senator, president of the Dominican Party. Is there anything you weren’t, Papa? I’ve become an expert on Trujillo. (chap. 4, p. 55)

In this part, Urania points that her knowledge about Trujillo’s era comes from different history books and sources. As it was mentioned, one of the ways to construct a political cognition is through textbooks and again it must be emphasized that controlling these sources of information leads to the control of the readers’ minds.

In all parts of her story, Urania uses offensive language referring to the regime especially to her father, Senator Chirinos, other government members, and Ramfis. They are people whom she admired before having any idea about political stories and plays. Pointing to all instances is not possible in this brief article so we have just pointed to the selective and important ones.

3.2. *FOG*’s Institutional and Organizational Discourse

This kind of discourse is the most permeated one in *FOG*. The conversations between different members of the government with each other and mainly the conversations between Trujillo with his ministers and officers are examples of such a discourse. As it was noted, this kind of discourse is a power-based one; it means that it is a kind of hierarchical power. Participants in each conversation speak according to the context, situation, and according to their status. They try not to violate the politeness, turn taking, and addressing roles.

Most of Trujillo’s conversations are with his politicians in his regime. They are his agents all over the country by whom he exercises the power over the powerless groups in the society. Trujillo is the most powerful man in Dominican Republic, so it seems natural for him to consider others as his slaves and speaks with them accordingly. His men also know how to speak with him in order not to be disgraced.

Johnny Abbes who is one of his major consultants in political issues, is ordered to speak briefly, clearly, and to the point, however it hurts Trujillo sometimes. Although he
speaks very formally with Abbes, sometimes he turns to informal speech to get more information about his private life.

He liked reading them; the colonel didn’t waste time on stupid shit, …” (chap. 5, p. 65)

Though there were times when the colonel’s frankness displeased Trujillo, he tolerated it. The head of the SIM had orders to speak to him with absolute sincerity even when it might offend his ears. (chap. 5, p. 67)

Now my twenty-four hours a day are dedicated to keeping our enemies from destroying this regime and killing you.

He spoke without emotion, in the same opaque, neutral tone he normally used to express himself. (chap. 5, p. 81-82)

Senator Henry Chirinos is another person who Trujillo speaks with in different political situations. First of all it should be mentioned again that Chirinos has two nicknames given by Trujillo, “Walking Turd” and “Constitutional Sot”. It shows that Trujillo feels more close to this person than to Abbes, so the way he speaks with Chirinos is different from Abbes. Most of the time, he speaks with Chirinos in an informal way, about some private issues either the country or his family.

The last but not the least addressee of Trujillo in FOG is the nominal president, Joaquín Balaguer. Unlike other members of the government, Balaguer is the only person to whom Trujillo speaks very formally. According to Llosa, Balaguer is a very clever politician. He never speaks in a way that may hurt him in future.

“I’ve always used formal address with you, haven’t I? The only one of my collaborators I call ‘usted’. Haven’t you noticed?”

The round little face blushed.

“I have, Excellency,” he murmured, shamefaced. “I always ask myself if you avoid ‘tu’ because you have less confidence in me than in my colleagues.” (chap. 14, p. 262)

Interestingly, Llosa reveals that this person controls all the events by his language and way of speaking. He never uses physical force to convince his enemies. He always uses a formal language with everybody no matter he is more powerful or not. Unlike Balaguer, other politicians speak according to their status with their colleagues or each other.

Another important issue in institutional discourse, as it was noted, is the use of titles, and first and last names. Trujillo always addresses his colleagues by either their first names or nicknames given by him, but nobody dares to address him in this way. This is not
something to need examples, but here are some which show the importance of titles and using the first or last names by other characters in FOG.

“Find Senator Henry Chirinos and tell him I want to see him right away, Isabel,” Senator Cabral says as he enters his office. (chap. 13, p. 239)

“President Cabral, I wanted to tell you,” he stammers, devastated by emotion. “Whatever happens, I’m with you. In everything. I know how much I owe you, Dr. Cabral.”

“Thank you, Goico. You’re new to this world, and you’ll see things that are worse. Don’t worry. We’ll weather the storm. And now, let’s get to work.” (chap. 13, p. 239)

“Senator Chirinos is expecting you at his house, Senator Cabral.” Isabelita is speaking as she comes into the office. (chap. 13, p. 239)

Cabral calls his secretary by her first name and addresses his other co-worker by his last name without any title, but Paris Goico and Isabelita address Cabral as “Senator Cabral” and “Dr. Cabral”. These examples reveal that institutional discourse is a kind of hierarchal discourse and it is based on the power status of the speakers. Llosa reveals the importance of the titles skillfully in the following excerpt from the conversation between Cabral and Quintanilla.

“Didn’t you realize that three or four days ago the papers stopped calling you a ‘distinguished gentleman’ and demoted you to ‘señor’?”(chap. 13, p. 237)

For the first time since reading the letter in “The Public Forum,” Agustín Cabral is afraid. It’s true: yesterday or the day before somebody at the Country Club joked that the society page in La Nación had deprived him of “distinguished gentleman,” which was usually a bad omen… .(chap. 13, p. 237)

These excerpts reveal clearly that the amount of Cabral’s power is determined by the titles, and after being disgraced by Trujillo, as his power decreases he loses his titles in public eyes.

3.3. Media Discourse

Apparently, media is a kind of unilateral means of communication and interaction, because its effects are revealed within a long time and abstractedly. Different kinds of media like television, newspaper, radio, magazines, and etc. are also considered among the most important sources of information and because of this they play a key role in every society.

The main discussion in this part of the article is on the construction of mental models, cognition, and their management by people in power. As it was mentioned earlier, given information through different sources is the major base on which cognition, especially
political one, is founded, so controlling these sources lead to the mind control and consequently cognition management.

Generally, like any typical society, Dominican Republic’s media is very crucial for its politicians and the whole country.

Indignant at the offensive against Trujillo by the White Home, Venezuela, and the OAS, he [Simon Gittleman] gave up his business in Arizona and bombarded the American press with letters, reminding everyone that during all of the Trujillo Era the Dominican Republic had been a bulwark of anti-Communism, the best ally of the United States in the Western Hemisphere. Not satisfied with that, he funded--out of his own damn pocket!--support committees, paid for publications, organized conferences. (chap. 2, p. 17)

This excerpt reveals two kinds of media: agreed and disagreed media, according to this paragraph United State’s press and media are against Trujillo, and his friend and teacher, Simon Gittleman attacks them through media and press in reaction.

The former editor of La Nación, a frantically Trujillista newspaper, Marrero had been Minister of Labor in 1956, and again in 1959, when he began to send reports to Tad Szulc, a journalist, so that he could defame the regime in his articles for The New York Times. (chap. 5, p. 74)

Thus, La Nación is one of the Dominican newspaper which is under the government control, but The New York Times is not so. Llosa points to some of the news in The New York Times. It seems that it divulges Trujillo’s regime crimes.

In March 1956, Jesús de Galánguez, who had become an American citizen, disappeared after being seen, for the last time, coming out of a subway station on Broadway, in the heart of Manhattan. … The powerful machinery that Trujillo had in the United States--journalists, congressmen, lobbyists, lawyers, and pro-moters--could not contain the explosion of indignation in the press, beginning with The New York Times, and among many representatives in Congress, at the possibility that a tinhorn Caribbean dictator would dare to abduct and murder an American citizen on American soil. (chap. 6, p. 97)

Antonio learned all this in bits and pieces (censorship did not allow the Dominican press and radio to mention the subject) in broadcasts from Puerto Rico, Venezuela, or the Voice of America, which could be picked up on shortwave, or in copies of the Miami Herald or The New York Times that filtered into the country in the bags and uniforms of pilots and airline attendants. (chap. 6, p. 98)
Thus, inner press is censored and if people want to know about the true news, they have to read foreign newspapers or to hear radios. It is clear that censorship is one way of controlling discourse, especially public discourse.

La Nación and El Caribe are the two major newspapers in FOG which are used mainly for political purposes. El Caribe is the newspaper in which people usually read about their own or disgraced powerful people’s fate. Its main part is “The Public Forum” which is full of terrible accusations, denunciations, and columns. According to Llosa (2008), this column:

kept people in a state of anxiety because their fate depended on whatever was said about them there, and for the intrigues and the operations directed against sometimes a political and decent people, peaceable citizens who had fallen somehow into the infinite nets of espionage that Johnny Abbes García and his vast army of calíés spread into every corner of Dominican society. (p. 43)

Johnny Abbes García is one of the columnists. He uses this column to cover his crime and deceive people. Senator Agustín Cabral is one of the victims of The Public Forum. He knows that when his name comes in this column and there is a letter against him, it means there is no hope to be pardoned by Trujillo. “Because it [The public Forum] was fed from the National Palace and served as a political barometer for the entire country”. (chap. 13, p. 230)

It was mentioned earlier that Cabral was first warned by La Nación when he remembered that this newspaper addresses him just as a “gentleman”. La Nación like El Caribe is used for fighting with the enemies of the regime, and the church and bishops are among major Trujillo’s enemies.

As van Dijk (2008) reminds, there are always contrary ideologies or disagreements in a society. In FOG, Trujillo’s assassins and the church are on the opposite of the regime. Thus, they are among the important subjects of the news. It is interesting to know that according to their plan, the first measure taken after killing Trujillo is:

“We have to force the hand of the Trujillistas before they can react. We’ll call on the people, we can use the Palace connection to every radio station in the country. We’ll tell them to take to the streets. In the end, the Army will support us.” (chap. 19, p. 354)

It means that the best, fast, and most reliable means for informing people is media.

Trujillo’s assassination is not announced immediately by the press because it causes the revolution. Till the previous nominal president, Balaguer, takes the power almost completely, all the media call the assassins as the ‘murderers’ of Trujillo. After taking the
power it is Balaguer himself who as the first person starts to criticize Trujillo’s regime slightly in the press and radio.

The day after the Trujillo brothers left the country, a political amnesty was declared. The jails began to open. Balaguer announced a commission to investigate what had happened to the “executioners of the tyrant.” From that day on, radio, television, and the newspapers stopped calling them assassins; executioners, their new designation, would soon become heroes. (chap. 23, p. 450)

Hence, media has a great effect on the construction of cognition and mental models of people. As Trujillo himself notes while he is listening to the news about his sons whom have been chosen as the most applauded players, the news is just “A lie, to beguile Dominicans” (chap. 2, p. 23). It is clear that media is under the control of the dominant group too, and they decide what, when, and how the news to be broadcast.

### 3.4. Textbooks

If not more powerful, textbooks are as powerful as media in controlling the ideas, opinions, and in one word the cognition. According to different definitions of discourse, written texts are one kind of discourse. Unlike media, textbooks are obligatory during the education years and everybody has to study it at least once, accordingly it can be said that the textbooks are more powerful than the media in this respect. As media is under the control of the powerful person or group in a society, textbooks and educational materials are also designed by or under direct control of the people in power. Although this issue is not considered so specifically in FOG, there are some examples of textbooks which have significant effects on people’s minds.

And his wife--for that fat, stupid old woman, the Bountiful First Lady, was his wife--had taken the business about being a writer and moralist seriously. And why not? Didn’t the newspapers, the radio, the television say so? Wasn’t Moral Meditations, with a prologue by the Mexican José Vasconcelos, required reading in the schools, and wasn’t it reprinted every two months? Hadn’t False Amity been the greatest stage hit in the thirty-one years of the Trujillo Era? Hadn’t the critics and reporters, the university professors, priests, and intellectuals, praised her to the skies? (chap. 2, p. 19)

There is no reference to the content of the book and the play, but since Trujillo’s wife has written them, it can be guessed that whatever has been written in them is something agreeable for the regime. In other words, the content is not important here. What is important is that this textbook, which is written by a member of the dominant family, is obligatory in
schools, and educational system is not free to choose the materials for the students. Llosa relates the discussion of the textbook and media in this part simultaneously and reveals the effect of media on mind. He notes that Doña María believed that she was the real writer of the book because all newspapers, radio, and television said so.

Reissued every year by the Trujillonian Institute, Balaguer’s speech was required reading in schools, and the central text in the Civics Handbook, used to educate high school and university students in the Trujillista Doctrine and composed by a trio of men he had selected: Balaguer, Egghead Cabral, and the Walking Turd. (chap. 14, p. 267)

What is Balaguer’s speech? It is the famous speech orated at the Fine Arts in which Balaguer introduces the well-known expression, “God and Trujillo” and relates Trujillo’s sovereignty to God’s will and considers it as a “decision of Divinity”. This excerpt reveals three points: first, Balaguer’s speech is a part of educational material which the students have to study; second, this speech is the main text of Civics Handbook taught in high schools and universities; and third, Civics Handbook is composed by three major politicians of the country, Balaguer, Cabral, and Henry Chirinos. Thus, it is politics which controls the educational materials and consequently it controls the minds of a great number of society members while their mental model is constructing. It is obvious that reading such materials and receiving such information about politics and the dominant person leads to the construction of an unreal political cognition.

Another kind of books which are very crucial in political discussions is the history books. They are also considered as a reliable information sources, but it does not mean that all given information is true and real. Again it is the powerful group who manipulates such books or composes the opposite ones immediately. Apparently, in FOG, history books are considered reliable by Urania, because she admits that by reading them she can understand many things about politics and Dominican history.

“My apartment in Manhattan is full of books,” Urania continues. “Like this house when I was a gift. Law, economy, history. But in my bedroom, only Dominican books. Testimonies, essays, memoirs, lots of histories. Can you guess the period? The Trujillo Era, what else? The most important thing that happened to us in five hundred years. (chap. 4, p. 55)

These thirty-one years seem very crucial to the Dominicans from Urania’s point of view, because of the amount of the cruelty and evil imposed on them, also this era is very important from her father’s point of view for its advantages and development. She also points to an
important role of the books in a society. It is the history books which preserve the culture, the language, and the different beliefs of a nation or country. Thus, reading the history helps people to know themselves and their country, especially in regard to the politics, better.

4. Conclusion

Mental representation and context model are two key sections in CDA studies especially in political ones. These two are the fundamental sections of cognition construction. Simply put, cognition is the mental and context models which are constructed based on given information from different sources. When the major subject of these models is politics, the constructed cognition will be called political cognition. Political cognition plays a key role in getting the implied meanings of political discourse by politician and people in power. It means that people make political decisions according to their political cognition, so they need to have a stable and true cognition in this regard. According to this article, people either have this political cognition or not. In the former case, people accept whatever the politician declares without any resistance because they do not have the power to analyze the discourses. The latter case has two phases: people have political cognition, but it is either true or not according to the given information by different sources. Since their decisions are based on their cognition, wrong cognition leads to wrong decisions and vice versa. Analyzing different examples in FOG, we conclude that politicians or powerful party in the society use either the lack of political cognition or the wrong political cognition of people to exercise their power over them.

Consequently, we answer three questions related to CDA, political cognition, and political discourse in FOG:

1. How is language used in FOG by different people according to their power?
2. How do the powerful groups control the public discourse?
3. How does control of the public discourse lead to political cognition?

According to the analyzed instances in FOG, this is political cognition that gives people power in a society. Hence, language is used based on the political cognition. In FOG, people with more power in their own scope of action, feel free in using the language during their conversation with their inferiors. Trujillo is the absolute power in the country, so he uses different nicknames, disdaining titles, or special way of speaking to show his power. But people who are given the same political cognition by Llosa talk with each other in a way that
reveals their shared political cognition, the assassination group or the main politicians of the country, for instances.

The answers of the second and the third questions have been the main discussions of this article and in fact the answers are interwoven and have a mutual relation. Based on the presented examples from FOG and their analysis according to cognition theory, the powerful party controls the public discourse in the following ways:

- Controlling the minds
- Controlling the media
- Controlling the textbooks

As it was discussed fully in the second section, discourse is not necessarily the oral production of language; it can be a written text, a photo, a painting, propagandas, or any other work of art. In FOG, Trujillo uses all kinds of discourse in order to manage his subordinates’ minds easily; oral speeches given by himself or his politicians, his statue in different places of the country, the name of the places which are given for his family members, and the famous slogan of the Republic are some instances in this regard. These are the things that people see or hear and adjust their minds to them unconsciously.

Media as the major source of information in every society must be allocated great amount of attention. Newspapers are read by different groups of people, in every house, there is at least a television set, and a great amount of news is broadcasting via radios. Thus, if the powerful party can control this section of society, in fact it will be able to control people’s minds which result in discourse control. In FOG, it was discussed that there was plenty of censorship on news, and the press and media were under Trujillo’s absolute control.

The last but not the least sources of information are the textbooks, especially the educational materials. It can be claimed that the educational materials are the most important kind of textbooks because reading and learning them is obligatory for everyone in different levels of education. Studying the instances from FOG, has made it clear that the powerful party tries to control the content of the textbooks and presents something which is in its favor.

We emphasize here that some of the most important texts about the positive aspects of Trujillo and his regime, even not real and true, were presented to the students at the elementary levels of education and in this way their mental and context models were constructed more easily. Trujillo knew that constructing the political cognition at the
elementary levels was not enough, so this procedure was continued at universities with more emphasis in order to establish a stable positive political cognition.

References


Title

An Intercultural Rhetoric Investigation: The Effect of Linear and Non-Linear Paragraphs on Students' Comprehension and Recalling

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Abstract

This research made a contrastive study of the rhetorical organization of a number of paragraphs written in English and Persian. Two linear expository paragraphs from English and Persian language and two non-linear expository paragraphs from English and Persian language were chosen. 70 students took part in this research. The participants in two classes received two texts, one received Persian and English linear paragraphs and the other received Persian and English non-linear paragraphs. The results of the quantitative analysis showed that Iranian students prefer non-linear paragraphs than linear ones in both English and Persian languages. These findings lend support to the existence of cross-cultural differences between Persian and English.

Key words: Culture, Contrastive Rhetoric, Linear and non-Linear Paragraphs

1. Introduction
The study of rhetoric started after publication of Kaplan’s (1966) paper “cultural through patterns in intercultural education”. After reading and analyzing a large number of students’ essay in his study, Kaplan argued that the forms these essays took might reflect the “thought pattern of the writers’ culture”. Oriental thought, for example, was said to follow a spiral, whereas English thought was said to follow a straight pattern of development. Matsuda's (2001) response to Ying (2000) includes a personal communication from Kaplan in which Kaplan admits having been very much influenced by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Matsuda concludes that the origin of contrastive rhetoric was a result of Kaplan's effort to synthesize at least three different intellectual traditions: contrastive analysis, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, the emerging field of composition and rhetoric. The latter encouraged Kaplan to approach contrastive analysis at the paragraph level (Connor, 2002).

Kaplan (1966) suggested that all written languages contain a variety of organizational modes, and that native speakers recognize which mode to use. However, he implied that the non-native speaker does not possess a complete inventory of possible alternatives; does not recognize the sociolinguistic constraints of those alternatives, and does not know what constraints a choice imposes on the text. Kaplan's data were used by Connor (2002), Hinds (1990) and Kaplan (2001) to support contrastive rhetoric as a theory that dealt with foreign language learners' cultural barriers in their academic writing. These studies show how writers' cultural background influence their organization of writing, what they choose to use as evidence in supporting their main ideas, how they express their main ideas, and how they write in the foreign language. They also show how different rhetorical preferences are reflected in textual organization of different languages.

For foreign students, linguistic and cultural patterns are transferred to their writing in the target language not only at the word and sentence level but also at the discourse level Moran, (1991). Since their original styles may not work with the new tasks assigned by the target language teachers, they need to adapt to the new academic context which has its own conventions (Jordan, 1997). To compose in a foreign language is not an isolated classroom activity, but a social and cultural experience. For example, the rules of other societies; likewise, the rules of Chinese writing reflect beliefs and values that may not be found in learning the values of the corresponding foreign society (Shen & Yao 1999).

Researchers who do contrastive rhetorical studies are interested in how writers' cultural backgrounds influence the way they organize their writing, and how they write in a foreign language (usually English). As a matter of fact, students of English as a foreign language
who come from different cultural backgrounds, often have different kinds of problems from those of native speakers of English. In Farsi, for example, the borderline between the spoken and written discourse is not clear-cut. The spoken style is more widespread and dominant in Farsi. As a result, the paragraph, as the unit of written discourse, follows the internal rhetorical structure of oral discourse (Khatib & Moradian, 2011). Besides, one of the main characteristics of oral discourse in Farsi is topic shift, i.e. the speaker, from time to time, shifts from one topic to another trying his or her best to make the issue as attractive and persuasive as possible. As a result, multi-topical paragraphs which are, to a large extent, the legacy of the oral style are common in Farsi style of writing (Meskoob, 1995). Besides, the written discourse of Farsi is characterized by too many instances of subordinate as well as coordinate clauses, resulting in many cases of T-units in a Farsi piece of writing (Hassani, 2004).

Kaplan (1966) believes that in a linear paragraph the approach is direct and the entire sentences support only the main idea in the paragraph, whereas in a non-linear paragraph an indirect approach is used and comes to the point only at the end.

The academic writings of many languages try to fit linear styles. Gonzales (1982) notes, in description of the language of the Philippines, that a priest will state his sermon in the local language but switch to English (a linear language) if the topic is academic and theological in nature. Clyne (1981) in discussion of English/German rhetorical patterns states:

There appear to be some disciplines (e.g., mathematics, and engineering) in which German scientists have adopted a basically linear discourse structure. This may be conditioned by the discipline or by leadership of English speakers (p. 64).

Eggington (1987) has also found that Korean speakers will be better able to reproduce information presented in more traditional non-linear rhetorical framework than information presented in the linear rhetorical patterns. Hinds (1983) have also demonstrated that Japanese students and English-speaking American students were asked to read and recall information contained in an essay written in one of the desired rhetorical patterns of Japanese. The Japanese readers were being able to retain information better than the English readers because the Japanese readers were operating within a familiar rhetorical framework.

In this study, the researcher is going to answer whether Iranian students prefer to use non-linear (indirect) paragraphs, in other words, whether understanding non-linear paragraphs is easier for Iranian students rather than linear ones and also if they keep non-linear paragraphs
in mind for a longer time than linear ones. So this study will test Kaplan’s claim about an oriental language (i.e. Persian). This study is going to answer the following questions:
1-Is there any difference between students’ comprehension and of linear and non-linear Persian texts?
2-Is there any difference between students’ recalling of linear and non-linear English texts?

2. Method
1. Participants
Our research population were 170 students who were studying English language at the Islamic Azad University of Ilam. All classes were defined as clusters. Two classes, including the females and the males, were randomly selected as our participants. 70 students took part in this research. They all majored in English literature and were studying in their fourth year of education at university. The reason for selecting students at the advanced level is that advanced students are better suited for the comprehension of given paragraphs, especially the English ones.

2.2. Procedure
To accomplish the purpose of the study the following procedures were applied: In order to make the participants homogeneous, a Cambridge reading TOEFL test was used. It included 40 items in a multiple choice format. One standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen for the next stage, there remained 40 homogeneous students, 26 girls and 14 boys. These forty students were divided into two classes randomly. The participants in the two classes received two texts, one received a Persian linear paragraph (Appendix A), and the other received a Persian non-linear paragraph (Appendix B). The participants were asked to read the paragraphs in 10 minutes and were told that they would be required to recall as much information from the paragraph as they could. After the given time, the paragraphs were taken away; the participants were given a blank piece of paper and were requested to write all that they remembered from the paragraphs within ten minutes. Next the participants received two English paragraphs: the first class an English linear paragraph (Appendix C) and the second class an English non-linear paragraph (Appendix D). After 20 minutes the paragraphs were taken away and again they were requested to write all that they remembered from the paragraphs within 15 minutes; then, the participants were requested to return the following week for another test. Upon their return, the participants were asked once again to reproduce as much as they could remember of the paragraphs. The participants’
comprehension and recalling responses were analyzed by three raters. Responses were scored on a six-point scale so that if the information contained in a participant’s clause, agreed exactly with the original, then a score of 1 would be assigned to the recalled clause; partial agreement results in a score of 2, 3, 4, or 5 depending on the closeness of the information in the participants’ clause to the original, while total disagreement, or no mention of the sentence, resulted in a score of 6. Therefore, the less information was recalled the higher the score. No penalty was given for any new information not found in the original, and the particular ordering of the recalled clauses had no effect on the scoring system. Four standard two-tailed t-tests were used to test the reproduction differences between the linear and non-linear texts in all conditions (immediate and delay). The study was set to investigate the following null hypotheses:

1. There isn’t any difference between students’ comprehension of linear and non-linear Persian texts in.
2. There isn’t any difference between students’ recalling of linear and non-linear Persian texts.
3. There isn’t any difference between students’ comprehension of linear and non-linear English texts.
4. There isn’t any difference between students’ recalling of linear and non-linear English texts.

2. 2. 1. The Level of difficulty of the paragraphs

For finding the level of difficulty of the given text a FOG formula (Farhady, Jafarpour & Birjandy, 1994) was used, then the level of difficulty of each paragraph was calculate

Table 1: Level of difficulty of the paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of difficulty of the paragraphs</th>
<th>Persian linear paragraph</th>
<th>Persian non-linear paragraph</th>
<th>English linear paragraph</th>
<th>English non-linear paragraph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on table 3.1., both Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs have almost the same level of difficulty and English linear paragraph is also as difficult as the non-linear one, so we can say that the chosen paragraphs were appropriate for the research; since any difference between comprehension or delayed recalling of the linear and non-linear paragraphs will be the result of the linearity or non-linearity of paragraphs in both languages not difficulty or easiness of the paragraphs.

2. 3. Instrumentation

2. 3. 1. TOEFL Test
The TOEFL reading comprehension test used in this study contained 5 texts and 40 questions in a multiple choice format.

2. 3. 2. Paragraphs
Two linear expository paragraphs, in English and Persian and two non-linear expository paragraphs in English and Persian were chosen. The linearity and non-linearity of all paragraphs were judged by six raters, all of them were PhD of applied linguistic.

3. Data analysis
3.1. Analyzing the results
Tables: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 show the mean of each class, the standard deviation from the mean and the results of t-tests for: Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs comprehension, Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs recalling, English linear and non-linear comprehension English linear and non-linear recalling, respectively.

3.1.1. Persian paragraphs
Table 2: Persian linear and non-linear comprehension results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraphs</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-tailed t-test formula was applied to the results of comprehension of Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs in table 2. The next table shows the results of the first.

Table 3: t-observed and t-critical for Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs comprehension results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-observed</th>
<th>Degree of Freedom (df)</th>
<th>T critical value for a two-tailed test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.44 0.05 level of significance .56 0.01 level of significance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the t-observed is .60 which exceeds the t-critical values at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance which are .44 and .56 respectively. Therefore, the difference between the scores of the two groups is significant; that is, more than happening just by chance. As a result, it can be concluded that the comprehension of non-linear Persian paragraphs is easier for Iranian students.

Table 4: Persian linear and non-linear recalling results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraphs</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two-tailed t-test formula was applied to the results of Iranian students' recalling of Persian linear and non-linear in table 4.4. Table 5 shows the results of the second t-test.

Table 5: t-observed and t- critical for Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs recalling results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-observed</th>
<th>Degree of Freedom (df)</th>
<th>T critical value for a two-tailed test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05 level of significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.90</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that the t-observed (.9) exceeds t-critical at level of significant of 0.05 and 0.01 which are respectively .44 and .56. So recalling of non-linear paragraphs is easier for Iranian students. According to table 4.2 and also table 4.4 (t-test1 and t-test2), the second null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, there is a significant difference between Iranian students' recalling of Persian linear and non-linear paragraphs in delayed conditions.

3.1.2. English Paragraphs

Table 6: English linear and non-linear paragraphs comprehension results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraphs</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two-tailed t-test formula was applied to the results of Iranian students' comprehension of English linear and non-linear in table 4.5. Table 4.6 shows the result of applying t-test.

Table 7: t-observed and t-critical for English linear and non-linear paragraphs comprehension results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-observed</th>
<th>Degree of Freedom (df)</th>
<th>T critical value for a two-tailed test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.05 level of significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 7, t-observed (3.2) is more than t-critical at the significant level of 0.05 and 0.01 or 3.2 > .44 and also 3.2 > .56. As a result, third null hypothesis is also rejected, leading to this conclusion that there is statistically a significant difference between comprehension of Iranian students of English linear and non-linear paragraphs.

Table 8: English linear and non-linear paragraphs recalling results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraphs</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-linear</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The two-tailed t-test formula was applied to the results of Iranian students' recalling of English linear and non-linear in table 8. Table 9 is the result of applying the two tailed t-test.

Table 9: t-observed and t- critical for English linear and non-linear paragraphs recalling results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Freedom (df)</th>
<th>T critical value for a two-tailed test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.05 level of significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, the result of applying the t-test shows that t-observed is much bigger than t-critical at both levels of significance 0.05 and 0.01 (3.04>.44, 3.04>.56 ). It means there is a significant difference between Iranian students' recalling of English linear and non-linear paragraphs. So the fourth null hypothesis is also rejected. In other words, recalling non-linear paragraphs is easier for Iranian students than linear ones.

Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 showed that Iranian students prefer non-linear paragraphs to linear ones in both English and Persian languages. That is, understanding and recalling of non-linear paragraphs, in both English and Persian language, is much easier for Iranian students than linear ones. In other words, Iranian students may have difficulty in comprehension and recalling of linear paragraphs. So all null hypotheses are rejected, leading to the conclusion that Persian and English are different in their use of non-linearity and linearity in writing.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study showed that Persian and English are different in their use of linear and non-linear paragraphs. Of course it does not mean that we just teach and accept western linear way of writing; it would be language imperialism and also a new colonialism to advocate the idea that only linear rhetorical patterns are acceptable and must be taught in our education. What here we need is the introduction of both systems of writing. It would be highly overconfident to maintain that this study presents an exhaustive description of rhetorical uses in writing in two cultures studied here. Such is not the intention of the present writers. Rather, it attempts to demonstrate that there are several important rhetorical differences between Eastern and Western writing preferences.

This study indicates that Iranian students are able to understand and retain information presented in the linear styles more than non-linear ones. In other words, Iranian students have
a certain built-in expectations about the ordering of the ideas. It is clear that these findings can be useful in writing class. This tendency toward non-linear paragraphs roots in Iranian literature.

On the other hand, one of the main characteristics of the oral style in Persian is topic or \textit{genre shift}. The speaker or the orator, from time to time, shifts from one topic to another trying his best to make the issue as attractive and persuasive as possible. As a result, multitopical paragraphs which are, to a large extent, the legacy of the oral style are common in Persian (Moradian, 1999, 2006). Haghshenas (1998) has also found that in Hafiz ghazal there is almost always a change of horizon (perspective) of the poem.

Another reason for non-linearity is that Persian prose of nearly all text types is heavily influenced by the poetry. In other words, Persian prose writers follow the conventions of the poetic style. Tabatabaii (2006) mentions the dominance of poem over prose in Persian language history. He states Saadi was one of the greatest men who combined poem with prose in his great work –\textit{Golestan}-one reason that he combined poem with prose was that he was criticized for writing prose, since during those days it was beneath great writers’ dignity to create their works in prose form. That is why most of the famous Persian literary works are poetry rather than the prose.

In contrast to the English writing system, the Persian writing system is nonlinear. The obvious problem that we face in the Persian composition classes is that both the teacher and the students do not exactly know what they are going to do. In these classes, teachers just want the students to write. They do not follow any special procedure. Just little guidance may come from the teacher. Teaching composition seems makes no difference at all levels of education; the students are given a subject and are asked to write a composition according to their background knowledge. Most of the teacher’s guidance is limited to correcting some grammatical points or giving some suggestions about choice of suitable words. Methodologists and researchers have suggests many different approaches as how to teach composition in EFL class, for example, process and product approaches Process approach is never used in Persian compositions classes (Hassani, 2004).

The results of this study can also be useful for syllabus designers to use linear or non-linear texts or even a careful combination of both. It is clear that we need both types of writing a paragraph (linear and non-linear), because according to Kaplan (1966) English as the international language is linear while Persian as our national language is non-linear, but Iranian students’ preference for each style was something unknown so that this research help
us understand students’ attitude toward these two systems of writing. The findings of the research benefit teachers who teach writing skills.

The results of this study are related to interlingual studies. When individuals write in a language other than their native language, they tend to use their native patterns in the target language. The results of the present study showed that Persian and English cultures orient their discourse differently. Now, the existence of these differences should be emphasized in the English language teaching context to minimize their interfering effects on Persian ESL/EFL students.

Over the past three decades, numerous studies undertaken within the discipline of contrastive rhetoric have supported the hypothesis that there exist preferred rhetorical styles within text. These findings cast more light on the existence of cross-cultural differences between Persian and English. So this study supports the claims made by previous research (cf. Kaplan, 1966; Regent, 1985; Vahapassi, 1988; Dantas-Whitney and Grabe, 1989) that writing is a cultural phenomenon. This is indicative of the fact that different cultures have different rhetorical preferences.

References


بررسی‌های مربوط به جنگ ابتدا در سطح ذات انسان موثر بوده است. سپس در سطح دولتها و بعد در سطح نظام بین‌الملل صورت گرفته است. ناسازگاری و جنگ و به دنبال آن همبستگی در سطح نظام بین‌الملل به آبی‌زهی مورد توجه اندیشمندان قرار گرفته است. فردت، ماهیت و نوع ان در ایجاد نظام موثر بوده است. به عنوان مثل اندازه نظام معمولاً تعادل میان نظام‌هایی از هم گسترش گرفته شده و در آن تنها چیزی غیر از همبستگی و هم‌دوره بودن در قالب نمایش می‌باشد. فردت در داخل نظام از جمله عوامل موثر در برقراری نظام بوده است. رژیمهای بین‌المللی محسوس قدرت‌های بوده اند. آنها مقابل ایجاد نظام، میزان تعهدات، به هم فشردگی و از هم گسترش گرفته و تمرکز قدرت در داخل نظام می‌باشد.

Sentence 1
Sentence 2
Sentence 3
Sentence 4
Sentence 5
Sentence 6
Sentence 7
Sentence 8

Figure 4: a Persian linear paragraph

Appendix B: Persian non-linear paragraph (Asgarkhani, 2004, p.71)
سازمان پیمان اکتولنایک شمالی (ناتو) در سال 1949 به عنوان یک رژیم امینیتی ایجاد شد. رژیم‌های امینیتی در چهارچوب رژیم‌های بین‌المللی افراد و دارای اصول، هنجارها و قواعد و رویه‌های تصمیم‌گیری می‌باشند. اصول در رابطه با اهداف، هنجارها در رابطه با رفتار و قواعد در رابطه با مکانیزم تنظیم رابطه میان اهداف و رفتار بوده و در واقع چگونگی نیاز به هدف را بیان می‌دارند. رویه‌های تصمیم‌گیری نیز فرآیند اتخاذ تصمیم میان بازیگران را مشخص می‌سازد. منشور ناتو دارای یک مقدمه و چهارده ماده می‌باشد. اهداف معقول در مقدمه رژیم‌ها می‌باشد. اهداف می‌باشد. گرچه در دوران جنگ سرد، ناتو می‌تواند اهداف را در خارج از مناطق خود پی‌گیری نماید.

Sentence 1
Sentence 2
Sentence 3
Sentence 4
Sentence 5
Sentence 6
Sentence 7
Sentence 8

Figure 5: a Persian non-linear paragraph

Appendix C: English linear paragraph (Alexander, 1990, p.171)
Populations increase and decrease relatively not only to one another, but also to natural sources. In most parts of the world, the relation between population and sources is already unfavorable and will probably become unfavorable in the future. This growing poverty in the midst of growing poverty constitutes a permanent menace to peace. And not only to peace, but also to democratic institutions and personal liberty. For overpopulation is not compatible with freedom. An unfavorable relationship between numbers and resources tends to make the earning of a living almost intolerably difficult. Labor is more abundant than goods, and individual is compelled to work long hours for little pay. No surplus of accumulated purchasing power stands between him and tyrannies of unfriendly nature or of equally unfriendly wielder of political and economic power. Democracy is, among other thing, the ability to 'say 'no' to the boss. But a man can not say 'no' to the boss, unless he is sure of being able to eat when the boss’s favor has been withdrawn. And he can not be certain of his next meal unless he owns the means of producing enough wealth for his family to live on, or has been able to accumulate a surplus out of past wages or has a chance of moving to virgin territories, where he can make a fresh start. In an overcrowded country, every few people own enough to make them financially independent; very few are in position to accumulate purchasing power; and there is no free land. Moreover, in any country where population presses hard upon natural resources, the general economic situation is apt to be so precarious that government control of capital and labor, production and consumption, becomes inevitable. It is no accident that the twentieth century should be the century of highly centralized governments and totalitarian dictatorship; it had to be the simple reason that the twentieth century is the century of planetary overcrowding:

This paragraph can be graphically represented as:

Sentence 1
Sentence 2
Sentence 3
Sentence 4
Sentence 5
Sentence 6
Sentence 7
Sentence 8
Sentence 9
Sentence 10
Sentence 11
Sentence 12
Sentence 13
Sentence 14
Sentence 15

Figure 6: an English linear-paragraph

Appendix D: English non-linear paragraph (Swan, 1990, p.69)
At the roots of much of our cultural thinking is our actual experience of speech. In Britain the question of good speech is deeply confused, and is in itself a major source of many of the divisions in our culture. It is inevitable, in modern society that our regional speech forms should move closer to each other, and that many extreme forms should disappear. But this should be a natural process, as people move and travel and meet more freely, and as they hear different speakers in films, television, and broadcasting. The mistake is to assume that there is already a "correct" form of modern English speech, which can serve as a standard to condemn all others. In fact "public-school English ", in the form in which many have tried to fix it, cannot no become a common speech-form in the country as a whole: both because of the social distinctions now associated which its use, and because of the powerful influence of American speech from. Yet many good forms of modified regional speech are in practice emerging and extending. The barriers imposed by dialect are reduced, in these forms, without the artificiality of imitating a form remote from most people's natural speaking. This is the path of growth. Yet in much speech training, in schools, we go on assuming that there is already one "correct" form over the country as a whole. Thousands of us are made to listen to our natural speaking with the implication from the beginning that it is wrong. This sets up such deep tensions, such active feeling of shame and resentment, that is should be no surprise that we cannot discuss culture in Britain without at once encountering tensions and prejudices deriving from this situation. If we experience speech training as an aspect of our social inferiority, a fundamental cultural division gets built in, very near the powerful emotions of self-respect, family affection, and local loyalty. This does not mean that we should stop speech training. But we shall not get near a common culture in Britain unless we make it a real social process-listening to ourselves and to others with no prior assumption of correctness-rather than the process of imitating a social class which is remote from must of us, living us stranded at the and with the "two-language "problem. Nothing is more urgent than to get rid of this arbitrary association between general excellence and the habits of a limited social group. It is not only that there is much that is good elsewhere. The above paragraph can be graphically represented as follow:

Figure7: an English non-linear paragraphe
Title

Gender Differences in Anxiety and Speaking English as a Second Language among Iranian English Major Students of Payame Noor University

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Abstract

Despite the fact that foreign language speaking anxiety is a common phenomenon in the teaching of English as a foreign language in Iran, this study aims to investigate anxiety of speaking English as a second language among Iranian male and female English major students of Payame Noor University. The study was conducted on a sample of 150 male and female English major students from Payame Noor University. This study attempts to identify potential sources of anxiety relevant to the students’ affective needs or concerns in Payame Noor University through the use of an in-depth qualitative questionnaire. As the pre-administered questionnaire findings indicate, the differences in the level of language anxiety exhibited by the participants seem to vary by gender. Using various studies by previous researchers of language anxiety as a theoretical guideline for data collection and analysis, this study also discusses some of the
influences or impact of anxiety-provoking factors on second language learning, along with some implications for further research on language anxiety.

**Key words:** Anxiety, Speaking anxiety, Second language learning

1. Introduction

Anxiety is a negative way to present human feelings. When we are anxious, we feel nervous, worried, and fearful. We struggle, tremble, perspire, and our hearts beat quickly. In general, anxiety can be defined as a complex concept dependent upon not only on one’s feelings of self-efficacy but also appraisals concerning the potential and perceived threats inherent in certain situations (Tobias, 1986). In simple words, anxiety is usually associated with unpleasant feelings and dissimilar to fear (Lader, 1975).

Anxiety in communicating in a second language, especially when that language is English can have a debilitating effect and can influence students’ adaptation to the target environment and ultimately their educational goals. There is also agreement that anxiety is related to performance (Balachandran & Skul1, 2004; Tobias & Everson, 1997), and that anxiety has been shown to have a debilitating effect on learning and achievement (Gaudy & Spielberger, 1971; Tobias, 1980).

In the past two decades, there has been a great deal of research in second language anxiety. Second language anxiety is defined as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to using a second language for communication beyond the classroom. Most people will experience language anxiety. Even though anxiety might not be the most important reason for failure or success in learning, we cannot ignore its affection. It cannot be denied that learning a second language is important especially when that second language is English. English is the most widespread and important language in the world today. It is a major language of international business, diplomacy, science and the professions. English is also an official language or the official language of many international and professional organizations. It is used not only for communication between native speakers of English but also between non-native speakers.

Even though English does not have the greatest number of first-language speakers in the world, it is the most widely used language. The importance of learning, understanding and speaking English fluently is necessary for careers especially when applying for jobs with multinational companies (MNCs). This is
because MNC shire people from different countries and cultures and they use English as a medium of communication.

The need for effective oral communication skills is crucial in the business world as there are many MNCs located all around the globe. However, for the past few decades, business graduates have been criticized by employers for their lack of communication skills (Greathouse, 1986; Dearlove, 1996). Curtis, Winsor and Stephens (1989) in one survey of personnel managers found that communication skills are more important for applicants in obtaining entry-level positions than are their technical skills, grade point averages or their degrees.

Among the communication skills deemed to be core managerial competency is the ability to make effective presentations (Fandt, 1994; Whetten & Cameron, 1998; deJanaszetal.,2002).

Thus, because of the importance of English in the world today, especially for business graduates, this study analyzes the anxiety level of university students in Iran. However, due to the time constraints, this study focuses only on students of Payame Noor University. The implications of the study are discussed and a number of recommendations are made to assist students in dealing with their anxiety level. This study assumes that the language anxiety is debilitating and investigates the possible causes of anxiety using qualitative methods.

1.1. Research Questions

This study is also made in order to answer the research questions:

1. Do gender differences have an impact towards the level of anxiety of students in university?
2. What are the possible causes of anxiety of speaking English in Public?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Defining Language Anxiety

In general, Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with the arousal of the nervous system. However, in attempting to define language anxiety, Scovel (1978) argues that it should be born in mind that even though we all know what language anxiety is and we all have experienced feelings of anxiousness, anxiety is still not easy to define in a simple sentence. “It is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self_doubt, apprehension, or worry” (as
Cited in Brown, 2000, p.151). To put it in another word, anxiety can be generally associated with “threats to self-_efficacy and appraisals of situations as threatening” (Pappamihiel, 2002, p. 331).

In addition, Gregersen (2005) argues that learners who feel anxious in their foreign language learning may find their study less enjoyable. In case of the conducted studies on foreign language anxiety (e.g., Aida, 1994; Macintyre, et al., 1997), are view of literature has shown that foreign language anxiety is negatively related to foreign language learning. However, in the light of the studies directed at examining the correlation between anxiety and language learning thus far, the overall findings are fairly inconsistent and contradictory. For example, Young (1991) reviews sixteen studies investigating the relationship between anxiety and language learning and demonstrates inconsistent results both within and across these studies. Accordingly, as Young maintains” research in the area of anxiety as it relates to second or foreign language learning and performance is scattered and inconclusive”(p.426)

2.2 Anxiety speaking

Public speaking anxiety is very common among both universities students and also the general population. It is a feeling of panic associated with physical sensations that are all too painfully familiar to those affected such as increased heart and breathing rates, increased adrenaline, over-rapid reactions, and a tension in the shoulder and neck area.

Almost 20% of university students face the problem of public speaking anxiety (McCroskey, 1977). He also defined anxiety in broad-based as “an individual’s level or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons”. The apprehension of speaking before a group of individuals remains a problem in the twenty-first century. According to Krannich (2004), the fear of delivering speech or a presentation ranks as the number one fear among most people, including students as well as adults from many diverse backgrounds. Ayres, Hopt and Peterson (2000) referred communication anxiety related with the delivering of speech or the fear or anxiety associated with anticipating the delivery of a speech.

According to Phillips (1991),“it is clear that fear of speaking in public is different from anxiety about social contact”. True communication apprehension means that the sufferers seem revalue in keeping quiet in all circumstances (even in conversation) than they do from talking. Speech anxiety is a much targeted fear. “Our sense of public speaking anxiety is closer to what psychologist sand psychiatrists refer to as a phobia rather than a free-floating anxiety”(Ayres & Hopf, 1993).It is an anxiety-based response not unlike the wide range of phobias that can be found in the areas of psychology and psychiatry.
2.3. Causes of Anxiety

There are various causes of anxiety. According to one article, there are ten top causes for anxiety in public speaking. The first one is lack of preparation. The second cause of anxiety is the feeling that the students have either too many points to cover in the allotted time period. The third cause is worrying that the audience will be overly critical. Fear about not entertaining or arousing the interest of people and they will walk out is the fourth cause of public speaking anxiety. Speakers who compare their perceptions to audience expectations and public speaking anxiety are revealed when audiences’ expectations are perceived greater than the speaker’s ability (Ayres, 1986). Perceived audience expectations influence a speaker’s level of anxiety as audiences to play a role in public speaking anxiety. The fifth cause is students’ intend to emulate other speakers rather than being themselves. Other possible causes of anxiety can be the fear of potential negative outcomes and stuttering or difficulty to finding words. The next cause is where students spend too much time over-preparing instead of developing confidence in their own natural ability to succeed. The last two causes are dislike in being the centre of attention and also low self-confidence. Ayres, Schliesman and Sonandre (1998), in their research, found that students who feel they have skill deficiencies in public speaking apprehension often experience anxiety.

While, in the context of speaking English as a second language, Young (1991) listed six potential causes of language anxiety which include both personal and interpersonal factors, learners’ beliefs about language learning, instructors’ beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures and language tests. However, to date, findings by Horwitzetal (1986) have been the most influential. They identified three causes of language anxiety, that is, communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Based on these three components they also designed a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) comprising thirty-three items. This scale was later used widely by researchers to measure foreign language learners’ anxiety and examine the effect of anxiety on learning in different contexts.

3. Method

3.1. Research population

For the purpose of this study, the target population is the English major students. The reason forth is population was chosen is because the title of the project requires the study of anxiety
and speaking English as a second language among Iranian male and female English major students of Payame Noor University.

3.2. Research sample
The samples in this study were selected through non-probability sampling in which the samples are selected on the basis of convenience. The procedure that is use inconvenience sampling which comprises units or people most conveniently available.
These samples were chosen from students of Payame Noor University. Survey data were collected from 150 English major students of Payame Noor University.

3.3. Data Collection procedures
Two procedures were used in conducting this research project, collection of secondary and primary data.

3.3.1. Primary data
For the purpose of this research, the primary data is collected through a self-administered questionnaire.

3.3.2. Secondary Data
Some of the secondary data that are used in this research are from journals, website, articles, books, and newspaper cuttings.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures
The data is analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The results are then transformed in to quantitative measurement.

4. Data Analysis and Findings
As stated earlier, the samples are the students of Payame Noor University and 150 samples are selected. The questionnaire was developed based on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FCLAS) where the researcher changed the proposed scale in order to make it suitable for the current study.

4.1. Analysis for Part B: Adoption and Perception of Speaking English Anxiety
Statement6: In classes, I forget how to say things I know.
It can be concluded that female respondents experienced more anxiety compared to male respondents in terms of forgetting to say things they know even though the result is quite similar. From 75 female respondents, 22 or 29.3% agreed with the statements, and 20 male respondents (26.7%) agreed that they sometimes forget how to say things they know in class.
Statement7: I tremble when I’m going to have to speak in English.
This statement was developed in order to analyze whether the respondents tremble when they have to speak in English. Out of 75 female respondents, those who agreed with the statement accounted for 20 students (26.7%). Only two strongly agreed (2.7%) that they were trembling when they had to speak in English in class. It can be concluded that the majority of the male students are less anxious compared to female students as only 20.0% agreed with the statement.

**Statement8:** I start to panic and am confused when I have to speak in English without preparation. The result is quite similar for both genders. 36 female respondents agreed with the statement (48.0%), while, for male respondents, 37 (49.3%) agreed that they feel anxious when they have to speak in English without preparation. It can be concluded that, in terms of speaking English without preparation, male students experienced slightly lower anxiety compared with female students.

**Statement9:** When I speak English, I feel like a different person.
This statement was developed in order to identify whether either or both genders felt that they are being somebody else when they speak in English. It can be summarized that most male students feel that they are a different person when they speak in English while 17 agreed with the statement (22.7%), while 15 of the female respondents (20.0%) agreed with the statement which makes them less anxious about being somebody else.

**Statement10:** Even when I’m prepared to speak English, I get nervous.
In this statement, the researcher wanted to determine whether the students are still nervous if they had prepared to speak in English (i.e; during presentations, interviews, etc.) and which gender experienced more anxiety. Female respondents are more anxious compared to males with 40.0% being nervous even though they had prepared. Only 29 male students agreed with the statement (38.7%).

**Statement11:** I’m afraid that my lecturers are ready to correct every mistake I make.
More female students were afraid that their lecturers would correct their mistakes in class with 17 (22.7%) agreeing with the statement. This is because they are afraid of being embarrassed for being corrected in front of others. Meanwhile for male students, only 16% are afraid of being corrected. Male students are usually not afraid of being corrected in front of others as they usually perceive it positively.

**Statement12:** It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in class.
From figure 4.12, female students tend to be more anxious compared to male as 20 (26.7%) agreed that they feel embarrassed when they want to volunteer answers in class. In contrast, male students more willingly volunteered answers in class as they are more confident in themselves with only 17 of them (22.7%) agreeing with the statement.

**Statement 13**: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in class.

This statement was developed in order to analyze whether the students feel confident when they were speaking in class and to identify which gender has more self-confidence. It can be seen that both genders have the same percentage of 26.7%. But, there are minor differences that show that female students lacked self-confidence in terms of expressing themselves in English with 7.3% strongly agreeing with the statement.

**Statement 14**: I always feel that the other students are speaking better than I do.

This statement also shows that female respondents have higher anxiety levels compared to male respondents with 37 (49.3%) tending to agree with the statement. In contrast, only 26.7% or 20 male respondents feel that the others are speaking better than they are. The reasons for this might be because male students usually perceiving the situation positively and they have more confidence in their ability compared to female students.

**Statement 15**: I am afraid that the other students will have a bad perception at me when I speak in front of the class Perception of others is one of the major stressors of speaking English.

In the findings, it can be analyzed that female students tend to keep thinking about the perceptions of others with 48.0% agreeing that they are afraid of others’ perceptions. Only 37.7% of male respondents agreed with the statement thus as a conclusion, female students have a higher anxiety level compared to male students.

### 4.2. Analysis for Part C: Open-Ended Questions

**Question 16**: How do you feel exactly when you had to speak in English while communicating with other persons and in front of a large group?

This question was developed in order to identify causes of anxiety of students when they had to speak in English. Out of 150 questionnaires that were distributed, only 50 of the respondents answered this open-ended question. Thus, the result of this finding is based from the answers given by the respondents.

For better understanding, the researcher identified the causes given by the respondents through an open-ended questionnaire. It was divided into seven different causes of anxiety and the causes identified are:
i. Nervous/ panic/shy
ii. They rarely speak English
iii. Afraid of audience
iv. Poor in English Language (in terms of grammar, pronunciation, etc)
   v. Speaking with people who are fluent in English
vi. Lack of self-confidence
vii. Afraid of perceptions to others.

It can be concluded that the majority of the students are afraid of the perceptions of others when they speak in English where 30 out of 50 respondents indicated the same answer. With a percentage of 60%, perceptions of others are placed as the major cause of anxiety and of speaking English. Most of the students were concerned about various kinds of evaluative situations in which their knowledge and performance of English will be monitored by people around them. They are conscious about the facial expressions of other students and also of the lecturer. They are afraid if their audiences look bored and confused, and cannot understand the information they are trying to deliver.

Many of them commented on the classroom situation in a negative manner, for example they would try to avoid eye contact with the lecturers, fearing they would be called onto answer some questions in front of other students, even if they were sure of the topics being discussed. They were afraid of being embarrassed in front of their friends especially if their answers were criticized.

The second cause that can be identified is a lack of English proficiency with 40% of the respondents writing a similar answer. Some of them said that they were weak in English, some were afraid of making mistakes in terms of grammar, pronunciation and arranging of words, and also their perceived lack of knowledge about the class subjects that they were studying. But the most frightening classroom situation experienced by most of the students is when their perceived lack of English proficiency is combined with their lack of knowledge or "unpreparedness" of the topics in question. These factors contribute to their level of anxiety.

The next factor is audience, with 36% of the respondents writing the same answer. This is because they feel anxious when there are too many people in the audience and are afraid of being tongue-tied in that situation. The fourth factor is of rarely speaking English with 17 out of 50 respondents choosing it as one of the causes of language anxiety.

Feeling shy, nervous or panicky also contributes as one of the causes of speaking English anxiety with 24% of the total respondents agreed on the same answer. The results were similar with lack of self confidence with 12 respondents said that they believe they do not have the confidence to express themselves in English. The last factor that caused anxiety
when speaking in English is when speaking with people who are fluent in the language (32%). One of the students wrote that he feels anxious when he had to speak with people with a higher status as he believes these people are proficient in their English. There was also one student who wrote that she felt her confidence was lowered when she had to speak with foreigners.

5. Conclusions

5.1. To identify whether gender differences has an impact on the level of anxiety

Conclusion1: In classes, I forget how to say things I know. It shows that compared with male students, female students experienced much more anxiety.

Conclusion2: I tremble when I’m going to have to speak in English. The researchers found that most of the female students were more anxious than male students.

Conclusion3: I start to panic and am confused when I have to speak in English without preparation. It can be concluded that male students tend to panic and become more confusion when they had to speak in English without preparation.

Conclusion4: When I speak English, I feel like a different person. The result of this statement shows that male students tend to feel like they become somebody else when they speak in English.

Conclusion5: Even when I’m prepared to speak English, I get nervous. The result of the finding shows that female students experienced nervousness and panic even when they were prepared to speak English.

Conclusion6: I’m afraid that my lecturers are ready to correct every mistake I make. In this finding, the researchers identified that female students felt fear that their lecturer would correct their mistake directly in class thus embarrassing them in front of their friends.

Conclusion7: It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in class. It can be concluded that male students experienced less anxiety when it comes to volunteering answer in English in class.

Conclusion8: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in class. It can be concluded that there are similarities between both genders in terms of being confused of their own capabilities when they had to speak in English.

Conclusion9: I always feel that the other students are speaking better than I do.
In this statement, the researcher found that female students tend to think about their friends who are much better than them in English, thus experiencing lower self-confidence.

**Conclusion: I am afraid that the other students will have bad perceptions at me when I speak in front of the class.**

It can be concluded that female students felt more anxious about the perceptions of others when they have to express themselves in English in class.

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that female students tend to be more anxious compared with male students.

5.2. To identify causes of anxiety while speaking English in public

Based on the analysis from the open-ended questionnaire, the researchers identified several causes of anxiety in speaking English. Seven major causes were identified which had similarities with previous studies. Among the seven major causes, the highest stressor of speaking in English was the perceptions of others. This has been supported by Pappamihiel (2002), where in one of her interview processes, one participant in her study said that one cause that made him feel anxious was being afraid that the other students will laugh at him when he says something in a class.

Thus, from the findings, it can be concluded that English language anxiety is multidimensional where it affects students differently depending on the context of the situation. The respondents’ anxiety levels vary depending on the situation. This result is also supported by the study of Pappamihiel (2002).

Where she finds that English language anxiety is of a dynamic nature where it can possibly affect students in many different ways. For the purpose of this study, the researcher gives several suggestions in dealing with gender differences in Anxiety and speaking English as a second language among Iranian English major students of Payame Noor University.

According to Rolls (1998) and Kim 2005), there are various strategies which can be used in coping with second language anxiety. The first strategy is to recognize your own feelings of second language anxiety. It is vital to identify your own feelings as in the process we will be able to recognize the causes of our anxiety. Just because people are nervous, it does not mean they have poor performance. Nervousness sometimes will help in enhancing the vitality and enthusiasm brought to the situation.

The next strategy is to share your feelings with others. It is helpful knowing that you are not suffering those feelings alone. Even professionals such as artists or experienced speakers...
may feel some sort of anxiety when they have to speak in public. Thus, having as light feeling of anxiety is normal as it is experienced by many of us.

Students must bear in their mind that nobody is aware of their fright except if there are outward signs of nervousness. However, nervousness can be controlled. Students must focus on getting their message across to the audience and not be afraid to make mistakes. Mistakes are the best way of learning so that we are less likely to keep making them. Many native English speakers do not speak a second language, so the fact that the students are able to converse in a second language at all says a lot.

Teachers should realize that language learning, and particularly oral production, is a potentially stressful situation for some students, and that the “tension and discomfort related to language learning call for the attention of the language teaching profession” (Horwitz, 2001: 122). The recommendations we make are congruent with previous studies suggesting that teachers should not be consider with drawn students as lazy, lacking in motivation, or having “poor attitude” (Gregersen, 2003:30), when in fact they suffer from anxiety. Instead, they should identify anxious learners and make interventions to help them overcome foreign language anxiety (Aida, 1994). Because foreign language speaking anxiety in the English classroom may stem from fear of making is takes and the consequent fear of negative evaluation, and students’ perception of low ability in relation to their peers, we suggest that teachers may want to consider the following interventions. At first, teachers can incorporate project work, because it can provide anxious and non_anxious students alike with abundant opportunities to use language in a non_threatening context. We argue that the first step in reducing anxiety is to actually have students participate in speaking tasks. Because students are more eager to participate in oral activities in small groups (Young, 1990), project work can be very helpful. Second, the creation of a friendly classroom atmosphere is important.

Universities should adopt innovative approaches to minimize apprehension and maximize student achievement. Lecturers must encourage the students to express themselves in English and help them reduce their anxiety by giving them support. Lecturers might also used quick relaxation techniques such as that suggested by Psychologist Anthony Grashato tense the body for account of 10 and then breathe deeply in and out to a count of four for a period of three to five minutes. This is especially effective after a tension-producing event.

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Title

Shifts of Source Language Units of Translation in Target Language

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Abstract

Achieving full equivalence in translation is not possible and different scholars have various perspectives on the concept of equivalence in translation. Gutt (1991) for instance, argues that “the need for decision-making arises from the fact that the target language rarely allows the translators to preserve exactly what the original conveyed” (p. 8). Languages have different written styles and structures. Therefore, this study considered the translation of compound-complex sentences from English into Persian. It was an attempt to study the most frequent type of shifts and also to identify the most common translation strategy applied in the process of translating English compound-complex sentences of the Lord of the Flies into Persian language through evaluating equivalents of these sentences in the original text and their translated version into Persian. To achieve the aims, a translation of this book was selected. The instances of compound-complex sentences were identified and compared with their Persian counterparts. The findings of the research suggested that formal correspondence was the most frequent translation strategy and category shift (structural and rank) was also the most common type of shift applied in the translation from English into Persian.
**Keywords:** Compound-complex sentences, English language, Persian language, Translation Evaluation, Translation Strategy

1. **Introduction**

Regarding translation, Munday (2001) maintains "the process of translation between two different written languages involves the translators changing an original written text (the source text or ST) in the original verbal language (the source text or ST) into a written text (the target text or TT) in a different verbal language (target language or TL)." (p. 5) According to Vossoughi (2009)

Compound-complex sentences are the largest and the most complicated structures in both English and Persian languages; they are made up of at least two main clauses and one subordinate clause; however, the number of these clause types and the kind of subordinate clauses in the structures of these sentences are not confined and there is not any limitation for them. It is why the structure of these sentences can potentially be very lengthy and complex, and accordingly the translation of them may be problematic even for professional translators. (p.94)

It is not always possible to achieve one-to-one correspondence in translation from one language into another; thus, compound-complex sentences are not exception from this rule. Therefore, the attempt should be made on true and acceptable translation and on conveying semantic aspects of the clauses. Thus, producing semantic equivalent clauses for these sentences is not simple and requires careful consideration on behalf of the translators. The purpose of the study is to classify and identify the different strategies and shifts of SL unit of translation in TT which occur in the process of translating compound-complex sentences in Lord of the Flies into Persian language and propose a model for their translation.

To achieve this aim, a comparison was done between the compound-complex sentences of English and their Persian translation equivalents. Also, the clauses in the two languages were considered and compared with each other regarding types of clauses and their number in the two languages, and the types of relationships which exist among them.

1.2. **Research Questions**

1. Is there any relationship in the process of translation between compound-complex sentences in English and Persian?
2. What is the most common strategy in translating English compound-complex sentences of the Lord of the Flies into Persian language?
3. What is the most frequent shift in the translation of English compound-complex sentences of the *Lord of the Flies* into Persian language?

4. **2. Review of the Related Literature**

Taking the subject matter of the study into account, i.e. shifts of SL Units of Translation in TL, and for clarifying and better understanding of it, this section considers the following issues: shifts in translation studies, unit of translation, and translation quality assessment mainly from a theoretical point of view.

**2.1. Concept of Shift in Translation**

Catford (1965) was the first translation theoretician who uses the term shift in translation studies. He defines formal correspondence and textual equivalence in discussing shift: formal correspondent refers to "any TL category (unit, class, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the same place in the economy of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL; textual equivalence also is "any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text" (p. 27). Generally, shifts in translation are "departure from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL" (Catford, 2000, p. 141).

He considers two kinds of shifts: (a) shift of level; (b) shift of category. Based on him shift of level is occurred when a linguistic element which is expressed by grammar in one language but is rendered by lexis in another language; he also divides category shift into four subcategories: (a) Structural shifts: Munday (2001) maintains that "these are said by Catford to be the most common form of shift and to involve mostly a shift in grammatical structure" (p. 61); (b) Class shifts: They refer to shifts from one part of speech to another; (c) Unit (rank) shifts: refer to situation where translation into the TL is at a different linguistic unit from the SL and (d) Intra-system shifts: where SL item has equivalent in the TL system but "translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system" (Catford, 2000, p. 146).

"a shift is said to occur if a ST element is rendered by a TL element that is different from the expected TL correspondent; shifts can occur at all levels, including text, genre, and discourse" (Hatim and Munday, 2004, p. 349). It is worth mentioning that clause is taken into account as the unit of translation in this research.

**2.2. Unit of Translation**
Vinay and Darbelnet (1995 cited in Munday, 2001) define unit of translation as "the smallest segment of utterance whose signs are linked in such a way that they should not be translated individually" (p. 59). According to Hatim and Munday (2004) unit of translation is "the linguistic element (word, clause, sentence, text) used by the translators in the process of translation" (p.353). Shuttle Worth and Cowie (1997) further state that it refers to a level of language at which ST element is restructured into the TL. "Translation units, therefore, will vary according to the linguistic structure involved" (to Hatim and Munday, 2004, p.20). Newmark (1988) is another translation scholar who discusses unit of translation. He argues that "the sentence is the 'natural' unit, just as it is the natural unit of comprehension and recorded thought; within a sentence, transposition, clause rearrangement, recasting are common, provided that functional sentence perspective is not infringed, and that there is a good reason for them" (p.65). In cases of long and short sentences Newmark reiterates that for too long sentences, it is not possible to break the sentences; too short sentences also are used for special purpose. But depending on types of texts, he mentions that long sentences must be kept in translation if they are a part of a writer's style especially in expressive texts. As for unit of translation, Newmark (1988) highlights that when we start to translate; we translate sentence by sentence, and look at the larger units such as text and paragraph only when: (a) there are problem in connectives; (b) the sentence as a unit of translation does not satisfy us; (c) we revise the translation. He also mentions that "if we include chapter or section under text, the next lower unit of translation is the paragraph" (p.65). Hatim and Munday(2004) further state that when a translator chooses the sentence as the translation unit, it is necessary to preserve features of the STs.

All lengths of languages can, at different moments and also simultaneously, be used as units of translation in the course of the translation activity; each length has a functional contribution to make, which can be summarized as lexical for the word and the collocations; grammatical for the group and the clause; notional for the sentence, the paragraph and the text. (Newmark, 1988, pp.66-67)

2.3. Translation Quality Assessment(TQA)

AlQinai (2000) states that there is no full equivalence in the act of translation from one language into another, therefore, in comparing Source Text (ST) with its Target Text (TT) and assessing their quality, it is sensible to talk about adequacy and acceptability of translation rather than the degree of equivalence. He further mentions that “the assessment of a translated text seeks to measure the degree of efficiency of the text with regard to the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic function of ST within the cultural frame and expressive...
potentials of both Source Language (SL) and Target Language (TL)” (p. 499). Tawbi (1994) considers evaluating of translation as one of the most difficult issues in translation studies since there are no absolute and objective yardsticks for assessing quality of translation. He mentions qualitative and quantitative assessments in evaluating quality of translation in which the first one considers personal and impressionistic approach to translation, and the latter, assign certain marks to assess translation quality. Regarding TQA, Nida and Taber (1969) also take three features for assessing translation quality into account: (a) the correctness of the original message; (b) the ease of comprehension of the original message in the receptor language, and (c) adequacy of translation form in the receptor language. Khomeijani Farahani (2005) also proposed a framework for the evaluation of translation and introduced different criteria for evaluation namely accuracy of the message, formal royalty, naturalness of the language used in translation, consistency and unity. He concluded that his model is not exhaustive and needs some changes to make it practical.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

Regarding translation Catford makes a distinction between formal correspondent and textual equivalent. Based on him (1965) a formal correspondent is 'any TL category (unit, class, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the "same" place in the "economy" of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL and a textual equivalent is 'any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion ... to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text'(p. 27). Munday (2001) also argues that "textual equivalence is thus tied to a particular ST- TT pair, while formal equivalence is a more general system-based concept between a pair of languages." (p. 60) Different scholars mentions shifts and their types namely Catford (2000), Levy (2000), Van Leuven-Zwart (1989)'s comparative-descriptive mode' of translation shifts. This research is based on Catford’s categorization of shift.

3. Methodology and Materials

As it was mentioned before, the research aims at considering the most common strategy used in the process of translating English compound-complex sentences of the Lord of the Flies into Persian language. The increased interest in Lord of the Flies encourage researcher to choose it. The intended translation of this book was that of Ms. Mansouri. So, Lord of the Flies and its Persian counterpart were the materials of the study. To find compound-complex sentences some chapters of the book were selected at random, and all instances of
compound-complex sentences were identified nearly 205 sentences. Each of them were written on a separate data note card with their Persian equivalents, those data note cards were classified based on Catford's shifts and those strategies which were used by the translator. Then, the data were analyzed and their percentage was calculated.

3.1. Descriptive Findings of the Study

Table 1

Frequency of translation strategies of English compound-complex sentences in the corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expansion</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reduction</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>textual</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 1 indicates formal correspondence is used with the highest frequency; the two other strategies i.e. expansion and reduction ones also appeared in the process of translating English compound-complex sentences into Persian.

Figure 1

Percentage of Translation Strategies in the Corpus

Based on figure 1 formal correspondence contains the highest percentage in comparison with the other strategies. Therefore, considering the second research question in mind, it is said that formal correspondence is the most frequent strategy. In answering the first research question of the study, the data indicated that in most cases there is a one-to-one relationship between compound-complex sentences in English and Persian translation, i.e. Persian translators translate them into their formal equivalents and preserve the style of original text in the act of translation.

Table 2

Frequency and percentage of types of shifts in the corpus
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of shift</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category shift</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structural and rank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shifts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level shift</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the types of shifts, table 2 shows that all of them were category shifts; thus, among the category shifts structural and rank shifts contained the highest number. So, the third research question is answered here.

4. Results and Discussion

According to the research, formal correspondent was the most frequent strategy used by the Persian translator in the act of translating English compound-complex sentences and category shift was the most common type of shift used in the act of translating. According to these results, it seems that most translators tend to translate English compound-complex sentences into their equivalents from English into Persian in most cases. It is probably because of these reasons: a) Syntactic structure of Persian language imposes certain limitations on the way message may be conveyed and organized in it; b) it seems that Persian translator wanted to present communicative and free translation rather than semantic one. Thus, it is sensible that translators try to convey the semantic aspects of the ST in the first place and also take type of text and readership into account. It is proposed that in translating such sentences translators first give priority to the meaning, then, to preserving the style of the original author. But we can generalize the results; they vary based on type of the text and specifications by those who commission translation.

5. Conclusion

The researcher attempted to identify the most frequent strategy which the Persian translator of Lord of the Flies had used in translating the English compound-complex sentences into Persian. Considering English compound-complex sentences and their translation procedures, it can be concluded that the translator apply different strategies in translating them from English into Persian. As it was mentioned before, formal correspondence was the most common translation strategy used by the Persian translator in translating English compound-
complex sentences and category shift (structural and rank shift) was the most frequent shift; they had the considerable number of 107 (52.19%) and 205 (100%) respectively.

References


Title

The Impact of Portfolio Assessment on the Breadth of Vocabulary Knowledge of Iranian Intermediate EFL Students

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of the portfolio assessment strategy to teach and assess vocabulary acquisition and production of intermediate EFL students enrolled in a private institute in Karaj, Iran. The main goal of this study was to determine whether portfolio assessment model was effective in assisting the students to upgrade their English vocabulary recognition and production. The whole population consisted of 40 male and female students. The experimental group students (N=20) received treatment (portfolio assessment strategy) while the control group students (N=20) received traditional classroom instruction. In order to gather enough data, various tools and tests were used and for the sake of analyzing the data, SPSS
software was used. The overall results of the pre-administration of instruments made known that the two groups were homogenous in terms of level of proficiency and vocabulary knowledge. However, the findings of the post-administration indicated a significant improvement in English vocabulary learning and producing of the portfolio group students as compared with the non-portfolio group. According to the obtained results of this study, it is recommended that EFL instructors and teachers use portfolio in EFL vocabulary instruction in a way that it complements other types of teaching and assessment.

**Keywords:** Portfolio assessment, EFL, Vocabulary, Breadth, Alternative assessment

1. **Introduction**

Vocabulary has always been considered as a vital and determining factor in the process of learning and teaching of L1 as well as L2 language. Before gaining a fair command on syntactical and subject knowledge in FL reading, vocabulary knowledge is the first and the foremost necessary thing (Laufer & Sim, 1985). Furthermore, vocabulary knowledge is an essential part of literacy skills (Pulido & Hambrick, 2008).

However, in the past history of language learning and teaching, vocabulary had been underestimated and it had a trivial status which played only as a pure medium applied for teaching grammar (Pavlů, 2009). That is; although vocabulary has occupied a very important status in L2 learning, there has been much more attentions directed toward the theoretical establishment of L2 grammar learning than vocabulary learning (Rahimi, 2012).

However, nowadays methodologists have pointed to the very central and determining status of vocabulary (Harmer, 1991). Actually, L2 vocabulary researchers have paid more attention to such issues of memorization, identification of lexical knowledge, storage, and retrieval of lexical knowledge (Carter, 2001).

Richards and Renandya (2002) assume that "vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write" (p. 255). Coady and Huckin (1997) have further asserted that L2 learners must have a considerable lexical richness to acquire satisfactorily competencies in all different language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. In the same vein, it is argued that learners who lack large repertoire of vocabulary knowledge usually shun reading tasks (Hart & Risley, 2003).
Finally, Harmer (1991, p.153) asserts that “If language structures make up the skeleton of
language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh”.
Having referred to the very important nature and status of vocabulary knowledge, it is worthy
to spend some further lines to illuminate some aspects and classifications of this important
component of any viable language.

1.1. Basic Aspects of Vocabulary Knowledge
Historically speaking, there have been several distinctions made between aspects of
vocabulary knowledge namely Receptive vs. Productive (Webb, 2005; Uygun, 2009) and
Depth vs. Breadth (Read, 1989. 1993, 1995; Wesche & Paribakht, 1993; Meara & Buxton,
1987; Meara & Jones, 1988).

Receptive knowledge is defined as being able to understand a word (Schmitt, 2000); That
is; those words which are not very well-known and have a lower frequency in use and not
used simultaneously (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005). On the other hand, productive vocabulary
knowledge includes the production of a word of one’s own accord (Schmitt, 2000). It refers to
words that can be written or spoken frequently without hesitation as they are well-known and
familiar (Kamil & Hiebert, 2005).

1.2. The Importance of Breadth of Vocabulary Knowledge
Browsing among the research upon vocabulary learning and teaching, an often cited
distinction can be found made between two aspects of vocabulary knowledge: breadth and
depth of vocabulary knowledge (Anderson & Freebody, 1983; Meara, 1996; Read, 2000).
The former defines the quantity or numbers of words a learner has in her/his repertoire, but
the latter envisages the quality or how well a learner knows a word (Anderson & Freebody,

Regarding the very important place of breadth of vocabulary knowledge in the field of
language learning in general, and foreign language learning and teaching in particular,
several researchers have stressed that different types of knowledge are correlated with a word
that a learner should know, including its spelling, morphological features, pronunciation,
register, syntactic and semantic relationships, synonymy, collocational meanings, antonymy,
hyponymy and stylistic elements (Nation, 1990; Meara, 1996; Haastrop & Henriksen, 2000;
Read, 2000).

Because of the importance placed on vocabulary size as a measure of ability to cope with
the demands of academic study, much research has been carried out to identify the
vocabulary size of different groups of learners (Nation, 1983, 1990; Schmitt, 1993; Laufer,
As it has been pointed above, in research on vocabulary learning, a distinction has often been made between two dimensions of vocabulary knowledge: *depth* of knowledge and size, or *breadth* of knowledge (Meara, 1996; Read, 2000). Depth of vocabulary knowledge refers to the numbers of a learner’s repertoire, but the breadth of vocabulary knowledge refers to the quality of knowing those words (Anderson & Freebody, 1983; Nation, 2001).

### 1.3. Assessment and Alternative Assessment

Furthermore, the interrelationship between language teaching and testing has been and is so tight (Farhady, Jafarpoor, & Birjandi, 1994). Furthermore, assessment is an indispensable part of all educational enterprises which has always been one of the most ever-growing challenges of language learning and teaching fields (Rostami Charvade, Jahandar & Khodabandehlou, 2012).

“Assessment is any method used to better understand the current knowledge that a student possesses” (Collins & O’Brien, 2003, p. 29). Similarly, Crooks argues that “assessment is any process that provides information about the thinking, achievement or progress of students” (2001, p. 1).

But the field of language testing and teaching has witnessed a great shift from traditional toward alternative assessment techniques via them the learner can consciously learn and assess the process of his/her learning effectively and efficiently (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990; Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Teasdale & Leung, 2000; Lynch, 2001; Hirvela & Sweetland, 2005; Lynch & Shaw, 2005; Leung & Lewkowicz, 2006).

The alternative assessment techniques or, as Brown (2004) calls it, alternative in assessment movement attempt to be more holistic and task-based oriented in assessing and evaluating learner’s proficiency. He depicts these trends very vividly in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Assessment</th>
<th>Alternative Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
<td>Assess the process of learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method</strong></td>
<td>Task-based activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Immediate and ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Learner-centered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the same vein, the advocates of self-assessment strategies, as one of the most robust branches of alternative assessment movement, assert when learners take part in these kinds of self-assessing procedures, they can better recognize their own weaknesses and strengths and thence can set authentic and attainable objectives for themselves (Dickinson, 1987; Chamot & O’Malley, 1994; Oscarson, 1997).

**Table1**

*Traditional and Alternative Assessment (Brown, 2004, p.13).*
### Traditional Assessment

- One shot, standardized exams
- Timed, multiple-choice format
- Decontextualized test items
- Scores suffice for feedback
- Norm-referenced scores
- Focus on the "right" answer
- Summative
- Oriented to product
- Non-interactive performance
- Fosters extrinsic motivation

### Alternative Assessment

- Continuous long-term assessment
- Untimed, free-response format
- Contextualized communicative tasks
- Individualized feedback and washback
- Criterion-referenced scores
- Open-ended, creative answers
- Formative
- Oriented to process
- Interactive performance
- Fosters intrinsic motivation

Numerous researchers have investigated the differences and similarities between the concepts of traditional and alternative assessment (Shulman, 1998; Wiggins, 1989; Belanoff & Dickson, 1991; Herman, Aschbacher, & Winters, 1992; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Wilson, 1995; Kane & Mitchell, 1996; Brown & Hudson 1998; McNamara, 2000; Brown, 2004; Nezakatgoo, 2011) and several procedures are used within the tenet of alternative assessment such as journals, checklists, self-assessments, logs, peer-assessments, videotapes and audiotapes, conferences, self-evaluation, teacher observations, diaries, and portfolios (Brown & Hudson, 1998).

Among the various techniques of alternative assessment, portfolio has occupied a unique status and as Hamp-Lyons (1996) has asserted, the forefront of alternative assessment procedures are portfolios.

No doubt, portfolio is not a new concept. Mathews (2003) stated that "The portfolio idea gained strength in the 1980s" (p.2). More specifically, interest in portfolios as assessment strategies first emerged in the literature in the field of composition and writing. In other words, Apple and Shimo (2004) reported that, unlike traditional tests, portfolio assessment measured individual students' progress rather than the product.

Using portfolio assessment is increasing in the language field, particularly with respect to the writing skill (Hancock, 1994). Around the same issue, Sweet (1993) suggested using portfolio in writing instruction as it illustrates the range of assessments, goals, and audiences for which a student produced written material. Obviously, portfolio can be a record of the activities undertaken over time in the development of written products. Portfolios offer the benefit of involving students in the assessment process. Portfolio assessment is not teacher
driven as is common in conventional assessments. In keeping with the trend toward student-centered classrooms, portfolio assessment is a shared responsibility. It requires the involvement of students, parents, as well as teachers, in establishing the assessment standards, criteria, and selecting contents of the portfolio.

Portfolio is a goal-directed collection of students’ works samples that manifests students’ progresses, self-reflections, and achievements in any dimension of learning (Genesee & Upshur, 1996). Based on Barrett’s definition, a portfolio is a purposeful collection of students’ works exhibiting these students’ effort, progress, and achievement in one or more areas (Barrett, 2001).

“Portfolio is one of the instruments of alternative assessment and indicates the deliberate, careful collection of learner production and reflective self-assessment which is employed to record progress and achievement over time” (Douglas, 2000, p.241).

**1.4. Portfolio Assessment Research Areas**

Krigere and Sardiko (2002) conducted a study which revealed how writing skills are the easiest to assess by means of portfolio whereas other language skills are more difficult. Including a variety of writing tasks in the portfolio allows students of different levels to thrive. Likewise, Johns (1995) suggested that those not already using portfolio assessments should consider it for their writing classes. Applebee and Langer (1992) believed that "Portfolios of students' work offer one of the best vehicles for assessments of writing for that they typically contain a variety of different samples of student work" (Cited in Penaflorida, 2005, p. 348).

Interestingly, teacher assessment is now often based on instruments focusing on an inclusive view of teaching, for example portfolios (Andrews & Barnes, 1990; Delandshere, 1994)

Portfolio assessment stimulates students’ learning motivation and facilitates students’ learning process (Cole, Struyk, Kinder & Sheehan, 1997).

Studies indicate that portfolios make considerable contributions to foreign language writing. For instance, Cohen (1994) notes that portfolios are “potentially beneficial. . . to the field of language assessment since the emphasis is on convergent and repeated measures over time rather than on single measures at one point in time” (p. 361).

Wu, Huang, Chao and Park (2011) assert that a proper combination of learner portfolios and some attentions to local environments, the students’ understanding of language and reading comprehension will enhance.
Even for ESL/EFL contexts the use of portfolios is claimed to be beneficial (Delett, Barnhardt & Kevorkian, 2001; Hamp-Lyons, 1995; Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000; Song & August, 2002).

1.4.1. Portfolio Assessment Research Areas in Iran

As it is evident, the notion of alternative assessment in general, and portfolio assessment in particular, are new to Iranian educational and testing fields.

Elahinia (2004) in a research examined the assessment of writing through portfolios and achievement test and finally she not only assured the advantage of portfolio but also came to this conclusion that portfolio can change students negative attitude toward writing.

In a research, Besharati (2004) has considered the relationship between Iranian students’ listening comprehension and alternatives in assessment (conferencing and self-assessment). During a semester he investigated the influence of self-assessment and conferencing on students listening comprehension skill. There were one experimental group and one control group. At the end she asserts the positive effect of alternatives in assessment.

To investigate the value of portfolios as a tool for students’ preparation of micro-level skills for their final examinations, Nezakatgoo (2005) made a comparison between portfolios based and non-portfolios based writing classroom. The result of the study revealed a significant difference between the two groups. The use of portfolios in his class helped improve students’ final examination score and their mastering of the mechanics.

Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Nejad Ansari (2010) examined the impact of portfolio assessment as a process-oriented assessment on Iranian EFL students’ writing ability. There was a comparison between two groups; one experimental group that received portfolio as a treatment and a control group that was taught writing based on traditional approach. The findings suggested that portfolios assessment empowers students learning of writing. They provided both quantitative and qualitative data.

Pezeshki (2010) made a comparative study of e-portfolio, portfolio and conventional writing classes. In her experiment there are two experimental and one control groups. She concluded that there is no significant difference among these methods considering their effect on Iranian students writing.

To investigate the effect of portfolio assessment on writing, Sharifi, & Hassaskhah (2011) tried a time series design. In the first half of the semester a traditional –based teaching and in the second half a portfolio-based teaching was used. There were 5 pre-tests and five post-tests. They come to this conclusion that there is a close relationship between teaching and testing and portfolio has a positive effect on students writing ability.
In sum, it can be said that portfolio assessment has been and is one of the most researched topics by many educators and researchers who have tried to measure the effects of portfolio assessment on writing (Frazier & Paulson, 1992; Shober, 1996; Crosby, 1997; Spencer, 1999; Starck, 1999; Subrick, 2003; Elahinia, 2004; Lee, 2006; Fahed Al-Serhani, 2007; Yurdabakan & Erdogan, 2009; Heidari, 2011; Pezeshki, 2010; Sharifi & Hassaskhah, 2011; Nicolaидou, 2012; Tabatabaei & Assemi, 2012; Colombini & McBride, 2012; Tavakoli & Amirian, 2012), essay writing (Khantong, 2000; Samnaingdee, 2003; van der Schaaf, Stokking & Verloop, 2008; Mansvelder-Longayroux, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2007; Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Nejad Ansari, 2010), reading (Khoshima, 2006; Atai & Nikuinezhad, 2006; Ikeda & Takeuchi, 2006; Rostami Charvade, Jahandar & Khodabandehlou, 2012), teacher education courses and teachers’ and students’ attitudes toward alternative assessment (Chinnawong, 2000; Apple & Shimo, 2004), ESP courses (Wang & Liao, 2008; Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010), culture (Moore, 1994; Jacobson, Sleicher & Maureen, 1999; Kavaliauskienė, Kaminskienė & Anusienė, 2007), reflective thinking, and listening, (Valencia, 1990; Morton, 1991; Nolet, 1992; Defina, 1992; Options, 1993; Barton & Collins, 1997, as cited in Sewell et al., 1999; Wade & Yarborough, 1996; Cole, Struyk, Kinder, & Sheehan, 1997; Gosselin, 1998; Yancey, 1999; Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000; Hedge, 2000; Harris & Sandra, 2001; Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Song & August, 2002; Elahinia, 2004; Besharati, 2004; Hirvela & Sweetland, 2005; Chen, 2005; Dysthe, 2008; Chang, 2008; Yurdabakan & Erdogan, 2009; Pezeshki, 2010; Lam & Lee, 2010; Hassaskhah, 2011).

1.5. Statement of the Problem

However, most of the previous research has focused more on writing and reading and little, if any, research (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Nejad Ansari, 2010) has been conducted on the possible effect of portfolio assessment on vocabulary knowledge, in general and breadth of vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners, in particular.

Furthermore, research finding indicating the usefulness of portfolio-based assessment come from English L1 contexts and little attention has been given to its application to ESL/EFL contexts (Hamp-Lyons, 2001; Hirvela & Pierson, 2000; Hirvela & Sweetland, 2005; Liu, 2003; Weigle, 2004).

Besides, Further, research indicates that the Western society students are encouraged to decide on their own goals and take the responsibility of learning themselves (Liu, 2003)
while there has been little research done on the use and value of portfolios in L2 contexts, in general, and vocabulary retention and instruction, in particular.

Finally, researchers have recognized the very intricate and multidimensionality of word knowledge and have asserted that knowing all the specific individual meanings of words in special contexts constitute the whole existence of a word (Nassaji, 2004). Thus, researchers have used various types of assessment tools with different formats to measure breadth of vocabulary knowledge, including tests that require the learner to identify a synonym for a word in a multiple-choice test, match words with definitions, translate a word into L1, or use checklists (see Wesche & Paribakht, 1996, for a discussion of these various assessment types). But, in the literature, there is no attempt to measure this dimension of vocabulary knowledge through newly developed versions of alternative assessment, in general, and portfolio assessment, in particular. This study tried to measure, as accurate and precise as possible, the effect of portfolio assessment on the breadth of vocabulary knowledge of learners.

1.6. Purpose of the Study
Thus, implementing the very innovative method of portfolio assessment in the actual teaching and testing procedures used within classrooms in order to gauge students’ breadth of vocabulary knowledge is the primary aim of this study.

1.7. Research Hypotheses
Based on a review of literature and the aforementioned lines of reasoning the following research hypotheses were formulated:

**H1:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students in the experimental group who apply portfolio assessment and the mean scores of those students in the control group who do not apply portfolio assessment.

**H2:** There are no differences between students’ attitudes toward the use of portfolio assessment prior and after the study.

1.8. Significance of the study
Based on the purposes of the study mentioned above, the findings of this research may be significant in a number of ways and these are:

* To provide relevant information and recommendations to the education authorities as to the viability of using the portfolio assessment procedure in Iranian EFL classrooms.
* Encouraging students’ participation in the actual process of foreign language learning.
* The motivating effects of using student’s portfolio as a powerful alternative for traditional assessment techniques in actual curriculum.
The development pattern of progression in reflection by learners in an EFL situation.
To encourage further studies related to identifying the needs of pupils in developing their reflective skills especially in the area of EFL using the portfolio assessment procedure.

2. Methodology

2.1. Design

In order to obtain as accurate and reliable information as possible, one of the quasi experimental designs, called the pretest-posttest non-equivalent groups was adopted for the current study. Best and Khan (2006) delineate the merits of this design as follows: “This design is often used in classroom experiments when experimental and control groups are such naturally assembled groups as intact classes, which may be similar” (p.129). In order to conduct the experiment of this study, two classes were randomly selected calling one class to serve as an experimental group (portfolio) and the other class as a control group (non-portfolio). The mean scores of the control and experimental groups compared and tested for statistical significance both before and after the introduction of the treatment (portfolio assessment procedure).

2.2. Participants

The participants of this study were 40 Iranian intermediate EFL learners who were all learning English language in a private English language institute in Karaj, Iran. Half of them were male and the others were female and aged between 14 to 18 years old. Regarding the usefulness and practicability of systematic random sampling, it was tried in this study to conduct a proportionate kind of this sampling. Subsequently, these subjects were divided into experimental and control groups with 20 male students in experimental group and 20 female students in control group. In order to enhance the uniformity of instruction and gradation, both group were taught and assessed by this same researcher.

2.3. Instruments

Instruments that were used in this study were as follows:

2.3.1. TOEFL Proficiency Test

This proficiency test is composed of three sections: a passage followed by 10 reading comprehension questions, 20 listening questions of two short dialogues and two long conversations, 20 vocabularies, and 25 grammar questions in the multiple-choice form. The allocated time to answer the test was 80 minutes.
Regarding the very credible status of this test and its respective reliability and validity, this test was used as a means to determine both group subjects’ language proficiency level before conducting the study.

2.3.2. The Vocabulary Levels Test (Nation, 2001)

Originally developed by Paul Nation (Nation, 1990, 2001; P. Nation, 1983b), VLT has been recognized as an efficient measure of vocabulary breadth and since then has had several forms and revisions (e.g., Belgar & Hunt, 1999; Kudo, 1999; Schmitt, Schmitt, & Clapham, 2001). The VLT is composed of five parts representative of five different vocabulary size levels in English; namely, the 2,000 word level, the 3,000 word level, the 5,000 word level, the university word level, and the 10,000 word level.

2.3.2.1. Reliability and Validity of the Vocabulary Levels Test

Akbarian (2008) performed Cronbach Alpha on VLT for the four 2,000-, 3,000-, 5,000-, and 10,000-word frequency levels and found the very high reliability coefficient of 0.963. Yu reported a very high correlation (.99) between the VS and the TOEFL Michigan test items, thus confirming the concurrent validity for VLT. The maximum time allowed for completing the VS in the main study was 20 minutes. Regarding the above-mentioned points, this test was used as both pre-test and post-test tool to show probable differences between control and experimental groups at the end of the experiment.

2.3.3. Portfolio Assessment Model (PAM)

Portfolio Assessment Model (PAM) which was used in this study was according to Moya and O’Malley’s model (1994).

2.3.4. Vocabulary Scoring Rubric (VSR)

2.3.4.1. Description of the Vocabulary Scoring Rubric

This researcher tried to create a proportionate compromise of the most common points of vocabulary assessment sections of different scoring rubrics in order to assess the learners’ portfolios. To accomplish this end, a 4-point rubric was developed for grading portfolio of the students as a whole. It measured the students’ vocabulary use against a pre-determined set of criteria.

The VSR was composed of four major components: criteria/standards, indicators, levels of performance, and descriptors. Six criteria including variety of utilization, appropriateness for topics, effective word/idiom choice, appropriate usage, word form mastery and appropriate register were listed in the left-hand column in the rubric. For each criterion, the rater applying the rubric could determine to what degree the student had met the criterion, i.e., the
level of performance. The rubric contained five levels of performance: Excellent to Proficient, Good to Competent, Average to Developing and Poor to Limited. The indicators helped better know the quality of the performance. Descriptors were also supplied to further explain what was expected of students at each level of performance for each criterion.

2.3.4.2. Validity of the Vocabulary Scoring Rubric
The VSR was submitted to a two Ph.D. specialists for face and content validity. They were asked to give their opinions concerning the adequacy and appropriateness of performance levels and clarity of each indicator, its relevance to the criterion, and its consistency with other indicators. They provided certain modifications, additions, and deletions to the descriptors which were considered in the final version.

2.3.4.3. Reliability of the Vocabulary Scoring Rubric
There are two forms of reliability that are considered in rubric development: inter-rater reliability and intra-rater reliability (Moskal & Leydens, 2000). Rater or scorer reliability generally refers to the consistency of scores that are assigned by two independent raters (inter-rater reliability) and that are assigned by the same rater (intra-rater reliability) at different points in time.

The VSR was piloted to make sure that it could be applied reliably by raters. Inter-rater reliability was used to establish the rubric reliability. It was measured by having the researcher and another rater independently score the same set of test papers of a sub-sample of students (n=22) and then calculating a correlation between their scores. The correlation coefficient was computed using Spearman-Brown Formula. The correlation between the two raters was .93. It was statistically significant at the level of 0.01.

For internal consistency of the VSR, the correlation coefficient of each criterion with the overall Vocabulary Scoring Rubric was calculated using Spearman-Brown Formula. Results showed that the Vocabulary Scoring Rubric is valid and reliable.

This researcher browsed the following tools and inserted the vocabulary section of them into the above-mentioned rubric:

2.3.5. Analytic Scoring Rubric (ASR) (AL-Serhani, 2007)
2.3.6. Modified Writing Scoring Rubric (Wang & Liao, 2008)
2.3.7. Writing Test Scoring Criteria (Weigle, 2004)
2.3.8. ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al., 1981)
2.3.9. Scoring Rubric for Writing (Rog, 2001)
2.4. Procedure

Implementation of the portfolio assessment procedure in classrooms inherently needs careful planning and adequate guidance in order for it to become an effective aid to teaching and learning. Accordingly and through developing efficient portfolios by students themselves, this study tried to investigate and explore if portfolio assessment had any positive effect on vocabulary learning of EFL learners.

To accomplish this end, the first step was to pilot the test to make sure that all groups were equal and belong to the same population in terms of their general English proficiency. In order to select the most homogeneous subjects, the researcher used the TOEFL to find out how subjects were homogenized. Having regarded the very credible and reliable status of this test, the researcher conducted this test on 40 examinees.

Next, they were randomly divided into two groups, experimental and control. In this study, the application of portfolio assessment technique was the independent variable and breadth of vocabulary knowledge as the dependent variable which was measured through Vocabulary Scoring Rubric (VSR) and Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT). The portfolio model which applied in this study was based on Moya and O'Malley’s (1994) Portfolio Assessment Model for EFL learners.

The experiment lasted 18 weeks (three classes per week). The same assignments of the textbook were given to both experimental and control groups. The two groups were taught by the same teacher; The control group received traditional assessment of vocabulary and unlike the experimental group they were not asked to reflect on their portfolio and their vocabulary comprehension ability was evaluated based on the final exam. But the experimental group received the treatment (portfolio assessment strategy). The researcher provided each student of the experimental group with a portfolio to be completed and filled in during the experiment.

During the initial classroom contact, an overview of the whole portfolio procedure presented to the students. This was followed by mini lessons to introduce individual aspects of the procedure before it be implemented.

Three simple principles guided the implementation of the Portfolio Assessment Model: collection, selection, and reflection. From the very beginning of the experiment and at specific classes during the term, the students (experimental group) collected and submitted a lot of context-based newly learnt vocabulary together with early exercises that were drawn from the students' textbook and developed in class work throughout the term and put them in a folder. Furthermore, wide varieties of vocabulary teaching and learning techniques such as
incidental vocabulary learning, realia, picture walk word, vocabulary cards, photographs and etc. provided to the both groups but the experimental group was guided to treat these materials through portfolio procedures. The researcher asked the students in the experimental group to keep all these vocabulary learning tools (such as Vocabulary Folders, Vocabulary Cards, Word Jars, Vocabulary Rings, etc.) and try to make out of unknown or recently taught vocabularies.

After completing the predetermined vocabulary assignments, the students were directed to select and choose their best and preferred topics and write an essay with the best and most appropriate vocabulary in order to compile a portfolio. Selection of items had been made depending upon the purpose of the portfolio.

In addition, after the class, the learners consulted their instructor to obtain comments in one-to-one conference. Then, they revisited and redrafted their works upon their instructor's and peer's feedbacks and own reflections. The control group, however, received traditional vocabulary learning and assessment. As it is the case with the experiment group, the teacher clearly explained about different parts of vocabulary learning tasks such as developing appropriate word usage, idioms and register, effective word choice, and accurate spelling.

Finally and at the end of this research, the Vocabulary Levels Test was conducted to all subjects (both experimental and control groups) as a post test. It was conducted in order to make sure whether the introduction of portfolio assessment has had any effect on the students’ vocabulary breadth or not.

3. Results
The quantitative analysis of data was conducted to assess the effect of the Portfolio Assessment Model on the vocabulary comprehension and production of intermediate EFL students.

Collected data were statistically treated through the computer package SPSS (version 16). Descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were computed. Independent samples t-test (2-tailed test) was used to determine if there were any significant differences in the mean scores between the experimental and control groups on the pre and post administrations of the VLT (before and after the treatment). For statistical analysis, the alpha level of significance 0.05 of confidence was set. Pearson product -moment correlation was also used to assess the correlation between the subjects' (experimental group) means of scores in the portfolio and their means of scores in the VLT.
For the sake of making sure about the homogeneity of students taking part in this study, TOEFL proficiency test, with regard to the very credible status of it and its respective reliability and validity, was used as a means to determine both group subjects’ language proficiency level before conducting the study. Table 3 presents a detailed descriptive statistics of the results of this test.

**Table 3**

*Descriptive Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<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></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>58.2813</td>
<td>7.0949</td>
<td>1.2542</td>
<td>55.7233</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>58.7813</td>
<td>8.7279</td>
<td>1.5429</td>
<td>55.6345</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>58.5313</td>
<td>7.8941</td>
<td>.9868</td>
<td>56.5594</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher also conducted the Levene Test to probe of the homogeneity of both experimental and control groups in terms of their proficiency based on their scores on TOEFL. The Levene statistic was 3.022 with the significance of 0.000. Table 4 reveals the results of the Levene statistical test on TOEFL.

**Table 4**

*Test of Homogeneity of Variances*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene Statistic</th>
<th>Df1</th>
<th>Df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.022</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The value of 3.022 is the indicative of a group of candidates with almost the same homogeneity of variances performing the Test of TOEFL.

As for the phase of the statistical procedures, the researcher conducted the VLT as both pre-test and post-test instruments to observe any probable difference or change in learners’ scores as result of introducing treatment which is portfolio assessment aiming at improving vocabulary knowledge.

The researcher used the Paired-samples t-test, because the trait to be tested was of the same nature for groups, that is, vocabulary breadth.

The differences between the pretest and posttest results in both groups indicate a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in vocabulary knowledge. The following tables represent the obtained t as 3.199 with the P value of 0.000 which is big enough to reject the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the performances of the students in both groups in answering vocabulary tests after passing a
portfolio based instruction and a traditional based (non-portfolio based) instruction. See table 5 for T-Test.

**Table 5**

*(T-Test) Paired Samples Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Command in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>1.950</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.6863</td>
<td>.1535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(portfolio based)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Command in</td>
<td>1.250</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.7864</td>
<td>.1758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group (Traditional based)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is evident from the table, the mean difference between the performances of experimental and control group under examination conditions were high. This means that students in experimental group (portfolio-based group) had by far better performance in their vocabulary than that of control group (non-portfolio- based group). See table 6 for paired samples correlations and table 7 for paired samples test.

**Table 6**

*Paired Samples Correlations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance on Vocabulary in Experimental Group (portfolio based) and Performance on Vocabulary in Control Group (traditional based)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7**

*Paired samples test*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>Sig. (two-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance on Vocabulary in Experimental Group (portfolio based)</td>
<td>.700</td>
<td>.9787</td>
<td>.2188</td>
<td>.2419</td>
<td>.1581</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The T-test table indicates that the amount of Obtained t, 3.199 is big enough to approve of the difference between the two variables, since the P value is 0.000.

A vast majority of students asserted that they were familiar with the real purposes of portfolio assessment (96%). Furthermore, they expressed that they have monitored their learning and progress of understanding new vocabulary very well and with high rate (86%) and that they have succeeded to recognize their strengths and weaknesses timely (96%). Another point noteworthy point is that portfolio assessment made these students feel responsible for their own learning (89%) and has enhanced their motivation for learning more vocabulary (82%). Finally, all the students strongly agreed that portfolio assessment has led them to self-monitor and self-assess themselves throughout the process of learning vocabulary (100%) and they have assented that the feedback of this kind was the most effective and non-threatening one (98%).

Moreover, the students were also asked to freely express their feelings and attitudes about advantages and disadvantages of portfolio assessment geared to help them learn vocabulary. The majority of student announced that this innovative way was advantageous and useful to them and that they have enjoyed it a lot. Up to 86% of the students have noted that portfolio assessment has led them to self-assess themselves more and better and through this way, they have recognized their weaknesses and strengths farther more. Finally, almost all the students (80%) declared that they suggested the introduction and application of portfolio assessment for other skills and components should be a must in modern language assessment procedures.

4. Discussion

Vocabulary knowledge occupies a unique status in the field of foreign/second language learning and teaching and one can’t considers it as an optional or trivial part of a foreign language (Milton, 2009). As Nation (2001) justifiably asserts, vocabulary is a core part of every language-teaching program and the process of learning enough vocabulary is one sub-goal of a wide continuum of goals that are enumerated as important goals in the language classroom.

Furthermore, Nation (2001) believes that vocabulary learning and teaching strategies can lead to acquisition of a large amount of vocabulary and that these strategies have proved very effective for students of different language levels.
One of these innovative strategies is the introduction and implementation of portfolio assessment in the mainstream of classroom instruction and evaluation. The following results were derived from the analysis of data:

1. The differences between the pretest and posttest results in both groups indicate a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in vocabulary performance. That is, the t-value 3.199 is bigger than the critical t at p≤ 0.05 to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the performances of the students in both groups in answering vocabulary tests after passing a portfolio based instruction and a traditional based (non-portfolio based) instruction. Thus, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

2. It is evident that student’s attitudes and perceptions toward the use and effectiveness of portfolio assessment on their vocabulary learning have vastly changed in a positive direction. That is, all the students strongly agreed that portfolio assessment has led them to self-monitor and self-assess themselves throughout the process of learning vocabulary (100%) and they have assented that the feedback of this kind was the most effective and non-threatening one (98%) and up to 86% of the students have noted that portfolio assessment has led them to self-assess themselves more and better and through this way, they have recognized their weaknesses and strengths farther more. So the second hypothesis is rejected as well.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the above-mentioned findings, the following conclusions could be drawn:

- Portfolio assessment strategy positively affects students' vocabulary learning and retention by focusing their attention on wide arrays of activities and opportunities.
- The teacher appropriately utilize from portfolios to properly analyze student progress and use this information for decision making regarding future instruction and strategies.
- Encouraging feedback on behalf of students create a climate of input as well as output negotiation and focus students’ attentions on process rather than the product of vocabulary learning.
- Teachers should consider portfolio assessment model as a useful instructional tool as well as an evaluation one.
- Through creating and applying portfolio, students feel confident and motivated to learn vocabulary and thus promote their repertoire of vocabulary knowledge actively.
- Using portfolio assessment strategy help students to construct a direct bridge between themselves and their teacher as well as their classmates.
The teachers through assigning the responsibility of creating portfolio and updating it regularly involve the students in the process of learning and guide them to take the responsibility as well as benefits of learning new instructional materials. Portfolio assessment strategy fosters self-assessment on behalf of students and through this they can gear the pace and load of learning to their optimal level.

References


Explicitation of Textual Cohesion and Autonomy of Translation: A Comparative Analysis of Elliptical Structures across Persian and English

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Abstract
This research is an attempt to see into explicitation as a feature of translation process and product. Building upon Blum-Kulka's (1986/2000) explicitation hypothesis and the common assumption that translated texts differ from non-translated ones, the present study launched a two-fold comparative analysis of a body of English source texts with their Persian translations and the same body of translated texts with a similar volume of Persian non-translated texts. The results showed that English source texts, Persian translated texts and Persian non-translated texts all vary in terms of the explicitness of the cohesive marker ellipsis. The distinctive frequency of elliptical structures observed in the study indicates that ellipsis explicitation can be confirmed to be one of the features of translation process as well as product. The conclusions drawn signal that explicitation of cohesive marker ellipsis reaches beyond the contrastive differences between English and Persian languages and the idiosyncratic preferences of individual translators. The results of this study are deemed to serve as a further contribution to the notions of Translation Universals and Third Code.

Keywords: Explicitation, Ellipsis, Textual cohesion, Third code, Translation universals

1. Introduction
In her survey of the translated texts from French into English and vice versa, Blum-Kulka (1986) observed that shifts occur in the type of cohesive markers used in translation as compared to the original. She also recorded instances that the translator inserts additional
words into the translation. These two, she notes, have the effect of raising the target texts level of explicitness, as compared to the original texts (Baker, 1998, p. 289).

On the basis of her own observations and the findings of other related researches in the context of the inter-language of German and Hebrew learners of English, Kulka (1986) hypothesized that the tendency to increase the level of explicitness of translated texts, or the written work of the second language learners, may be a universal strategy inherent in the very process of language mediation.

Kulka's (1986) explicitation hypothesis postulates explicitation to be a feature of translation process. A question that may arise here is whether or not explicitation is a feature of translation product (i.e. translated texts seen as independent texts in their own rights, acting independently in the poly-system of the target language.)

Apart from that, studies carried out on explicitation have yielded contradictory results. Baker (1993) and Vanderauwera (1985), (as cited in Baker 1998), in line with Kulka, (1986) have claimed explicitation to be a universal tendency of translation. However, Rachel Weissbrod (1992) in an investigation of explicitation in translations from English into Hebrew refutes this claim and contends that "explicitation is not, as previous researches suggested, solely a universal tendency, or a function of translation on a literacy or orality scale. It is norm-dependent and changes with historical circumstances and according to the position of the translated literature" (Øveras, 1998, p. 25).

In fact, the present study has taken the commonly held assumption that translation texts differ from the native non-translated texts, and speculates that this deviation will have its reflections in the way the cohesive marker ellipsis is treated in translations, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

From the outset, this research started from a set of questions, supplying an answer for which was an objective. This research was aimed to reveal whether or not explicitation, particularly of cohesive markers, is a feature of Persian translation process; whether it is merely confined to the translation process, or it is a feature of translation product, too. Is this explicitation, if it ever exists, only a consequence of the contrastive differences between the systems of English and Persian languages? Can it not be attributed to the stylistic preferences of the individual Persian translators? Will it not transcend the contrastive differences and stylistic preferences? If so, is explicitation part of the norms controlling the translation activity in Persian, or rather, it reaches beyond the boundaries between English and Persian languages? Is it a result of the interpretation activity on the part of the translators, and
therefore, universal among all translations and independent of the influence of the particular languages and translators involved?

2. Autonomy of Translated Texts

The autonomy of translated texts, which sees translation as a literary mode in its own right, is not a new phenomenon. It has recurred from antiquity onwards, but has been systematically developed and conceptualized in recent years. Susan Bassnett, (1980) based her Translation Studies on the relative autonomy of translated texts. This view, according to Venuti (2000), became the most common theoretical assumption about translation in the 1980s. He declared that:

Approaches informed by semiotics, discourse analysis, and post structural textual theory display important conceptual and methodological differences but nonetheless agree that translation is an independent form of writing, distinct from the foreign text and the texts originally written in the translating language. (Venuti, 2000, p. 215)

Venuti (2000) further stated that this view sees translation as enacting its own process of signification and that "it recurs in translation traditions from antiquity onwards, but now is developed systematically and conceptualized according to various discourses that characterize current academic disciplines" (Venuti, 2000, p. 215).

Perhaps the first explicit treatment of the issue of autonomy of translated texts has been made by William Frawley (1984). According to him, if translation is a mode of communication, then there is information only in difference, so that translation is actually a "code in its own right, setting its own standards and structural presuppositions and entailments", although they are necessarily “derivative of matrix information and target parameters" (Frawley, 1984, as cited in Venuti, 2000,p. 216).

2.1 William Frawley and the Concept of the Third Code

The issue of relative autonomy of the translated texts found an expression in Frawley's(1984). In an attempt to come to a general theory of translation which is concerned directly with translation itself, Frawley (1984) defined translation as a process of "re-codification". He defined translation as the re-codification or re-rendering of the information in matrix code into the "parameters of the target code" (Venuti 2000, p.252).

The term re-codification presupposes at least two codes, which Frawley (1984) called Matrix (source) code and Target code. The matrix code is "the code of the origin of translation; it is the primary stimulus, the code that demands re-rendering and the target code
is the goal of the re-codification, the code into which the matrix code is debatably rendered” (Venuti 2000, p. 252).

To Frawley (1984), the matrix code consists of information, and this information is not limited to semantic information, but also covers the range of phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information, too. Target code, on the other hand, is a set of "parameters", "constraints" into which the matrix "information is accommodated". These parameters are in fact "virtual" operational codes, (texts), i.e. texts which are never realized in themselves, but "serve as the parameters for realized translation" (Venuti, 2000,p. 258).

He argued that as all the information of the matrix code cannot be accommodated into the target code, and as all the parameters of the target code cannot be accommodated into the matrix information (i.e. they do not match each other), the translated text is neither like the target nor like the matrix code. But it is a code by itself, matching their standards, structures etc. in some way and digressing from them in some others.

Frawley (1984, as cited in Venuti 2000, p. 258) called this latter code a new code or third code, and believed that this new code becomes established and individuated, acquiring its own presuppositions and entailments: “Since translation truly has dual linkage it emerges as a code in its own right, setting its own standards and structural presuppositions and entailments. Though, they are necessarily derivative of the matrix information and target parameters.”

In other words what the matrix and target code do is just providing the input into the third code, but the new code supersedes both the matrix information and target parameters, hence it’s being differentiated from the two. This new code later establishes its own "predictability as an individual text" and "dictates its own logic" (Venuti 2000, p. 260).

2.2 Blum-Kulka and the Concept of New Discourse
The issue of third code was given a new treatment in the work of Kulka (1986/2000). Working on the issue of translation shifts, she approached the third code as a type of discourse specific to translation

The classical conception of discourse, as the process of producing a text on the part of a writer or speaker and its reception on the part of the listener or receiver, designates a set of relationships, established either through linguistic elements between different parts of the text (cohesion) or manifested as an underlying semantic relationship which holds the text together as a semantic and meaningful whole in the mind of the receiver (coherence).

Therefore, when translation is to be considered as a specific discourse in its own right, then it will manifest its own cohesive patterns, coherence, and call for its own back-ground
information and presuppositions. As far as related to the present research, Kulka (2000) observed that translation "increases the semantic relations among the parts of the translated texts, establishing a greater cohesion through explicitness, repetition, redundancy, explanations and other discoursal strategies" (Venuti, 2000, p. 216).

Kulka (2000, p. 259) adopted a discoursal and communicative approach to translation, viewing it as a "communicative act" and postulated that the very process of translation "necessarily entails shifts in both textual and discoursal relationships". She observed that translation like any other act of communication, both in the process and the product, is related at least to linguistic, discoursal and social systems of the two languages and cultures involved.

Kulka (2000) defined coherence as "a covered potentially meaning relationship among the parts of a text made overt by the reader or listener through the process of interpretation". For this process to be realized, the reader or listener "must be able to relate the text to relevant and familiar worlds either real or fictional". On the other hand, cohesion is "an overt relationship holding between different parts of the text and which is expressed by language specific markers" (Kulka, 2000, p. 299).

To Kulka (2000, p. 299) shifts in the type of cohesive markers can affect translation in one or two of the following ways:
1. Shifts in text meanings (the explicit or implicit potential meaning of the ST changes through translation.)
2. Shifts in the level of explicitness (the general level of the target text's level of explicitness is higher or lower than that of the source text.)

3. Universals of Translation

Universals of translation is a term used to refer to number of features of the translated texts which "are posited as being the almost inevitable by-product of the process of translation, irrespective of the specific language pairs involved" (Shuttleworth 1997, p. 193). The presence of universals is sometimes attributed to the translators' conscious or subconscious attempt in order to make the translation easier to understand, or a consequence of the very translation activity or language mediation. (Øveras, 1998; Olohan, 2003)

On the basis of contrastive studies of translated texts and their source texts, a number of features, thought to be common among all translated texts, have been identified. They include: simplification (lexical, grammatical and stylistic simplification), omission of the
repetitions in the ST, normalization and growing standardization, discourse transfer and the law of interference, distinctive distribution of TL items, and explicitation.

3.1 Explicitation

This universal reflects a tendency to make explicit in TT the information which is left implicit in the ST. The term was introduced by Vinay and Darbelnet in the late 1950s. They distinguished between obligatory explicitation, which occurs due to the differences between the languages, and optional explicitation, used for ease of understanding (See Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995).

Two major sets of evidence can be differentiated that cater for the existence of explicitation as a universal of translation – qualitative evidence and quantitative evidence (Olohan, 2003). Vanderauwera (1985, as cited in Baker, 1998) and Kulka (1986) provided qualitative evidence for explicitation. In her study of translations from Dutch into English, Vanderauwera (1985) pointed to numerous instances where the translator uses the explicitation techniques. Among them are expansion of condensed passages, addition of modifiers, qualifiers and conjunctions for the sake of greater transparency, addition of extra information or explanations, etc. Kulka (2000), too, in her survey of English translation of French and vice versa, recorded cases of insertion of additional words and shifts in cohesive markers. She concluded that these two have the effect of increasing the TT texts' level of explicitness, and posited her explicitation hypothesis.

It is the corpus methodology which provided us with the most insight into the nature of translated texts, and with the development of corpus studies in 1990s, explicitation was provided with the quantitative evidence.

Pápai (2004) added a further classification to this: explicitation in terms of process and explicitation in terms of product. In terms of process, explicitation is a "translation technique, involving a shift from ST concerning structure or lexis" (Pápai, 2004, p. 145). In this respect, explicitation is a technique to resolve ambiguity, to increase cohesiveness of the ST, and to add linguistic or extra-linguistic information. Translator's ultimate motivation for explicitation as such is his/her conscious or unconscious attempt to increase the natural flaw of the TT, and to meet the TT readership's expectations (Pápai, 2004, p. 145).

In terms of product, explicitation is a text feature which contributes to a higher level of explicitness of the translated texts in comparison with non-translated texts in the TL. This can be manifested in linguistic features used at higher frequencies than in non-translated texts, or in added linguistic or extra-linguistic information (Pápai, 2004, p. 145).
In the following part, I shall provide a brief review of some researches done on the issue of explicitation.

3.1.1 Vilma Pápai and Explicitation in Hungarian

Pápai (2004) carried out a two-step study of Hungarian translations of English in order to test the explicitation hypothesis. As the first step, she carried out a contrastive analysis of English original texts and their Hungarian translations in order to work out explicitation strategies. Based on the findings of the first step, she identified and categorized 16 types of explicitation strategies. The identified shifts are at all levels of language, including logical-visual relations (such as addition or modification of punctuation marks, explanatory conjunctions like *i.e.*), lexicogrammatical (lexical repetition, etc.), syntactic (addition of conjunctions or cataphoric reference), and textual and extra-linguistic level (discourse organizing items, lexical explanations, culture-specific items, etc.).

The findings of this step were used as the basis for the second part of the research, which was an analysis of the translated texts with non-translated texts (*i.e.* comparable corpus). In the second step, she chose a set of explicitation features and compared their frequency in the comparable corpus. She found that in 80% of the cases, the frequencies of features investigated in translated texts outnumber the frequencies in non-translated ones.

Using the type/token ratio formula, Pápai (2004) understood that the number of word forms used in the translated texts is less than non-translated texts, and consequently, the level of difficulty of translated texts is less than non-translated texts. She, therefore, concluded that although the structural differences between English and Hungarian is so that Hungarian people use fewer words to express the same meaning as compared to English speaking people, (based on which translations from English into Hungarian would be expected to be more implicit), nonetheless, "with the 16 explicitation strategies established in the parallel corpus, explicitation seems to be a strong tendency in English-Hungarian direction" (Pápai, 2004, p. 159).

She also confirmed that her evidence supported the claim that explicitness in translations is higher than non-translated texts, and argued for the existence of a close connection between explicitation and simplification.

3.1.2 Explicitation and the Length of the Text

Ana Frankenberg-Garcia (2004), in a corpus-based study of explicitation, launched a comparative investigation between Portuguese and English to find out whether translations are longer than source texts or not. She asked whether translations will be longer than originals, as explicitation often takes the form of addition texts.
She argued that, when comparing text length across languages, more words does not necessarily mean greater explicitation. She gave examples which demonstrated explicitation by using fewer words, and also cases that revealed that although the TT sentence was longer than the ST sentence, but did not include explicitation. Thus, she contended that "word count affects different languages differently" and that "to make any claims about text length across languages based on word count, the language dependent bias of word count has to be controlled" (Frankenberg-Garcia, 2004).

Investigating a balanced corpus of 16 authors (8 English and 8 Portuguese) and 16 translators (8 English and 8 Portuguese), from each accounting 1500 words, she understood that, with a probability of 95%, (measured using a t-test), translated texts are significantly longer than source texts, with an increase of 5 percent.

4. Research Method and Data Collection

The research method which has been devised for this investigation is composed of a two-fold comparative analysis, carried out on an English-Persian parallel corpus and a comparable corpus of translated and non-translated texts in Persian.

The theoretical framework, based on which cases of ellipsis were identified and studied, is the one proposed by Halliday and Hassan's (1976). According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), an elliptical sentence is one whose structure does not represent all the meaningful choices that have gone into its makeup, and these pieces of missing information must be present somewhere in the text. In other words, for a sentence to be elliptical, two conditions must be met:

1. The structure of the sentence must be presupposing and express some gaps.
2. The presupposed information must exit in the text, either anaphorically, *i.e.* in previous sentences, or cataphorically, *i.e.* in following sentences. (Halliday & Hassan, 1976, pp. 143–144).

Among these two conditions, the latter is more important and substantial since there may be cases where the structure is incomplete and presupposing, but the outcome is not an elliptical construct. According to the above definition, even if a sentence is structurally presupposing, but the missing information is not present in the text, the sentence is not considered as elliptical. This is because ellipsis is going to serve the cohesion of the texts by relating different parts of the text to each other and also to the overall fabric of the text, but
this relation cannot be established unless by the presence of the missing linguistic items in the text itself.

With regard to the position of ellipsis, we can distinguish between intra-sentential ellipsis (grammatical ellipsis) and inter-sentential ellipsis. To Halliday and Hassan (1976), both of these two are cohesive, but it is only the inter-sentential ellipsis which contributes to textual cohesion. Within the confines of a single sentence, grammar serves the relation between the constituent parts of a sentence or clause.

Given this theoretical framework, the present study started, in the first phase, by investigating the behavior of ellipsis in the English-Persian comparable corpus. In this phase we began by locating and identifying cases of ellipsis in English source texts, and then, proceeded to trace them in the Persian target texts. The criterion for identifying ellipsis was that of Halliday and Hassan (1976), and we also applied their three-partite categorization of nominal, verbal and clausal ellipsis to identified cases. The aim of this phase was to see whether an elliptical given sentence in the English source text had been rendered elliptically, or rather, explicited by filling the gaps on the part of the translators. We also distinguished between cases of ellipsis in conversations and dialogues and those in descriptive parts of the texts. This latter distinction seems to be necessarily based on the assumption that elliptical structures are more frequent in conversations and dialogues than in other more descriptive parts of literary texts. Finally, the frequencies of each and every one of these were recorded and presented in diagrams and charts. The parallel corpus used in this phase included three English novels and their Persian translations.

The comparable corpus of Persian translated and non-translated texts, too, was a collection of six novels: three translations (the translated texts of the parallel corpus) and three original Persian novels written by the same translators (translauthors). The investigation of the patterns of ellipsis and the comparative analysis of the elliptical sentences in either of these two formed the second phase of the research. In this step, we, again, read the Persian translations with a view to locate, identify and record the frequencies of cases of inter-sentential (textual) ellipsis. Persian non-translated texts, too, were read with the same view and instances of ellipsis were recorded and their frequencies were counted. The model for identifying ellipsis in this phase was also taken from Halliday and Hassan (1976). But due to structural incongruities between English and Persian, their classification of ellipsis was not exercised.

The underlying principle for choosing this methodology was the intention to control the factor of stylistic and idiosyncratic preferences of the target language translators/writers. This
research aimed at controlling the factor of idiosyncrasy, just on the assumption that by doing so the results of the research could be more easily validated and objections as to the conclusions of the research would be discarded.

Subordinate to the factor of *transauthor*, the issue of geographical variation, gender and historical factors have also been taken into consideration in selecting the two sub-corpora. The English source texts of the parallel sub-corpora belong to America (*Huckleberry Finn*), England (*Bleak House*), and South Africa (*Cry The Beloved Country*). The Persian *transauthors* included both genders: Mrs. Simin Daneshvar, and Mr. Ibrahim Golestan and Mr. Ibrahim Younesi. With regard to historical factors, all the materials of the comparable corpora of Persian translated and non-translated texts belong to the last four decades or so, ranging from late 1960s to early 2000s.

As it was already stated, the present research aimed at finding the effect of translation on the cohesion of the translated texts in comparison with original and non-translated texts. Therefore, we delimited our search for ellipsis to inter-sentential types and deleted those occurring within the confines of a single sentence. Thus, having an operational definition of ‘sentence’ was unavoidable. ‘Sentence’ was defined in this research as a set of linguistic elements which occur between two periods (.), after a semicolon (;) or between two dashes (—) and have complete meanings. Cases other than these were considered as complete sentences, and therefore, their elliptical structures have not been taken into account. It should also be noted that due to some operational difficulties, the subject corpus here was not a running (computerized) one, and all the process of locating, identifying and classifying cases of ellipsis was done manually.

5. Findings of the Research

5.1 English-Persian Parallel Corpus

The results obtained from comparing English elliptical structures with their Persian translation revealed that more than half of English elliptical sentences (53%), have been rendered non-elliptically; *i.e.* have been explicature. Forty-five percent of the English elliptical structures, too, have been translated elliptically by preserving ellipsis in the Persian version. We also attempted to distinguish elliptical sentences of dialogues and conversations from those occurred in the descriptive part of the texts. Our statistics again showed that something about 65 percent of the total cases of inter-sentential cases of ellipsis have occurred in dialogues, leaving about 35 percent for the descriptive part of the texts. Our
findings also revealed a very high frequency of intra-sentential cases of ellipsis as compared to inter-sentential types (397 cases of intra-sentential ellipsis and 107 cases of inter-sentential type in a corpus of 30000 English words, i.e. about four times as much).

5.1.1 Explicitation and Transfer of Ellipsis
Comparative analysis of the English source texts with their Persian translations showed that, encountered with elliptical English structures, translators either choose to transfer the ellipsis, producing elliptical Persian structures, or rather decide to fill the gaps and produce non-elliptical Persian sentences. As in the latter option, where the translators explicate the implicit information in the source texts, we refer to them as explicitation. Here are examples of either of these strategies from each of the English texts and their Persian translations.

5.1.2 Explicitation
"The line moved forward and he with it, clutching his bag. And again forward, and again forward, soon he must enter a bus. " (Cry the Beloved Country, p. 19)
"صفبهجلومیرفتواومچمدانشراچسبیدهصفمیرفتوباصفمیرftarabumishadaramishbahasefmer345

5.1.3 Transfer of Ellipsis
We use the term ‘transfer of ellipsis’ to refer to cases where the translators choose to keep the English elliptical structures in their translations. This transfer of ellipsis is achieved sometimes by preserving the same elliptical structure in the translation, and sometimes by moving across the boundaries of different categories of ellipsis (i.e. translating for example a verbal ellipsis into a clausal one and vice versa).

Here is an example pertaining to transfer of ellipsis:
"Who makes them tear around so?"
"Why, whoever rubs the lamp or the ring."(Huckleberry Finn, p. 13)
چهکسیاوهاینگرکارهایامیداره؟". "هه،همانکسیکچهراغیاچلهارامیاله

Huckleberry Finn, translated by Ibrahim Golestan, p. 23)(

We can see a clausal ellipsis of the type question and answer in the English text, in which the second sentence only gives an answer to "who" and leaves the rest of the question
presupposed (i.e. “makes them tear around so”). The Persian translation exactly reflects the same pattern and the second sentence presupposes the whole question except for “چیکس” (‘who’).

Our statistics showed that 43% of the cases of the ellipses found were transferred, 55% were explicated and another 2% went for cases that the translators had not translated at all.

5.2 Persian Translated and Non-Translated Comparable Corpora

This part of the research covered a body of 60 thousand words made up of the first 10,000 words of six novels; three translated Persian and three non-translated original Persian novels. The translated texts under investigation in this phase of the research covered the same words studied in the previous step, i.e. investigating the parallel corpus. But, the way they were treated is different from what was carried out in the first phase. The difference is that in the previous phase, the Persian translated texts were considered only in relation with their originals in order to work out the decisions made by the translators in the process of translating elliptical English sentences into Persian. However, in this phase of the research, we investigated the Persian translated texts by viewing them as literary works belonging to the Persian poly-system, and completely independently of their English source texts.

The second part of the comparable corpora consisted of three Persian non-translated novels, written by the same translators (translauthors). These works include: Jazireh-ye Sargardani by Simin Daneshvar, KhoshAmadi by Ibrahim Younesi and Mad Va Meh by Ibrahim Golestan. As it was explained before, our purpose of choosing the original Persian works of the English-Persian translators was only to control the factor of idiosyncrasy and stylistic preferences of the translators.

In the process of investigating the parallel sub-corpora, we read both the translated and non-translated texts, scanning them for elliptical sentences. We also attempted to distinguish elliptical sentences occurring in dialogues and conversations from those occurring in other parts of the texts. The formula to differentiate elliptical Persian structures— both translational and non-translational— from non-elliptical ones was exactly what Halliday and Hassan (1976) suggested. According to this formula, only structures which are incomplete and their implied information are present somewhere in the text can be regarded elliptical.

The statistics drawn out of this comparative analysis showed that the translational and non-translational works of each of the translauthors studied, demonstrate different frequencies of elliptical structures. The total number of elliptical sentences found in the body of 60,000 of words in the comparable corpus of translated and non-translated Persian texts amounts to 244 cases. As it was expected, the frequency of ellipsis in Persian non-translational texts, on the
whole, stands higher than that of the translational texts. The analysis of the 30,000 words of
the non-translational Persian texts yielded 133 cases of ellipsis, which is about 55 percent of
the total elliptical cases, while the same body of Persian translational texts showed a
frequency of 111 cases, which occupies about 45 percent of the overall number of ellipses
found in the comparable sub-corpora.

6. Summary of the Results

To sum up the results, we would rather first hark back to the research hypotheses to see
whether or not they have been confirmed:

1. The process of translation involves qualitative and quantitative shifts of ellipsis from
   English STs to Persian TTs.
2. The TTs' level of ellipsis explicitness is higher than the STs'.
3. Persian translated texts' level of ellipsis explicitness is higher than that of non-
   translated Persian texts.
4. Increases in the level of ellipsis explicitness reaches beyond the contrastive
differences between English and Persian and translator's idiosyncrasies.

The first phase of the research, as it was expected, showed that Persian translators did not
feel obliged to follow ellipsis patterns of English into their translations; they chose
between keeping an elliptical structure and explicating it by feeding in the missing pieces of
information. They also shuffled back and forth across different classes of ellipsis (i.e.
nominal, verbal, clausal), rendered two elliptic sentences into one, or even preferred not to
translate some elliptical structures at all.

Our statistics demonstrated that about 55 percent of the total elliptical structures found in
English STs have been explicated in the process of translation and about 43 percent of them
have been transferred into Persian TTs. The two remaining percent is devoted to the cases
where the ST’s elliptical sentences were not translated at all.

The fact that 55 percent of English elliptical sentences have been explicated means that
the same body of elliptical structures have been filled in, either by insertion of redundancy or
linguistic information or by changing ellipsis into other cohesive markers such as reference,
substitution or lexical repetition, etc. As a consequence, the readability and explicitness of
the translated texts have increased in comparison with their corresponding source texts.
Therefore, it is confirmed that the increased level of ellipsis explicitness is a feature of the translation process (Hypothesis 2), and that the process of translation involves the shift of the cohesive marker ellipsis (Hypothesis 1).

Table 1 shows the frequencies of ellipsis in the investigated English source texts (ST), Persian translated texts (TT) and Persian non-translated texts (nTT).

Table 1. Frequencies of ellipsis in the English source texts (ST), Persian translated (TT), and Persian non-translated texts (nTT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Type of Text</th>
<th>Frequency of Ellipsis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cry the Beloved Country</td>
<td>source text</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleak House</td>
<td>source text</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huckleberry Finn</td>
<td>source text</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average in English original texts</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BenalVatan</td>
<td>translation</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khaneh-ye Tariki</td>
<td>translation</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huckleberry Finn</td>
<td>translation</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average in Persian translated texts</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazireh-ye Sargardani</td>
<td>non-translation</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KhoshAmadi</td>
<td>non-translation</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mad Va Meh</td>
<td>non-translation</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average in Persian non-translated texts</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to avoid confusion, there is a point of caution that should be made here. The comparative study of Persian translations with their English source texts showed that explicitation of ellipsis (i.e. reduction of the number of ellipses) is a feature of the translation process from English into Persian. But in the above table, the number of ellipses in TTs is a little higher than that of STs. However, these statistics do not contradict the previous finding:
the increase in the number of ellipses in the target texts should be attributed to a feature in the Persian language itself.

**Figure 1. Frequency of ellipsis in the English ST, Persian TT and Persian nTT**

This diagram indicates the differences between stylistic choices of the Persian translauthors with regard to the use of ellipsis. But, by and large, there can be seen an obvious regular upward movement from translated texts to non-translated texts of every individual translauthor (i.e. when writing in their own language, Persian, translators are inclined to the more frequent use of elliptical structures than when they are translating into their language).

The comparison of the frequency of ellipsis in Persian translated texts with Persian non-translated texts shows that Persian translational texts have involved a lower occurrence of elliptical structures. The decreased number of ellipses in translated texts may indicate that the translators have, consciously or sub-consciously, attempted to fill in the linguistic gaps as much as possible, and meet the expectations of the TT readership for an easy and readable translation. That is, the translator, knowingly or unknowingly, is worried of not being understood and thus does his/her utmost to clear out any possible sources of ambiguity and uncertainty and, hence, the increased level of explicitness and reduced number of ellipses.

Our argument will be clearer if we give a quantity to every text with respect to their use of ellipsis, derived from dividing the number of words studied in each case (i.e. 10,000) to the average number of elliptical cases found. Based on this, we may expect to see an instance of ellipsis in every 270 words of Persian translated texts, while this frequency is higher in case of Persian non-translated texts and we may expect to come across an instance of elliptical structure in every 225 words (i.e. an increase of 17%).
This shows that translated texts detach themselves from non-translated ones in this respect. And also, this is exactly in line with the notion of third code – which argues the translated texts have features with lower or higher frequencies than their source texts and native TL texts (cf. Frawley, 1985; Øveras, 1998).

However, the question pertaining to the level of cohesiveness of the translated texts remains unsolved. We have taken the reduction of the number of ellipses in the TTs as an indicative of their inclination towards more explicitness in comparison with non-translated texts. But the question which remains here is whether the reduced number of ellipses will necessarily mean reduced textual cohesion, or rather, translated texts have benefited more from other sources of cohesion like lexical repetition, reference or substitution, which are more explicit than ellipsis (something which is open to further research). However, one thing is clear, and that is the fact that although translated texts lost more than half of their elliptical structures in the process of translation, they still exhibit an ample number of ellipses so as to outnumber their corresponding original texts. And this can reasonably induce us to conclude that as far as ellipsis-related cohesion is concerned, the overall cohesiveness of the translated texts is retained by and large intact.

7. Conclusion

The fact that translated texts have exhibited a unique frequency of elliptical structures can induce us to agree that the explicitation of the cohesive marker, ellipsis, is a feature of translation product. The comparison of the statistics in Table 1 suggests that there is a movement upward from STs to TTs and then to nTTs in terms of the frequency of ellipses. If we contrast this with the fact that 55 percent of the ellipses within English STs were explicated in the process of translation (which should naturally cause a noticeable reduction in the number of ellipses in TTs in comparison with STs), we might be induced to conclude that Persian language by itself is inclined to the frequent use of ellipsis, and that, Persian translated texts have only approximated Persian native texts in this respect.

To sum up, more than half of the ST ellipses were explicated in the Persian TTs (i.e. TTs' increased level of explicitness), and Persian non-translated texts reflected a higher frequency of ellipsis (i.e. higher implicitation and less explicitation) than TTs. So far, Blum-Kulka's (1986/2000) explicitation hypothesis is confirmed. The question to consider here, however, is: 'what is the source of the distinctive explicitness of translated texts? Is it merely the contrastive differences between English and Persian or the translators’ stylistic preferences,
or is it an outgrowth of operating norms in the Persian language, or rather a feature of translation universals?’

The methodology which we employed in choosing the materials (selecting Persian translauthors), and the result of the comparative study of comparable corpora which pointed out to the distinctive ellipsis explicitness of translated texts may convince us to ignore the factor of idiosyncrasies and contrastive differences as the ultimate source.

It still remains uncertain whether we should agree with Mona Baker (1998) and Blum-Kulka (2000) who saw explicitation as an inherent feature of the translation process, a consequence of the act of interpreting on the part of the translators and as a universal of translation, or rather hold Weissbrod’s (1992) contention that:

Explicitation in translation is not as previous research has suggested, solely a universal tendency or a feature of translation …. It is norm-dependent and thus changes with historical circumstances and according to the position of translated literature”. (Cited in Øveras, 1998, p. 27)

However, we prefer to postpone the determination of whether it is norm-dependent and thus bound to socio-cultural and historical context or a universal tendency for further research and agree with Gideon Toury (1980) who suggested that:

The identification of what is universal and what is norm-dependent can only be gradually achieved through a combination of theoretical speculation and the accumulative of (tentative) conclusions of studies carried out along similar lines and relating to different languages/literatures and to various periods in history (Toury, 1980, p. 60).

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Paton, A. (1948). *Cry the beloved country*. Santa Barbara, Calif: ABC-CLIO.


Title

Mutual Relationship between Iranian School Leaving Test of English (ISLTE) and the Students' Language Learning Beliefs

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Abstract

This baseline study aimed to probe whether students' general language learning beliefs about the importance of skills and sub-skills and beliefs about ISLTE (Iranian School-leaving Test of English) test preparation or beliefs about one learning situation are consistent or reshaped by the other situation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten female highschool students in their third grade across the two situations of both FLL and ISLTE. The interviews were transcribed and subjected to Atlas.ti (5) software for coding and inconsistency was estimated as an indication of change in students' beliefs. The results showed some changes in students' beliefs in terms of grammar, translation, pronunciation, memorization, practice and repetition, speaking English, speaking and listening compared to reading and writing. On average, there was 35% inconsistency in the students' beliefs. However, the results indicated no significant change, across the two situations, in students' beliefs about the importance of learning vocabulary, guessing, and memorization. The study also showed that students held mainly non-communicative beliefs about language learning.

Keywords: Washback, High-stakes test, ISLTE, Learner beliefs
1. Introduction

It is a common practice to assert that tests impact the behaviors, perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders including teachers, learners, policy makers and parents. Hence, the term washback (Alderson & Wall, 1993) has been used invariably to refer to the possible impact of test on teaching and learning in applied linguistics literature. Pearson (1998) states" it is generally accepted that public examinations influence the attitudes, behavior and motivation of teachers, learners and parents" (as cited in Bailey, 1999). That is, high-stakes tests, as the name accounts, can bring about consequences and change in the attitude and motivation of stakeholders due to their perceived power. For example, Bailey (1999) asserted that the higher the stakes of the test, the greater the effect of the test. Likewise, national examinations like ISLTE can play a crucial role in the Iranian context due to their high-stakes nature. Shohamy (2007,p.118) notes that this view of tests is derived mostly from the power of tests and its manifestations with regard to high-stakes decisions based on test results for individuals, educational system and society as a whole. Due to their high-stakes nature, tests might have some macro-level impact (i.e. on society and educational system) and micro-level impact (i.e. on classroom teaching, learning, teachers, learners and parents) (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, p.29-35).

Moreover, it is also assumed that certain attitudes and beliefs might interact with tests and influence students' language learning. In this regard, Barcelos (2003) pointed out " not only beliefs drive actions but also actions and reflections may lead to changes in beliefs or create other beliefs"(p.19). That is, beliefs can shape actions and, in reverse, actions may change or reshape them. Therefore, this study aims to explore whether ISLTE as a contextual factor impact students' perceptions of language learning beliefs i.e. test preparation beliefs, how their already-held beliefs might impact their perceptions of learning activities, and whether these beliefs are stable or reshaped by test preparation experience.

Although there have been a few empirical studies on the washback effect of tests on learners' perceptions and attitudes in general (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1999; Cheng, 1998; Cheng, 2010), to my best knowledge, no study has addressed the effect of tests on beliefs specifically or the possible relationship between washback and learner beliefs.

1.1. The Research context

The educational system in Iran is characterized to be deeply-rooted in the examination culture since large-scale high-stakes tests serve as entry into secondary and tertiary. Indeed, tests have always been taken seriously by key stakeholders including teachers, students,
parents and authorities. To quote Shohamy (2007), "this view of tests is derived mostly from the power of tests and its manifestations with regard to high-stakes decisions based on test results for individuals, educational system and society as a whole "(p.118). In Iran, English is a main foreign language that is incorporated into school curriculum as one of the main subjects at secondary school and high school. They learn English for three years at secondary school and four years at high school. The students start learning foreign language through grammar-translation instruction which is the dominant method of instruction at secondary schools and high schools for language instruction such as Arabic and English. The students will prepare themselves for another national school leaving exam in all subjects at third year in high school. Due to test-driven instruction in Iran, there have been claims that both students' language learning beliefs and beliefs about ISLTE test preparation affect each other reciprocally. In addition, there are other ways for foreign language learning, for example, informal instruction of foreign languages such as Arabic and English in kindergartens, private tutorial classes, attending extracurricular classes held by schools, language institutes, mass Medias, and computer games. All these contexts can shape students subsequent language learning beliefs and, more importantly, the high-stakes test such as ISLTE which play a crucial role for acceptance and non-acceptance of students into tertiary education in Iranian context.

1.2. A Description of the ISLTE
ISLTE is a school-leaving test of English in written form which students are required to take at the end of their third year of high school. It is one of the prerequisites for acceptance into tertiary education. The Iranian School-leaving Test of English (ISLTE) is designed with the aim of measuring students' knowledge of language components such as spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and skills including reading. The article tries to follow the following research question:

1. Are beliefs about language learning in general and ISLTE test preparation beliefs consistent?

2. Review of literature
2.1. Part I: Washback
2.1.1. Definition of Washback and Related Concepts
The term washback or backwash has been defined as the influence of test on teaching and learning (Hughes, 1989, p.1). Moreover, Alderson& Wall (1993) proposed the washback
hypotheses. According to them, tests push both teachers and learners to do things that they
would not necessarily do. However, the proposed concept of washback seems relatively
restrictive regarding its complex nature and broad consequences. Thus it is necessary to
further explicate the complex nature of this construct. Cohen (1994) describes washback in
terms of "how assessment instruments affect educational practices and beliefs". Indeed, he
proposed two broad categories which are crucial: actions and perceptions. In other words,
high-stakes tests can change the stakeholders' perceptions of language learning process.
Shohamy (1993b) noted that external tests have become powerful devices which can change
and affect the behavior and the perception of administrators, teachers and students.
Moreover, there are some other concepts which contribute to our further understanding of
washback. Shohamy (1993a, p.4) proposed some key definitions which illuminate the
washback concept. First, measurement driven instruction, that is, tests drive learning. In other
words, tests can be used as a device for affecting the educational process (Shohmay1933b,
p.186). Second, "curriculum alignment" refers to the interface between testing and teaching
tsyllabus. Third, "systematic validity" implies the incorporation of a new test into education
system which may lead to improvisation of new curricula, textbooks.

As noted earlier, washback may affect learners' actions or perceptions and such
perceptions may have wide ranging consequences (Bialy, 1999). Likewise, Alderson and
Wall (1993, p.5) noted that pupils and parents might have attitudes to, opinions about tests
which influence their behavior, that is, their perceptions. In addition, in their proposed model
of washback hypotheses, they claimed that tests can have a deterministic power and can be
used as a "levers for change" to bring about change in learners' and teachers' beliefs and
behaviors. Unlike their initial claim which sounded naive, they contend that the nature of
impact and change is partially clear and what influences how, when and why teachers and
learners change their beliefs and behavior is so complex. Buck (1988) contends that
washback can be either beneficial or harmful. Similarly, Alderson and Wall (1993) classified
washback effect of test into two types: negative and positive. According to them, negative
washback refers to the undesirable effect of teaching and learning of a particular test deemed
to be poor". That is, tests push learners and teachers to teach or learn things that they do not
wish to do (Cheng, 2004, p.9). Cheng (2004, p.10) defines positive washback as situations in
which teachers and learners have positive attitude toward the examination or test and work
willingly or collaboratively towards its objectives.

2.1.2. Models of washback
In the realm of language testing, Alderson and Wall (1993) were pioneers who set a theoretical framework for empirical washback studies. They proposed fifteen "washback hypotheses", concerning the potential effects of tests on teaching and learning. The washback hypotheses are as follows:

1. A test will influence teaching.
2. A test will influence learning.
3. A test will influence what teachers teach.
4. A test will influence how teachers teach.
5. A test will influence what learners learn; and
6. A test will influence how learners learn.
7. A test will influence the rate and sequence of teaching; and
8. A test will influence the rate and sequence of learning.
9. A test will influence the degree and depth of teaching; and
10. A test will influence the degree and depth of learning.
11. A test will influence attitudes to the content, method, etc., of teaching and learning.
12. Tests that have important consequences will have washback.
13. Tests that do not have important consequences will have no washback.
14. Tests will have washback on all learners and teachers.
15. Tests will have washback effects for some learners and some teachers, but not for others.

These hypotheses and Hughes' model of washback have been evolutionary in providing a theoretical framework for research into washback. Hughes (1993) draws a useful distinction between effects on participants, processes and outcome. The influence of a test on participants (the teachers, learners, and materials writers preparing for a test and the perceptions and attitudes they bring to the task), leads them to modify their process (teaching and learning behaviors) and these in turn impact on product(learning outcomes including knowledge of target skills and test scores) (as cited in Green,2007). In Hughes'(1993) view, the perceptions and attitudes of participants appear to be paramount. Similarly, Rea-dickins (1997, p.306) contends that learners as test-takers are perhaps the most important stakeholders that "their views are among the most difficult to make sense of and to use"(as cited in Scott, 2007, p.29). However, the present study will draw on the "washback hypotheses" proposed by Alderson and Wall (1993).

2.1.3. Research studies on washback
The past decade has witnessed a major shift in the understanding of the functions, status and roles of language tests (Shohamy, 2007). Due to their high-stakes nature, tests exert great impact on the behaviors, motivation, self-image, and aspirations of the learners as the key stakeholders (Kirkland, 1971). Much has been said about the influential effect of tests on learners' perceptions and attitudes, but our understanding of the role of high-stakes tests as an agent for change is limited due to the small number of studies available on this issue (Qi, 2007). More importantly, in-depth studies of the interrelationship between learners' beliefs and washback effect are essential in order to elucidate the complex nature of the two constructs in details and build a detailed picture of the reciprocal influence of the two phenomena. However, only few studies explored the washback effect of tests on learners' beliefs and attitudes indirectly which are noteworthy.

Cheng (1998) investigated the impact of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) using questionnaire. There were two cohorts of students, one cohort under the old examination, and the other cohort under the new examination. The study intended to investigate the relationship between the examination change, the learning process and to what extent students' learning process as well as their attitudes towards teaching and learning activities inside and outside their English lessons could be influenced by the new examination. She found that the examination change led to a minimal change in students' attitudes and perception of strategy use.

Conversely, Cheng, Andrews and Yu's (2010) study yielded important results. Their study explored the impact and consequences of school-based assessment (SBA) into the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examinations (HKCEE) and the effect of assessment change on students' and parents' perceptions of impact of SBA on learning and the learning activities through questionnaire survey. They found that the incorporation of the new test showed significant differences in students' perceptions of language learning process and activities.

Although relatively few washback studies investigated learner beliefs, no washback study addressed learner beliefs systematically.

2.2. Part II: Learning Beliefs

2.2.1. Significance of learner beliefs

The interest in learner beliefs about second language acquisition (SLA) in applied linguistics began in the mid 1980s with the work of researchers like Horwitz (1987) and Wenden (1986) who were pioneers in this fledgling arena. The study of learner beliefs has gained undue importance within recent years for several reasons. First and foremost to gain a grasp of the
learners' beliefs and perceptions of language learning and the role these beliefs may play on their future foreign language learning experiences. Second, it helps teachers and researchers to gain an understanding of the different sources of impact on learners' beliefs and perceptions because beliefs are dynamic, flexible and socially constructed (Kalaja, 2003; Hosenfled, 2003). According to Wenden (1995), these possible sources of impact which can change learner belief over time are as follows: teachers' beliefs, parents' beliefs, as well as peers providing them with advice on how to learn. Another source of impact can be learners' experiences, as Yang (1992) claims, just as experiences give rise to beliefs, beliefs initiate experiences. In addition, a new source of impact has been recognized within the recent years by some scholars (Alderson& Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1999; Kalaja, 2003). This new sources of impact refers to the possible influence of high-stakes tests on learners' beliefs and perceptions due to their educational context which has a long history in measurement-driven instruction. This impact is worthy of attention since it may affect learners' subsequent language learning behaviors and strategy use (White, 1999) which is beyond the scope of this paper.

2.2.2. Research studies on learner beliefs

As mentioned earlier, though there is a profusion of assertions about the possible sources of impact on learners' beliefs in literature, there is paucity of empirical research in this realm.

According to Benson and Lor (1999, p.462), the beliefs articulated by students are not necessarily held under all circumstances. Rather they can be understood as cognitive resources on which students draw to make sense of and cope with specific content and context of learning. This can lead to a better understanding of learner beliefs in the sense that beliefs do not reside in individuals rather they reside in learning context. Benson and Lor (1999) suggested that in order to modify learners' beliefs, the context in which they function should be considered.

Although the importance of learners' beliefs have been recognized for years, and a body of research emerged to investigate the flexible and complex nature of beliefs, there is still few studies, investigating the different factors that might interact and somehow mediate in the process of shaping and reshaping learners' beliefs and perceptions. Therefore, there is an urgent need for more research into what roles washback as a social construct might play in formation of students' perception of foreign language learning process and their modifications of the already-held beliefs and perceptions. To cast more light on the elusive concept of learners' beliefs which are variable and context-specific, I will present a brief summary of some empirical belief studies.
Cotterall (1995) constructed a structured questionnaire. She found that students showed more control over their language learning and more use of metacognitive strategies as a response to the demands by distance learning context.

White (1999) focused on how learners’ beliefs and initial expectations might change as the students gain experience in a university solo distance language learning context. An iterative data collection cycle was used through five phases (interviews, ranking exercises, scenarios and yoked subject procedure). It revealed that learners’ initial expectation of self instructed learning as offering flexible physical circumstances for learning was displaced by a notion of a learner context interface which highlights how both learner and context exert an influence on the other.

In addition, Sakui and Gaies (1999) constructed a questionnaire followed by an interview, investigating learners' beliefs and validate the questionnaire. They concluded that learners' beliefs are not consistent. That is, learners' beliefs about SLA are changeable and situationally variable.

Alanen (2003) examined the development of young language learners' beliefs about language learning as they emerge, using semi-structured interviews to probe learners' foreign language learning beliefs. Alanen conducted two interviews: individual interviews and pair interviews. The semi-structured interviews focused on learners' thoughts and feelings about the Japanese language learning and there were also questions about foreign language learning and language learning in general. It was found that learners' beliefs were affected by parents, peers and significant other persons who show joint nature of belief construction.

Kalaja (2003) explored students’ beliefs about foreign language learning. The students were asked to keep a diary of their thoughts, feelings and experiences concerning the English test (Marticultion Examination). The results showed that learners' expectation of success against Matriculation Examination are situated and constructed.

Barcelos (1995) used semi-structured interviews, participant observation and open-ended questionnaires, aiming to understand students' beliefs through the characterization of their culture of learning languages. She found that students held beliefs about the role of grammar, the role of the teacher, and the role of target language country. In addition, students' previous language learning experiences exerted strong influence on their beliefs.

Similarly, Peng (2011) explored possible changes in beliefs about language learning and teaching EFL, including types of activities preferred, learning and teaching goals while transferring from highschool to university. Semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and learning journals were used. The findings demonstrated substantive
changes in this student's beliefs during transitional period. The findings indicated that beliefs are fluid, emergent and context-responsive. In addition, it was found that the examination-oriented activities employed near the end of first semester led to replacement of the emerging belief about learning English for communication with the earlier one that learning English is about examinations.

To sum up, all these studies reviewed above have addressed some key variables that might play a partially significant role in shaping and modifying learners' beliefs about and perceptions of language learning. These factors might include learners' previous learning experience, their language learning strategies, teaching methods, the learning context and more specifically high-stakes test which might affect learners' perceptions and beliefs due to their flexible and variable nature.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Research Approach
Student interviews comprised the core of the data collection procedure. Qualitative research traditionally uses interviews to collect participants’ emic, contextualized experiences of reality (McKay, 2006; Silverman, 2000). Choosing interviews to collect information about washback is also well-founded (e.g. Alderson & Hamp-Lyons, 1996; Cheng, 1997; Saif, 2006).

3.2. Participant
The participants were selected using convenience sampling method. All the participants will be female. Available time was during students' sport class and break time. Thus, the students in this study were 10 female penultimate students studying in third grade in one of the state high schools in Babol. They were aged 16-17 and all of them (N=10) attested to attend at English language institutes.

3.3. Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

3.3.1. Interview
The main qualitative self-report approach is the semi-structured interview. The great advantage of self-report methods such as the semi-structured interview is that it gives you the respondents' own views and perceptions of themselves and their world directly (Barker & Pistrang, 2002). Barker and Pistrang (2002) defined semi-structured interview as a type of interview based on an interview schedule, which lists a set of pre-prepared questions, prompts and probes to follow up with. The format is open-ended and the interviewee focuses
on the issues raised in an exploratory manner. The semi-structured interview is flexible and allows investigating students' perspectives and perceptions in their own terms. Burrows (2001) notes, in-depth insights into attitudes and reported practices are accessible through interviews.

3.4. Data analysis
Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with each student. I conducted ten interviews of approximately 20 minutes in two phases. All interviews were audio-recorded, with students' permission. The students' interviews were conducted in the students' native language, Persian. The data were subjected to Atlas.ti (5) for coding. The inconsistency was calculated to show change in students' beliefs.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Vocabulary
In terms of the importance of vocabulary, 100% of the students remained consistent across the two situations of FLL and ISLTE.

Table 1.1. Vocabulary as the most important for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes- Yes</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S9, S10</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S9, S10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No- No</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL= foreign language learning
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

Most of the students (N=9) held the belief that learning vocabulary was imperative for FLL and ISLTE. This congruity in the students' beliefs means that their beliefs were stable across the two situations. It seems that ISLTE maintained students' FLL beliefs about learning vocabulary. Regarding FLL, S3 asserted:

S3: "you can speak unless you know vocabularies. As a result, you can communicate and learn a language."

With respect to ISLTE S3 pointed out:

S3: "vocabulary is important for all aspects of the test. When you know vocabulary, you can translate, understand and answer all the test items."
S8 rejected the importance of learning vocabulary for FLL and ISLTE. They reasoned that grammar was the most important. It seems that ISLTE did not affect S8 belief about learning vocabulary. Regarding FLL, S1 asserted:

*S8: "I think grammar is the basis of language learning. It doesn’t matter how many words you know when you can’t put them together in a sentence. Thus no one can understand you when you speak."

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice vocabulary for foreign language learning?", the students reported different methods for learning vocabulary. Table 1.2 shows the methods and their frequency.

*Table 1.2. Beliefs about methods of learning vocabulary for FLL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rote Learning</th>
<th>Students’ ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice vocabulary through listening &amp; repetition</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorizing native equivalents</td>
<td>S2,S4,S5,S10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal repetition</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S6,S9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition through writing</td>
<td>S4,S5,S6,S10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization of vocabulary</td>
<td>S2,S4,S5,S9,S10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using antonym &amp; synonym</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization of vocabulary visually</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using whatever methods suggested by commercial books</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence-building</td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice vocabulary for ISLTE?", all of the students reported rote learning including memorization and repetition as the main test preparation strategies for learning vocabulary for ISLTE. The students reported different methods for learning vocabulary. Table 1.3 shows the methods and their frequency.

*Table 1.3. Beliefs about methods of vocabulary learning for ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rote learning</th>
<th>Students’ ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memorizing native equivalents</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3, S4,S5,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal repetition</td>
<td>S3,S5,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition through writing</td>
<td>S2,S4,S6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization of vocabulary</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S5,S6,S7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using whatever methods suggested by commercial books</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. Grammar
With respect to the importance of learning grammar for FLL and ISLTE, 30% of the students were inconsistent.

**Table 2.1. Grammar as the most important for FLL and ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL Students' ID</th>
<th>ISLTE Students' ID</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-Yes</td>
<td>S1,S3,S5,S7</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-No</td>
<td>S2,S6,S9,S10</td>
<td>S2,S6,S9,S10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S4,S6</td>
<td>S4,S6</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total= 30%**

FLL= foreign language learning

ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

S2 and S8 endorsed the importance of grammar for FLL and rejected its importance for ISLTE. In contrast, S4 and S6 rejected the importance of grammar for FLL, but they supported the importance of grammar for ISLTE.

In terms of the reasons about the importance of grammar, these students stated different reasons. See Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2. Reasons for grammar as the most important for FLL and ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Student's ID</th>
<th>Reasons for FLL</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Grammar is necessary to juxtapose words together to speak</td>
<td>There are not many grammar questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S6</td>
<td>Vocabulary is the most important</td>
<td>Vocabulary is given more points in ISLTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Vocabulary is the most important, Grammar is necessary for speaking</td>
<td>Grammar is necessary to answer questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL= foreign language learning

ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

S8 stated that grammar was necessary to bind strings of words together to construct sentences and make sense of it for FLL. However, S8 mentioned low weighting of grammar section in ISLTE as the reason for underestimating it. Regarding FLL, S8 stated:
S8: "well, I think grammar is the basis of a language. We might know lots of words, but our utterances make sense only when we could put the words in a correct order. Without grammar, our speech would be incomprehensible."

With respect to ISLTE, S8 pointed out:

S8: "because most test items are from vocabulary and there are not many test items from grammar."

Therefore, it seems that ISLTE had a negative washback effect on S8 in terms of importance of grammar learning.

In contrast, S4 and S6 rejected the importance of grammar and regarded vocabulary as the most important for FLL, but they mentioned the importance of grammar for ISLTE due to weighting and necessity of grammar to answer test items. Thus, it can be concluded that ISLTE had a slightly positive washback effect on S4 and S6 beliefs about the importance of grammar.

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice grammar for foreign language learning?", the students reported different methods for learning grammar. Table 2.3 shows the methods and their frequencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.3. Beliefs about methods of learning grammar for FLL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using whatever methods suggested by commercial books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization of grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's instruction in classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning grammar through examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice and repetition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice grammar for ISLTE?", a large number of the students (N=7) stated the use of "commercial books" to practice grammar for ISLTE. Also, the students talked about different methods for grammar learning. Table 2.4 shows the methods and their frequency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.4. Beliefs about learning grammar for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using whatever methods suggested by commercial books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning grammar through examples

Teacher's instruction in classroom

Memorization of grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past papers</th>
<th>S7</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning grammar</td>
<td>S2,S8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>examples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's instruction</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorization of</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3. Translation

In terms of the importance of translation for FLL and ISLTE, 20% of the students were inconsistent.

**Table 3.1. Translation as the most important for FLL and ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes – Yes</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S9,S10</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8, S9,S10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No – Yes</td>
<td>S7,S8</td>
<td>S7,S8</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL = foreign language learning
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

S7 and S8 rejected the importance of translation for FLL but they endorsed the importance of translation for ISLTE. Regarding FLL, S8 stated:

S8: "our mother tongue is Farsi if we translate an English text into Farsi, then the Farsi meaning remains in your mind and we forget the English meaning. We should practice and repeat the English meaning."

With respect to ISLTE, S8 pointed out:

S8: "I usually translate into Farsi. For example, first I read the reading comprehension text, and then I translate the text into Farsi and answer the questions."

In terms of reasons for the importance of translation for FLL and ISLTE, S7 and S8 gave the following reasons. See Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2. Reasons for translation as the most important for FLL and ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Reasons for FLL</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>Listening and speaking are more important, I never translate.</td>
<td>To answer test items and translate reading comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>If we translate the text into Farsi,</td>
<td>Use translation to understand the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
we'll forget it. Thus, it's better to understand it in English.

reading comprehension and answer test items.

FLL = foreign language learning

ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

S7 and S8 stated the necessity of translation for answering the test items and understanding reading comprehension, respectively. Therefore, it is likely that ISLTE had a negative washback effect on these students' beliefs (S7, S8) regarding the importance of translation for ISLTE. S7 and S8 stated that they used translation to answer the test items and understand reading. It seems that the test encouraged the students to hold non-communicative strategies.

In response to my probing question, "how do you use translation for foreign language learning?", most of the students (N=8) held the belief that translation was the most important learning strategy for reading. Students reported different methods for using translation. Table 3.3 shows the methods and their frequency.

Table 3.3. Beliefs about methods of using translation for FLL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer questions</td>
<td>S1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary</td>
<td>S9,S10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S8,S9,S10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaking</td>
<td>S1,S7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to my probing question, "how do you use translation to prepare for ISLTE?", most of the students (N=9) reported translation as the dominant test preparation strategy for reading comprehension. In addition, they reported different methods for using translation. Table 3.4 shows different beliefs about the use of translation for ISLTE:

Table 3.4. Beliefs about methods of using of translation for ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer questions</td>
<td>S1,S6,S7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning vocabulary</td>
<td>S1,S2,S5,S10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning grammar</td>
<td>S2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4. Excellent pronunciation

In terms of the importance of excellent pronunciation for FLL and ISLTE, 80% of the students were inconsistent.

Table 4.1. Beliefs about excellent pronunciation for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes-Yes</td>
<td>S5, S10</td>
<td>S5, S10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S7, S8, S9</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S7, S8, S9</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL = foreign language learning
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

80% of the students supported the importance of excellent pronunciation for FLL, but they did not endorse the belief about the importance of excellent pronunciation for ISLTE.

In terms of the reasons about the importance of excellent pronunciation for FLL and ISLTE, the students pointed out various reasons. See Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Reasons for excellent pronunciation FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Students’ ID</th>
<th>Reasons for FLL</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S2, S3, S4, S9</td>
<td>Improve speaking to travel abroad</td>
<td>Low weighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S7, S8</td>
<td>accuracy in speech</td>
<td>Test impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S6</td>
<td>Prevent misunderstanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Good for speaking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL = foreign language learning
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

Based on students' reported reasons, it can be inferred that 80% of the reasons referred to "low weighting" of pronunciation sub-skill as the main reason for rejection of the excellent pronunciation for ISLTE. Regarding FLL, S2 stated:

S2: "I think if we can speak English with an excellent pronunciation, we talk more easily with foreigners when traveling to other countries."

With respect to ISLTE, S2 pointed out:
S2: “Pronunciation is not important for ISLTE because only one test item relates to pronunciation and it is given only one point.”

It seems that the test had adverse washback effects on students’ beliefs about the importance of pronunciation for FLL. Low weighting can be considered as a test factor affecting students’ beliefs about excellent pronunciation.

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice pronunciation for foreign language learning?", the students reported different methods. See Table 4.14.

### Table 4.3. Beliefs about methods of practicing Pronunciation for FLL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S4,S7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3. Beliefs about methods of practicing Pronunciation for FLL

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice pronunciation to prepare for ISLTE?", the students reported various methods for practicing pronunciation. Table 4.4 shows different methods for practicing pronunciation for ISLTE:

### Table 4.4. Beliefs about methods of practicing pronunciation for ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S4,S7,S5,S6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1,S2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.5. Guessing

In terms of the importance of guessing for FLL and ISLTE, 100% of the students were consistent.

### Table 5.1. Beliefs about use of guessing for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes-Yes</td>
<td>S1,S8,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S9,S10</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL= foreign language learning

ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English
All of the students (N=10) supported the belief about the use of guessing across the two situations of FLL and ISLTE. With respect to FLL, S7 stated:

*S7: “because when we don't know the meaning of a word, we can guess its meaning from the sentence in which it is used. It doesn't matter if we cannot translate the sentence into Farsi. We can guess the meaning of a word from the sentence.”*

Regarding ISLTE, S7 pointed out:

*S7: “I think it's good for ISLTE since the test items are not multiple choice and you won't lose any points. I usually guess the meaning of most English words from the words before and after them, in particular, in reading.”*

It seems the students' beliefs regarding the importance of guessing for ISLTE and FLL did not undergo any change and remained stable and constant.

### 4.6. Memorization

In terms of the importance of memorization for FLL and ISLTE, 90% of the students were consistent.

*Table 6.1. Beliefs about memorization for FLL and ISLTE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes-Yes</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S9,S10</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-No</td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>S8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL = foreign language learning  
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English  

80% of the students supported the belief about the importance of memorization for FLL and ISLTE. This consistency in students' beliefs about the significance of memorization for FLL and ISLTE showed that students' beliefs remained stable. It seems that ISLTE maintained students' beliefs about the importance of memorization for FLL. But S7 rejected the importance of memorization across the two situations of FLL and ISLTE. Almost 90% remained consistent except S8. Thus, S8's belief showed 10% inconsistency.

In terms of memorization, S8 stated the following reasons for FLL and ISLTE. See Table 4.18.

*Table 6.2. Reasons for importance of memorization for FLL and ISLTE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Reasons for FLL</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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FLL = foreign language learning
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

S8 rejected memorization for FLL and emphasized practice and repetition. However, S8 supported memorization for ISLTE. With respect to FLL, S8 stated:

*S8:* "there is nothing to be memorized; I usually learn a foreign language through practice and repetition."

Regarding the importance of memorization for ISLTE, S8 pointed out:

*S8:* "we should only learn grammar a bit but we should memorize all the other aspects for ISLTE."

It appears that ISLTE encouraged S8 to hold a non-communicative belief about the importance of memorization.

### 4.7. Practice and Repetition

In terms of the prominence of practice and repetition, 90% of the students were consistent across the two situations of FLL and ISLTE.

**Table 7.1. Beliefs about practice and repetition for FLL and ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-Yes</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6, S7, S8, S9,S10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total= 10%

FLL= foreign language learning
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

90% of the students agreed with the importance of practice and repetition for FLL and ISLTE. Regarding FLL, S5 stated:

*S5:* "I can learn different parts of language through practice and repetition including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation."

With respect to ISLTE, S5 pointed out:

*S5:* "we should practice and repeat the language, in particular, the vocabularies. Because when you practice vocabularies, you learn them and you can keep them in your memory and retrieve them more easily."

### Table 7.1. Beliefs about practice and repetition for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-Yes</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6, S7, S8, S9,S10</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total= 10%
It appears students' beliefs (N=9) about the importance of practice and repetition did not change and remained stable across the two situations. That is, the test confirmed students' beliefs in this regard.

However, S1 rejected the importance of practice and repetition for FLL but supported the importance of practice and repetition for ISLTE. With respect to FLL, S1 stated:

*S1:* "It isn't important because I learn the language from the teacher's instruction in class. I've never studied the formula of language. I can memorize the grammar of language better than its vocabulary."

Regarding ISLTE, S1 pointed out:

*S1:* "It's very important. Because I practice and repeat vocabulary and grammar for ISLTE. I usually practice the textbook exercises."

Apparently, the test affected S1's belief about the importance of practice and repetition for ISLTE.

### 4.8. Speaking English

With respect to the importance of speaking for FLL and ISLTE, 100% of the students were inconsistent.

Table 8.1. Beliefs about Speaking for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes- No</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total= 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL= foreign language learning  
ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

100% of the students endorsed agreement with the importance of speaking English for FLL. Conversely, 100% of the students disagreed with the necessity of speaking English for ISLTE. That is, a significant change happened in students' beliefs in this regard.

In terms of reasons for the importance of speaking English for FLL and ISLTE, the students gave different reasons. See Table 8.21.

Table 8.2. Reasons for speaking English for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Reasons for FLL</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S3,S6,S10</td>
<td>University entrance exam</td>
<td>Speaking is not important because there is <strong>no speaking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3,S5,S8,S10</td>
<td>International language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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They reasoned that there was no speaking in ISLTE. It seems that the test negatively affected students' general language learning beliefs about the importance of speaking. Regarding FLL, S5 stated:

*S5: "because English is an international language, one should learn how to speak. Besides, when one can speak English, other would say that person has a high social class."

With respect to the importance of speaking for ISLTE, S5 pointed out:

*S5: "speaking is not important since there is no speaking in ISLTE."

This inconsistency in students' beliefs can be attributed to the negative washback effect of ISLTE. Since there is no speaking section in ISLTE, the students' underestimation of the importance of speaking seems to be affected by the test factor.

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice speaking for foreign language learning?", the students reported different methods for learning speaking. Table 8.3 shows the methods and their frequencies.

**Table 8.3. Beliefs about methods of practicing Speaking for FLL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S2,S6,S10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Social prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Familiarity with target culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.9. Efficacy of speaking and listening compared with reading and writing**

In terms of the importance of efficacy of speaking and listening compared with reading and writing for FLL and ISLTE, 80% of the students were inconsistent.
Table 9.1. Beliefs about Efficacy of speaking & listening over reading & writing for FLL and ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>FLL</th>
<th>ISLTE</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td>Students' ID</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S1,S2,S4,S6,S7,S8,S9, S10</td>
<td>S1,S2,S4,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-No</td>
<td>S3,S5</td>
<td>S3,S5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FLL** = foreign language learning  
**ISLTE** = Iranian final third high school test of English

80% of the students endorsed the efficacy of speaking and listening for FLL. In contrast, 100% of the students supported the efficacy of reading for ISLTE. It seems students' support of the efficacy of speaking and listening for FLL and their rejection of the importance of speaking and listening for ISLTE can be indicative of adverse test impact. Regarding FLL, S1 stated:

*S1: ‘for example, if one travels abroad, one usually speaks and never writes. One is speaking all the time. Besides, when one listens, one learns better. For instance, I say English words aloud and record them, and then I listen to my voice, repeat the words and say their meaning in Farsi.’* With respect to the efficacy of speaking and listening compared with reading and writing for ISLTE, S1 pointed out:

*S1: ‘I think reading and writing are more important. Writing is important for spelling. In ISLTE, you should write. So speaking and listening are not important since there is no speaking and listening but writing is important. Then, for reading, you should know the vocabularies to be able to answer the questions.’*

With regard to four skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing for FLL and ISLTE, the students stated various reasons.

In terms of the importance of listening for ISLTE, all of the students rejected its importance for ISLTE and stated that there was no listening in ISLTE.

Table 9.2. Reasons for importance of Listening for ISLTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8, S9,S10</td>
<td>There is no listening section in ISLTE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It can be inferred that the test had a negative washback effect on students' beliefs about the importance of listening. In response to my probing question, "how do you practice listening for foreign language learning?", the students reported different methods for listening. Table 4.25 shows the methods and their frequencies.

*Table 9.3. Beliefs about methods of practicing Listening for FLL*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use CD to practice listening</td>
<td>S3,S5,S7,S8,S9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching English movies</td>
<td>S8,S9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice listening in classroom at language institutes</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S6,S10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the importance of reading for ISLTE, all of the students endorsed its importance for ISLTE and stated that there was reading in ISLTE. It seems that weighting of reading in ISLTE brought about the change in students' beliefs about the importance of reading. Therefore, it can be inferred that the test had a positive washback effect on students' beliefs about the importance of reading.

*Table 9.4. Reasons for importance of Reading for ISLTE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S1,S2,S3,S4,S5,S7</td>
<td>Weighting Test impact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice reading for foreign language learning?", students reported different methods for reading. Table 4.26 shows the methods and their frequencies.

*Table 9.5. Beliefs about methods of practicing Reading for FLL*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story books</td>
<td>S1,S2,S5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing reading</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S8,S9,S10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In response to my probing question, "how do you practice reading for ISLTE?", the students reported different methods for reading. Table 4.26 shows the methods and their frequencies.

**Table 9.6. Beliefs about methods of practicing Reading for ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8, S9, S10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the importance of writing for ISLTE, half of the students (S3, S4, S6, S7, and S8) rejected its importance for ISLTE and pointed out there was no writing in ISLTE. S2 and S3 stated that writing was necessary to answer the test items. S1 considered writing as spelling. Based on students' reported reasons, it seems that ISLTE had negatively influenced students' beliefs about the importance of writing as a skill as well as their perceptions of writing as a construct.

**Table 9.7. Reasons for importance of Writing for ISLTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Reasons for ISLTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td>S3, S4, S6, S7, S8, S9</td>
<td>There is no writing in ISLTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Yes</td>
<td>S2, S3</td>
<td>To answer test items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FLL= foreign language learning

ISLTE = Iranian final third high school test of English

In response to my probing question, "how do you practice writing for foreign language learning?", the students reported different methods for writing. Table 4.30 shows the methods and their frequencies.

**Table 9.8. Beliefs about methods of practicing Writing for FLL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Students' ID</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes we write about a topic in our classes at language institutes</td>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, S5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally, we write paragraphs</td>
<td>S6, S9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5. Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of students' beliefs about ISLTE test preparation on their beliefs about general language learning. To answer the research question,
I investigated what beliefs students had for each situation and what reasons they had for their beliefs.

With respect to impact of students' beliefs about ISLTE test preparation on students' beliefs about FLL, the results showed that the test had negative washback effect on students' language learning beliefs. That is, the students' beliefs were inconsistent: 30% for grammar, 20% for translation, 80% for pronunciation, 10% for memorization, 10% for practice and repetition, 100% for speaking, 80% for efficacy of speaking, listening and writing compared with reading. On average, there was 35% inconsistency in the students' beliefs.

With respect to communicativeness or non-communicativeness of the students' beliefs for FLL, the results showed that 79% of the students' reported beliefs were non-communicative while 13% of their reported beliefs were communicative. Regarding ISLTE, the results indicated that 78% of the students' stated beliefs were non-communicative while 2% of their beliefs were communicative. This suggests that the test encouraged non-communicative language learning beliefs within students. The results also suggest a mutual relationship between the two situations i.e. the fact that a large part of students' beliefs (78%) were non-communicative in IF3rd-HTE preparation, an almost equal part of which was held by the students in FLL situation, suggests that the non-communicative beliefs in the test preparation might have been affected by the beliefs for FLL.

5.1. Limitations and Implications

A few limitations of the study need to be addressed to support the accurate interpretations of the results derived from this study. The first limitations of this study lies in the generalizability of the results. Our data is self-reported data, that is, perception data of the 10 students on what they see, what beliefs they hold about general language learning and ISLTE test preparation. Thus, one of the limitations of the present study involves the size of the participants. This limits the generalizability of the findings. A larger sample size in future studies can be very helpful in promoting the validity of the study as well as its generalizability. Additionally, this study is limited in that I only used semi-structured interviews to probe students' beliefs. Therefore, it is suggested to investigate the sources of impact such as test impact and teachers' beliefs, some interviews should be conducted with teachers as well as classroom observations.

The findings of this study bring on constructive implications to practice that might lead to some innovations in different aspects of educational system.

In terms of the implication of the study for EFL teachers, the study informs the teachers of the impact of their beliefs on students' general language learning beliefs and ISLTE test
preparation beliefs. The results provide EFL teachers with a sort of awareness of context and encourage them to reflect on their own beliefs, make some revisions on their beliefs. That is, EFL teachers should foster communicative beliefs and encourage students to internalize these communicative beliefs to promote their language learning.

This study could also have implications for test constructors. The findings of the present study apprise test constructors of negative washback effects of ISLTE on students’ general language learning beliefs and ISLTE test preparation beliefs. Therefore, the findings can benefit test constructors to design new high-stakes tests which are communicative with the aim of fostering positive communicative beliefs both within students and EFL teachers.

The reported beliefs have also implications for material developers and curriculum designers to design new textbooks and curriculum which emphasize the development of positive communicative beliefs.

**References**


Educational Researcher, 18(9), p. 27-32.


Title

The Effect of Dialogue Journal Strategy on the Improvement of Iranian EFL Learners’ Writing Performance, Reflection, and Motivation

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Abstract

This study examined the efficacy of English dialogue journal writing (DJW) on participants’ overall writing performance as well as on the other components of writing. Out of 50 female high-intermediate students studying English at Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urumieh, forty-four were selected based on their scores on a proficiency test. They were then randomly divided in two equal groups, one control and one experimental. Prior to the treatment, a pre-test was administered to all the participants in the study. The independent-samples t-test analysis of the test scores demonstrated no prior significant difference between the writing performance of the participants in the control and experimental groups. During the treatment period, the experimental group experienced keeping dialogue journals;
each participant was required to write 18 journal entries with two journal entries per week. However, the control group received the same instruction without the practice of dialogue journals. After the treatment period, a post-test was administered. The data included 360 journal entries and the results of the pre- and post-tests on writing performance. The findings showed that the DJW project improved the participants’ overall writing performance as well as the other components of writing in the experimental group. Moreover, the comparison of the means at p < .05 showed the experimental group outperformed the control group in their overall writing proficiency and the component of content which, in turn, can be attributed to the positive effect of dialogue journal writing on learners’ writing skill.

**Keywords**: Dialogue journals, Dialogue journal writing (DJW) project, Content

### 1. Introduction

In the field of second language writing research there has been a great many lively discussions with regard to the role of writing in our global community. Today at the age of information explosion, writing has become an essential tool for people of all professions; it has been considered a major accomplishment to be able to express one’s thoughts in written form, something which once considered the domain of the elite and well-educated. However, producing a coherent, fluent, and accurate piece of writing is a demanding task for a language learner, particularly an EFL learner who is going to study in a language that is not his/her own, as Nunan (2001) puts it. Olshtain (2001) refers to ‘emotive writing tasks’ as one of the more advanced writing tasks which start shifting their goal from the focus on the mechanics of writing to basic process-oriented tasks. According to him, “Emotive writing tasks are concerned with personal writing. Such personal writing, primarily include letters to friends and narratives describing personal experiences as well as personal journals and diaries” (p.212). He also adds that journals especially dialogue journals enable students and teachers to interact on a one-to-one basis at any level and in any learning context.

A dialogue journal is a written conversation in which a student and teacher communicate regularly (daily, weekly, etc., depending on the educational setting) over a semester, school year, or course. Students write as much as they choose and the teacher writes back regularly, responding to students’ questions and comments, introducing new topics, or asking questions. The teacher is a participant in an ongoing, written conversation with the student,
rather than an evaluator who corrects or comments on the student’s writing. (Peyton & Staton, 1993). It is also an important way of individualizing instruction and encouraging independent thinking. Journals record the students’ individual travel through the academic world; at the same time, journals can provide a springboard for more formal papers or projects, as Fulwiler (2000) puts it. Incorporating guided conversation and discussion into the classroom helps students develop a deeper understanding of the topics and materials being taught. Dialogue journals also teach students to formulate and express opinions. Dialogue Journals are a great teaching tool that can be used in the classroom, with students of any age and of different levels (Kamchatka, 2012).

The use of Dialogue Journals in classrooms, particularly in second language (L2) classrooms, rests on strong theoretical and pedagogical bases. From a theoretical perspective, the use of Dialogue Journals accords with a social constructivist view of learning. The roots of social constructivism are based on the work of Vygotsky (1978), who believed that human development is inherently a socially situated activity. Vygotsky (1978) argued that what was needed for learning to occur was the presence of a more knowledgeable person who would help the learner to move from being able to do something only with the help of that expert to being able to do it independently. This “space”, in which support is provided, contingent upon the learner’s developmental level, was called “Zone of Proximal Development” (ZPD) by Vygotsky (1978). Thus, from a social constructivist perspective, learners should be encouraged to participate in activities which foster interaction and co-construction of knowledge.

From a pedagogical perspective, the use of small group and pair work is further supported by the communicative approach to L2 instruction and its emphasis on providing learners with opportunities to use their L2. One of the ways to promote social interaction among learners in the writing class is to involve them in collaborative writing or group writing activities. In addition, the DJW is in line with Swain’s comprehensible output hypothesis. As Swain (2000, as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006) states, successful second language acquisition depends on learners producing oral or written language. She believed that through collaborative dialogue, which is a cognitive and a social activity, language use mediates language learning. Dialogue journals open new channels of communication; they provide natural contexts for language development. It is assumed that the more journal entries the learners write, the more comprehensible output is produced, which leads to success in acquisition of a second/foreign language.

1.1. Review of the Related Literature
Writing has been with us for several thousand years, from clay tablets to computer chips, and nowadays is more important than ever. Although hundreds of millions of people are still unable to read and write, humanity relies on writing to an unprecedented extent. It is quite possible that, today, more communication takes place in the written than in the oral mode. Perhaps writing might best be viewed as a continuum of activities that range from the more mechanical or formal aspects of “writing down”, on the one end to the more complex act of composing, on the other. This seems most sensible in the context of second and foreign language learning, where beginning language students must first struggle with the transcription of speech before they can engage in more complex forms of written expression.

Although competent writing is frequently accepted as being the last language skill to be acquired for native speakers of the language as well as for foreign/second language learners (Hamp and Heasly, 2006), it has become an essential tool for the people of all walks of life in today’s global community.

To view language as a communicative act, the skill of writing enjoys special status through which one can communicate a variety of messages to a variety of readers, whether close or distant, known or unknown (Olshtain, 1991). Furthermore, Alderson and Bachman (2008) also believe that the ability to write effectively allows individuals from different cultures and backgrounds to communicate. They further add that it is now widely recognized that writing plays a vital role not only in conveying information, but also in transforming knowledge to create new knowledge. The ability to express one’s ideas in writing in a second or foreign language and to do so with reasonable coherence and accuracy is a major achievement; many native speakers of English never truly master the skill (Olshtain, 2001).

Therefore, in a complex society with a plurality of perspectives and opinions, students need to be capable of expressing their viewpoints clearly and logically to convince others. The ability to inform others of ideas and concepts is also critical in an information-driven society. Moreover, in an era in which many of the borders that have long separated the world’s peoples blur, exploring and sharing human experience through writing helps define not only individual identity but also the universal connections that people share. The impact of communications technologies has changed the way people write and the kinds of writing they do. Writing in the 21st century is defined by its frequency and efficiency, and modern writers must express ideas in ways that enable them to communicate effectively with many audiences. It is clear that the ability to use written language to communicate with others—and the corresponding need for effective writing instruction and assessment—is more relevant than ever (NAEP, 2011). Every student should be given the opportunity to view
writing as a way to represent life experiences. As Leonhardt (1998) affirms, writing about the
details of their [writers] lives can put them into an intimate relationship with writing, and let
them see how powerful writing is, and how much insight writing can give them into their
daily experiences. To give students this experience, teachers must show their students that
they see the value in and potential joy of writing (Isabell, 2010). Rivers (1975, as cited in
Hadly, 2003) points out that the most difficult task for the teacher is to know how to
effectively bridge the gap between skill-getting and skill-using activities. Perhaps one
solution is to minimize the use of writing practice activities that are manipulative or
impersonal in nature and choose instead activities that are contextualized, meaningful, and
personalized, even when students are focusing primarily on form. Another possibility is to
include various kinds of creative writing activities, such as journal writing or cinquain
poetry, in beginning courses to encourage students to express their own meaning within the
limits of their developing competence. “When teachers set up imaginative writing tasks so
that their students are thoroughly engaged, those students frequently strive harder than usual
to produce a greater variety of correct and appropriate language than they might for more
routine assignments” (Harmer, 2001, p.259). Thus, a blend of diverse tasks that elicit
performance ranging from the “careful style” to the “vernacular style” (Tarone 1983, as cited
in Hadley, 2003) may be most beneficial for the development of spoken or written proficiency at all levels (pp. 231-232), one of which is keeping a dialogue journal.

A journal is a book. It can be bought or made one by binding paper together. A good
handy size is an A5 because it is easy to carry around. Like any other skill, the more one
writes the better she/he gets at it. A journal is a good thing to have at hand because it gives
the learners an on-going place to write. They write about so long as they keep practicing
writing. Some people like to keep their journals private. Some people like to share some of
their pieces of writing. But the most important thing about a journal is that it is a place for
reflecting. So it is important that one use it to express her/himself freely. Dialogue journal
writing is the practice of regular learner–teacher written dialogue in which initial decisions
about topics, length, style, format and so on are made by learners. Teachers regularly write
their side of the dialogue, commenting on any aspect of a learner’s writings, responding to
questions, posing questions and challenges, and initiating their own dialogue topics (Peyton
2000). According to Brown (2004), dialogue journals imply an interaction between a reader
(the teacher) and the student through dialogue or responses. Dialogue journals are similar to
personal journals. The exception is that they are written with the intent to be shared with a
teacher or classmate. The person who receives the journal reads the entry and responds to it.
These journals are interactive and take the form of a conversation (Tompkins, 2002). Spaventa (2000) provides another definition for dialogue journals as “notebooks in which writers keep a record of ideas, opinions, and description of daily life. Journals help writers develop their creativity” (p. 168). Tompkins (2000) is also in consensus with Staton (1987) in journals being interactive, and conversational in tone by saying, “Most importantly, they are an authentic writing activity and provide the opportunity for real communication between students or between a student and the teacher” (p. 174). Every time the students write in their dialogue journals, they write informally to the teacher about something of interest or concern, and the teacher writes a response. Students are in control of the topic choice, and they have the opportunity to take that topic in any direction (Tompkins, 2000).

Auerbach and Isserlis (1999, 1996, as cited in Gholami, 2008) also note that dialogue journal writing is consistent with a learner-centered curriculum orientation, in which learners write to express themselves, to make sense of their own and others’ experiences, and to develop their abilities. Dialogue journal writing supports the writing process by providing an authentic two-way written interaction between writing partners, which are usually the teacher and the student (Edelsky, 1986; Peyton & Reed, 1990; Peyton & Staton, 1993; Silva, 1990; Urzua, 1987). Students trust and get close acquaintance with the reader/responder of dialogue journal writing, so they attend to specifics more and explain their ideas in more detail to meet their reader/responder’s needs, and feel comfortable with letting out their emotions (Alexander, 2001). Dialogue journals give learners the chance to negotiate with a more academically skilled adult and accordingly receive support and feedback necessary for language learning (Vygotsky, 1978). The phenomenon of an individual being able to perform at a higher level of competence with the assistance of more capable others is referred to in Vygotskian terms as the zone of proximal development (ZPD).

Research has shown that they provide opportunities to engage learners in a natural, purposeful way in different kinds of writing: narration, description and argumentation, even poetry (Kreeft et al. 1985; Staton et al. 1987), and to use all the functions of language. Leaders in ESL/EFL pedagogy contend that journals are “...a valuable component in developing writing and reading competence in both first and second language classes” (Staton, 1982, p. 101). In the same line, Kreeft (1983) reported that through journal writing and daily feedback, ESL/EFL teachers were able to “customize” the writing process for each of their students’ unique needs. In addition, students in Trites’ (2001) study enjoyed sharing with their teacher and peers their ideas, and built strong rapport with them in writing their dialogue journals. Another benefit of DJW to L2 language learners is the development of
writing fluency (Holmes & Moulton, 1997; McGrail, 1996; Peyton, 1990, 2000). Students’ use of language in terms of “the number of words, T-units [Minimal Terminate Unit], cohesive ties, and rhetorical complexity” was more enhanced in their dialogue journals than in their assigned writing (Peyton & Reed, 1990, as cited in Holmes & Moulton, 1995, p.225). Over time, student entries increase in length, become more fluent, and show greater competency in focusing on a topic and elaborating on it (Staton et al., 1986). Writing dialogue journal provides students with a large number of comprehensible texts to read. As a result, it can help students build fluency in writing, as Kreeft (1984) argues. And last but not least, it was concluded that dialogue journals are beneficial to emergent readers and writers (Bloem, 2004, as cited in Liao, 2007).

Research studies in Iran (Homaeian, 2001; Gholami, 2008; Mirhosseini & Ghahremani, 2003) also reveal that dialogue journal writing promotes writing ability of Iranian EFL learners. Furthermore, the findings of Mirhosseini & Ghahremani-Ghajar’s (2005) study revealed that dialogue journal writing provided EFL high school students in Tehran opportunities to express their voice and helped the students gain critical self-reflective writing ability.

Although some of these studies have been conducted in Iranian EFL contexts, further research is also needed to validate these findings.

1.2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

To this end, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Is there a difference between the overall writing performance of the DJW group and control group?
2. Is there a difference between the writing performance of the DJW group and control group in terms of components of writing?

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

The study was a pretest-posttest as well as a comparison-group one. It was quasi-experimental because the convenience sampling was used based on the participants’ performance on the First Certificate in English (FCE). Out of four high-intermediate classes at Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urumieh, two of them were chosen randomly, 25 in each class. Then 44 participants with scores falling one standard deviation (SD) above and one SD below the mean score were selected and randomly assigned into experimental and control groups.
groups. Their ages ranged between 15 and 24, and they were all at high-intermediate three level. Thus, there was an independent variable named the DJW as well as six dependent variables named overall writing performance and five components of writing including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. Both groups were taught by the researcher herself.

2.2. Instrumentation

The proficiency test employed in the present study was First Certificate in English “FCE”. It included four parts: multiple choice cloze (12 items), open cloze (12 items), word formation (10 items), and ‘key’ word formation (8 items).

For both pre- and post-tests the writing topics were adopted from the Barron’s IELTS (International English Language Testing System) by Lougheed (2006), all of which belonged to the same kind of writing task, that is AD (agreeing, disagreeing)(Appendices A & B). In the pre-test and post-test, the participants were required to provide reasons and examples to support their ideas with regard to their own experiences. They were not allowed to use dictionaries or discuss with each other. Moreover, due to the fact that the criterion-related validity of the test was important, the researcher has tried to use a test that is comparable to a well-established test of writing.

To evaluate the learners’ essays, Jacobs et al.’s (1981) scale was used (See Appendix c). This scale was used in the study because based on Weigle (2008), analytic scales separate scores which provide the researcher with more useful diagnostic information and a more accurate picture of the individuals’ writing ability, and the researcher can identify writers’ strengths and weaknesses. As a result, as Becker (2010/2011) assured, the reliability of scoring is improved when analytic rubrics are used.

2.3. Procedure

The study extended over a course of 20 sessions on a Monday-Thursday schedule in classes including female students. On the day before the treatment session of the main study, the participants of two groups took a pre-test of writing. The participants in experimental group were also given some instructions on writing dialogue journals as well as some information about the positive effects it might have on their writing. For the treatment, therefore, the participants of the study in the experimental group were asked to write one journal each session on a topic and hand it in to the teacher. The journals were written as part of routine classroom activities, forming a continuous flow of exchange in single notebooks, according to Peyton (1990), who defines dialogue journal as “a written ongoing interaction between individual students and their teacher in a bound notebook” (p.199). As a general strategy, the
researcher asked the participants to initiate topics in the journals based on their personal interests and choices. They were encouraged to write their experiences or observations as well as their reflections in or outside the class; they were also encouraged to connect their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the learning activities they were engaged in. The participants wrote their journal entries at home. The researcher as the teacher was supposed to respond to them accordingly. After the class, the teacher read what the learner had written and wrote back in their journals. According to Mirhosseini’s (2009) suggestion, learners were told not to worry about grammar or spelling, and to focus on expressing their thoughts and feelings freely. On the other hand, Mirhosseini (2009) and Peyton (1990) stated that teachers can at times correct written forms in the journals or comment on the communicative aspects of dialogues without inhibiting the dialogue. According to Peyton’s (1990) suggestion, the teacher tried to model the correct usage of the error in her responses. Thus, errors were not corrected directly; however, they were mentioned in the teacher’s responses to their entries in an indirect way. The teacher wrote sentences that were pertinent to the participants’ errors, including grammatical and punctuation ones. The participants were required to write 18 journal entries during the study. They had to write two journal entries per week, which were submitted to the teacher (researcher). After a period of a ten-week treatment, the learners’ journals were collected. Two sample entries are provided in Appendix D.

On the other hand, the participants in the control group were also asked to write paragraphs on topics of interest during the ten-week usual course. At the end of the ten-week program, the participants in both groups took the post-test. During a 10-week term, both the experimental and control groups received instructions on how to write a paragraph. However, the control group took only a pre- and a post-test. The experimental group took a pre-test and after a nine-week treatment, they took a post-test. The two tests taken by the experimental and the control groups were on the same topics. During the study, the participants studied the book High-Intermediate 3, published by Iran Language Institute Research and Planning Department (2006). Then their writings were collected, scored, and compared with each other. The post-testing procedure was exactly the same as pre-testing. Samples of a student’s pre- and post-tests are provided in Appendix E.

As Mackey and Gass (2005) argued, to assess the feasibility and usefulness of the data collection methods and make the necessary revisions, the whole study was piloted before the beginning of the main study. In order to prevent the possibility of the researcher’s bias and considering the rater reliability, two raters scored the participants’ essays anonymously.
3. Data Analyses and Results

3.1. Language Proficiency Test

As already mentioned, FCE test was used to check the homogeneity of the participants in both groups. The data obtained were submitted to SPSS for running statistical analysis. First, the Levene’s test of equality of error variances was run to check whether the independent samples t-test could be run or not. The results of the test, $p = .88$, indicated that an independent t-test could be run. Then an independent samples t-test was run to get assurance of the homogeneity of the participants in two groups. According to the results of the independent-samples t-test, there was no significant difference in the writing mean score of the control group ($M=35.08$, $SD=4.37$) and that of the experimental group ($M=34.04$, $SD=3.99$) in their general proficiency measured by the FCE test, $t (48) = .877$, $p = .385$.

3.2. The First Research Question

Before running the t-test analysis for answering the research questions, the normality of the data had to be assured. So, a One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was run to check the normality of the distribution of the data. The data in both pre- and post-tests showed no violation of normality or linearity.

The first research question investigated the difference between the overall writing performance of the experimental and control group. Thus, an independent samples t-test was run on the overall mean scores of the two groups. The results are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1
Descriptive Data for Pre- and Post-Tests of the Overall Writing Performance in Two Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preoveral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>79.409</td>
<td>9.358</td>
<td>1.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73.363</td>
<td>10.732</td>
<td>2.288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postoveral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>84.136</td>
<td>11.961</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>84.136</td>
<td>11.961</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
Independent Samples Tests for Pre- and Post-Tests of Overall Writing in Two Groups
As it is shown in Table 1, the mean score and standard deviation of the pre-test in control group are \(M=79.40, SD= 9.35\), and in experimental group are \(M=73.36, SD= 10.73\). The result of an independent samples t-test in Table 2 for pre-tests in two groups, \(t (42) = 1.991, p=.053\), shows that there was not a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-tests of the control and experimental groups, which further shows the homogeneity of the two groups before treatment. However, comparing the mean score and standard deviation of the post-test in the control group, \(M=77.00, SD=11.24\), with the ones in the experimental group, \(M=84.13, SD=11.96\), shows a significant difference between the mean scores of their post-tests, \(t (42) = -2.039, p=.048\). It can be concluded that although both groups were taught the same materials, the participants of the experimental group outperformed the participants of the control group and it can be attributed to the dialogue journal writing by the experimental group.

3.3. The Second Research Question

In order to compare the mean scores of pre- and post-tests of the experimental and control groups in terms of writing components, a one-way MANOVA was run. The dependent variables were post-scores of both experimental and control groups including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics, whilst the independent variable was ‘group’, which consisted of two categories: “Experimental”, and “Control”. Tables 3, 4, and 5 show the results.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Experimental and Control Groups’ Post-Test
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Exp.</th>
<th>17.636</th>
<th>2.381</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.954</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-vocabulary</td>
<td>Con.</td>
<td>15.59</td>
<td>2.839</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp.</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.181</td>
<td>3.711</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.386</td>
<td>3.363</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-language</td>
<td>Con.</td>
<td>18.681</td>
<td>3.577</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp.</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.454</td>
<td>3.276</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>19.568</td>
<td>3.506</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-mechanics</td>
<td>Con.</td>
<td>4.181</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.045</td>
<td>0.653</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.113</td>
<td>0.689</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 3, the mean score and standard deviation of the post-test in the experimental group in terms of content are \((M=25.50, SD=3.67)\), in terms of organization are \((M=17.63, D=2.38)\), in terms of vocabulary are \((M=17.18, SD=3.71)\), in terms of language use are \((M=20.45, SD=3.27)\), and mechanics are \((M=4.04, SD=.65)\). The mean score of each item on the participants’ post-test in the experimental group except for the mechanics \((M=4.04< 4.18)\) is higher than those of the control group \((M = 25.50 > 23.18\) for content; \(M = 17.63 > 16.27\) for organization; \(M = 5.51 > 3.24\) for language use; \(M= 20.45 > 18.68\) for vocabulary); however, these differences are only significantly high in terms of the content component.

Table 4

Multivariate Tests for Experimental and Control Groups’ Post-Tests

<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></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>0.985</td>
<td>501.192(^b)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>501.192(^b)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>65.946</td>
<td>501.192</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>65.946</td>
<td>501.192</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>1.833(^b)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td>1.833(^b)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>1.833(^b)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>1.833(^b)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

Pairwise Comparisons for Experimental and Control Groups’ Post-Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>(I) group</th>
<th>(J) group</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig. (^b)</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Difference (^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-content</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>-2.318(^*)</td>
<td>1.098</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>-4.534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>2.318(^*)</td>
<td>1.098</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>0.103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-organization</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>-1.364</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>-2.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>-0.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-vocabulary</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>-1.591</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>-3.602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>1.591</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-language</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>-1.773</td>
<td>1.034</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>-3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>1.773</td>
<td>1.034</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>-0.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-mechanics</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.518</td>
<td>-0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exp</td>
<td>con</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.518</td>
<td>-0.559</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on estimated marginal means

\(^*\). The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 5 shows that mean scores of the component of content were statistically significantly different between experimental and control groups \((p < .05), (MD = 2.318, p = .041)\). Thus, it can be concluded that the participants in the experimental group outperformed in their writing performance in terms of content as well as overall writing performance, as discussed earlier. Of course, the improvement in the content score can be due to the fact that the participants were studying English in an EFL context, and they were not given any direct corrective feedback; however, they exchanged ideas with the teacher in a meaningful way. These differences can be easily visualized by the plots generated by this procedure, as shown in Figures 1 and 2:

Figure 1

Estimated Marginal Means of the Two Groups’ Post-Overall Writing
On the contrary, in terms of other aspects of writing including organization \((MD = 1.364, p = .061)\), vocabulary \((MD = 1.591, p = .118)\), language use \((MD = 1.773, p = .094)\), and mechanics \((MD = -.136, p = .518)\), there were no significant difference between the two groups.

4. Discussion
The major findings of the present study can be summed up as follows. First, the DJW project was effective in promoting the participants’ overall English writing performance, which matches the findings of previous studies (e.g., Dolly, 1990; Liao, 2007; McCarthy, 1991; Peyton & Seyoum, 1988). However, the factor of context regarding the use of the DJW must not be ignored, which in this study is a context of EFL. The point is that although a vast body of literature on the use of journals in ESL settings has concluded that the DJW improves linguistic and writing ability, some of the studies in Japan, such as Casanave’s (1994, as cited in Yoshihara, 2008) and Dupppenthaler (2004) revealed that most of the students did not demonstrate considerable improvement in linguistic and writing ability. Another such study,
which suggests the existence of differences in the efficacy of the DJW on improving the students’ linguistic and writing ability between the EFL and ESL contexts, is Hemmati & Soltanpour’s (2012) study. This difference might be due to the lack of sufficient exposure to L2 in the context of the EFL. That might be the reason for which Yoshihara (2008) suggests more research to be carried out into the DJW to “deepen our understanding of its effects and whether or not it is equally effective in ESL and EFL contexts” (p. 4).

Second, significant differences were found in the participants’ writing performance in terms of content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics between the pre- and post-tests in the experimental group, which is in line with Liao’s (2007) study. This improvement can be attributed to the DJW project, which was especially effective in guiding the participants to generate more ideas, organize the ideas and transform their ideas into higher quality of written texts.

The findings also support those of Mirhosseini & Ghahremani-Ghajar’s (2009) study, which revealed that dialogue journal writing provided EFL high school students with opportunities to express their ideas and helped the students gain critical self-reflective writing ability. In addition, the findings echo those of Hansen-Thomas’ (2003) case study on reflective journals in a university-level EFL writing course in Hungary, which revealed that students made positive changes in their learning and resolved problems or obstructions by reflecting on their personal writing processes.

Referring to the results of this study, it can be inferred that dialogue journal writing has a high positive effect on improving writing performance and it can be included in the syllabus and teaching materials.

5. Conclusion

This study tried to shed more light on the efficacy of dialogue journal writing in improving EFL learners’ writing skill. To this end, two female groups of students at the Iran Language Institute (ILI) in Urumieh, all at High-Intermediate level were chosen and assigned to two groups: one experimental and the other control. The treatment was given to the experimental group through the exchange of journal entries for a period of ten weeks. The comparison of the post-tests of the two groups indicated that the participants in the experimental group outperformed the control group in their overall writing performance as well as in the content component of their writings.
References


**APPENDIX A**

**PRE-TEST**
Writing task (pre-test)

AD (Agreeing, Disagreeing)

Some people prefer to live in a small town; others prefer to live in a big city. Which place would you prefer to live in?

(You should write at least 250 words)

Use your own knowledge and experience and support your argument with examples and relevant evidence.

APPENDIX B

POST-TEST

Writing task (post-test)

AD

Some people think that they can learn better by themselves than with a teacher. Others think it is better to have a teacher. Which do you prefer?

(You should write at least 250 words)

Use your own knowledge and experience and support your argument with examples and relevant evidence.

APPENDIX C

Two Samples of a Participant’s Journal Entries

The first journal entry:

It was a very good idea that my friends suggest me to go mountain. About two months ago I and my friends decided to go mounting. At night we prepared all things that we needed. At 5 on morning we called each other. It was 6 that we started mounting. You know mounting is a very good action for our health. It was a very good day for all of us because when friends are in one place it is a very best day. After two hours we arrived there we ate breakfast and relax for some minuts. Then we continue mounting we laughed very much we told joke and every thing that was fun for us. At least we arrived at the top of the mountain it was a very beautiful and interesting view there. We were happy and so tired. We ate lunch and at 6 PM we turned.

Teacher’s response: I love mountain climbing, too. It’s a very good exercise for your health and also a very refreshing one, esp. with friends or the people whom you like.

The last journal entry:

I think this is my last diary that I write to you. First of all I should thank from you. Because you taught us how to write a diary. At first I hate writing but now I enjoy writing English. You are so kind and teach us everything calmly. I never forget High 3 and never forget you. I have best wishes for you. I hope to pass my final exam.

Teacher’s response: Thanks a million, dear. I did enjoy being in your class, too. You always gave me positive energy. I would never forget you, either.

APPENDIX D  Jacob Et Al.’S (1981) Scoring Profile
### APPENDIX E

Samples of a Student’s Pre- and Post-Test

#### Pre-test

---

**ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30-27</td>
<td>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable • substantive • thorough development of thesis • relevant to assigned topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26-22</td>
<td>GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject • adequate range • limited development of thesis • mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21-17</td>
<td>FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject • little substance • inadequate development of topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16-13</td>
<td>VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject • non-substantive • not pertinent • OR not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20-18</td>
<td>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression • ideas clearly stated/supported • succinct • well-organized • logical sequencing • cohesive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17-14</td>
<td>GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy • loosely organized but main ideas stand out • limited support • logical but incomplete sequencing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13-10</td>
<td>FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent • ideas confused or disconnected • lacks logical sequencing and development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9-7</td>
<td>VERY POOR: does not communicate • no organization • OR not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20-18</td>
<td>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range • effective word/idiom choice and usage • word form mastery • appropriate register</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17-14</td>
<td>GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range • occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13-10</td>
<td>FAIR TO POOR: limited range • frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage • meaning confused or obscured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9-7</td>
<td>VERY POOR: essentially translation • little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form • OR not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25-22</td>
<td>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions • few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21-18</td>
<td>GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions • minor problems in complex constructions • several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17-11</td>
<td>FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/complex constructions • frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions • meaning confused or obscured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10-5</td>
<td>VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules • dominated by errors • does not communicate • OR not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions • few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • poor handwriting • meaning confused or obscured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions • dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing • handwriting illegible • OR not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL SCORE READER COMMENTS**

---

Figure 6.3 Jacobs et al.’s (1981) scoring profile
I prefer to live in a small town. Although big cities sometimes offer more opportunities; small towns are more quiet and friendly. In my opinion, there are some advantages to live in a little town. The first advantage is that small towns have an easy access to all of their places because they have short distances to get to any place. Since there are some benefits such as saving time. For example when I have to go to the mall, I don’t have to drive too much because it is near to my house. I don’t spend much time driving. So, it is comfortable to me. In case of an emergency, If I have to take someone to the hospital, I would get soon there. Thus, it is an invaluable advantage. In addition, little cities have less pollution than big cities. Air pollution is dangerous for health. Some studies have demonstrated that air pollution is increasing every year in large cities. This air pollution is caused by industrial factories and vehicle traffic. These factories and cars steamed pollutant smoke to the air. This is important to me because I want to keep myself healthy. So, it is impossible in these cities because their pollutant is harmful to my lungs. On the other hand, small cities have less pollution since they don’t have big factories and vehicle traffic. This is a great benefit because it means less pollution. I want to keep myself healthy. So, small cities are ideal for me.

Score: content: 22; organization: 18; vocabulary: 19; language use: 23; mechanics: 4
Total: 86

Post-test:
Nowadays, many students prefer to study without asking for a teacher help. While many students are really smart and totally depend on themselves, half of them sometimes deceive themselves by believing that they are smarter than average. They refuse to ask for their teacher help. Sadly, when exams come at the door they start to feel nervous and regret their arrogant behavior. Hence, I am strongly opposed to the idea of studying without a teacher help. One of the reason that make me believe that it is very important to ask for teachers help is that they have excellent experience. They used both life and work experience to find their students hidden talents and encouraged them to make an improvement. Besides, good teachers recognized their students mistakes and offer extra classes in order to overcome them. For example, in in high school my friend and I found difficulties in learning mathematics. When our teacher recognized this problem she offered a free extra every Tuesday evening in order to help us. In fact, my mathematical skills have improved a lot and owe that to her. Actually, teachers are good in a variety of things, but definitely stepping up and being creative. This is another reason that makes me believe in asking for my teachers help. They always implement a way to have students develop themselves and do things that allow them to feel more connected to the subject that they are studying. To sum up, teachers are the greatest because they are offering their help without asking for something in return. Hence, we should honor them and benefit from their experience as much as we can.

Score: content: 29; Organization: 19; vocabulary: 19; language use: 24; mechanics: 5
Total: 96
Title

The Effects of VanPatten's Input Processing Instruction and Consciousness-raising Instruction

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Abstract

The present study was inspired by the effectiveness of different techniques of focus on form instruction. The study was conducted to compare the effect of two explicit focus on form techniques, input processing (IP) and consciousness-raising (CR), in helping Iranian EFL learners to acquire certain specified grammar structures (conditional sentences, wish, and relative clauses). The participants were sixty intermediate learners at Jihad University of Tehran. The participants were randomly assigned to two treatment groups of IP and CR. A quasi-experimental design with a pretest-treatment-posttest sequence was used. Assessment consisted of a grammar test which included interpretation and production tasks at the sentence level. The analysis of the data was done through repeated measure and t-test. Finally, it was concluded that the IP group outperformed the CR group in their performance to use the target structures on the posttest. The findings of the study also revealed that the IP group had better outcome in interpretation tasks. As the production performance,
both groups were equal in their performance to produce sentences containing target structures on the posttest. Finally, it could be concluded that following activities after introducing grammar structures explicitly had an important role in learning the target grammar structures. As in the current study, IP (referential and affective) activities were more helpful in learning the target structures.

**Keywords:** Input Processing, Consciousness-raising, Interpretation tasks, Production tasks, Focus on form, Explicit focus on form

1. **Introduction**

A cursory look at the history of language pedagogy shows that grammar teaching has undergone changes. It started from teaching forms as one of the important stages in language learning and moved to considering it as an unnecessary and an unimportant part in doing so. However, recent researches have demonstrated the need for formal instruction to achieve high levels of accuracy. Some researchers like Krashen (1982) states that grammar is acquired naturally if learners are exposed to sufficient comprehensible input, whereas formal instruction of grammar will lead to learning which should not be the focus of instruction. Also, Swain (1995) focuses on communication and meaning rather than on form and accuracy. On the other hand, White (1987) claims that formal instruction of grammar is necessary because some aspects of grammar cannot be acquired simply through exposure alone. In this regard, Long and Robinson (1998) state that the first belief leads to discarding grammar, and, as a result, inaccuracy in language acquisition, and the latter leads to focus on forms, the controversial issue of teaching the language not teaching the language.

Several lines of research have emerged that support formal instruction, exploring ways to integrate instruction of problematic grammatical forms within a communicative framework. Focus on form (FoF) instruction, discovery learning, input-enhancement, consciousness-raising, noticing, and input processing are some these approaches. They vary in some ways, but all share the feature that they do not start with explicit presentation of a rule; rather the learner is prompted to discover how language works.

Over the past three decades, a great number of comprehensive reviews have arrived at the conclusion that explicit grammar instruction really makes a difference in language acquisition, as compared with naturalistic exposure to second language (L2) (e.g., Doughty & Williams, 1998; Norris & Ortega, 2000). Accordingly, the focus of current research in L2
instruction has shifted to the question of what types of instruction are more effective for L2 learning.

2. Review of the Related Literature

There may be no single best approach to grammar teaching that would be applied to all situations to diverse types of learners a teacher can. However, teacher’s familiarity with different approaches to grammar instruction and language learning can allow teachers to apply the most effective grammar teaching to their particular situation. In addition, familiarity with a variety of views and approaches can lead to recognition that many approaches share common features of teaching grammar (Fotos & Nassaji, 2004).

A number of researchers (e.g., Doughty & Varela, 1998; Ellis, 1994, 2002, 2003; Robinson, 2001) have argued that if the goal of second language learning is the development of communicative competence and enabling learners to use language for communicative purposes, then grammar and communication must be integrated. However, the challenge is to identify the most effective ways of doing so in L2 classrooms (Nassaji, 1999; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000) and to maximize the opportunity for a focus on grammar without sacrificing the focus on meaning and communication. Several proposals have been made during the last ten years on ways to combine some form of grammar instruction with the provision of opportunities for communicative input and output (Fotos & Nassaji, 2004).

VanPatten’s Approach to Grammar Instruction

VanPatten (1996, 2002) suggests that one way to teach grammar communicatively is through input processing. In this approach, an initial exposure to explicit instruction is combined with a series of activities/tasks that encourage the comprehension of the target structure rather than its production. These activities have been suggested to help learners to create form-meaning connections in input and hence process grammar for meaning. Because of the explicit focus on form component of this approach, some researchers have equated it with Long’s focus on forms (e.g., Sheen, 2002). A number of studies have been conducted by VanPatten and his colleagues to investigate the effectiveness of input processing (IP) for the learning of grammar and the results indicated favorable effects.

Processing Instruction (PI) is a type of focus on form instruction that is predicated on a model of IP (VanPatten, 2004). The goal of PI is to help L2 learners derive richer intake from input by having them engage in structured input activities that push them away from the strategies they normally use to make form-meaning connections. The three major
characteristics of PI are (1) explicit information about the target structure, (2) explicit information about processing strategies, and (3) structured input activities.

While some of the studies provided supportive evidence for the superiority of PI over other types of grammar interventions, some other studies which involved a range of different grammatical structures and target languages failed to produce evidence supporting the advantage of PI over output-based instruction. One of the PI studies was done on Spanish object pronouns and word order by VanPatten and Cadierno (1993). This study set out to compare PI to the traditional approach to IP instruction. VanPatten (2004) says that DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996) replicated VanPatten and Cadierno’s study (1993). Based on results of their study, DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996) concluded that PI is not superior to traditional instruction (TI).

Salaberry (1997) also claimed to have evidence to refute the findings of VanPatten and Cadierno (1993). He concluded that PI is not better than TI. However, an examination of the treatment groups revealed that the instruction that the IP group received was input-based but did not contain structured input (SI) activities that attempted to push learners away from faulty processing strategies.

2.1. Consciousness-Raising (CR) Tasks
Consciousness Raising (CR) is an approach to language teaching. Many applied linguists today (e.g., Ellis, 1994) regard language awareness, or C-R activities, as being potentially more effective than practice. Teachers might use CR tasks as their main approach or only occasionally. They believe that C-R tasks or activities, in the long run, will lead to the noticing of formal and semantic features of linguistic forms, and after noticing a linguistic form, one will be able to acquire and internalize the form. Grammar consciousness-raising tasks (GCRTs) are the result of integrating task-based language teaching (Prabhu, 1987) and grammar consciousness-raising (Rutherford, 1988).

As Fotos and Ellis (1991) state, CR tasks are communicative tasks in which learners, using the target language, discuss the meanings of various grammatical forms and try to identify regular patterns in their use.

Studies have also revealed the effectiveness of CR. One such study was conducted in Japan by Fotos and Ellis (1991). They compared the effectiveness of CR tasks with traditional teacher-fronted grammar lessons. Fotos and Ellis concluded, “the task appeared to have functioned equally well as the grammar lesson in the short term, and was only slightly less effective in maintaining proficiency than the grammar lesson after two weeks” (p. 619).
The experiments by Fotos and Ellis (1991) and Fotos (1994) showed some positive results for CR tasks, that consciousness raising tasks work as well as teacher centered lessons in teaching grammatical structures. Furthermore, the amount of negotiated meaning, while very limited in the first study by Fotos and Ellis (1991), was still more than that in the teacher-fronted lessons.

Concerning the effectiveness of IP and CR, the present paper intends to investigate whether there is any statistically significant difference between the CR group and IP group in terms of learning certain specified grammatical forms.

3. Instrumentation and Procedure

To accomplish the objectives of this study, sixty female intermediate learners at Jihad University of Tehran were selected via a homogeneity test. These participants were pretested by a validated teacher-made test (see Appendix A) and then were assigned into two experimental groups of IP and CR. Since it was practically impossible to disrupt the schedules of the institute, four classes were randomly assigned to two treatment groups in order to reduce the effect of selection bias.

In order to carry out the study, reading, writing, and listening sections of the Preliminary English Test (PET) were administered to measure the general language proficiency of the original pool of participants prior to the commencement of the study (the speaking section of the proficiency test was not administered due to practical limitations). The mean and standard deviation of the participants’ scores on the PET were used as the criteria for choosing the participants. Then, the participants’ ability to interpret and produce the target structures before the treatment was also examined via a validated teacher-made pretest, consisting of two sections: interpretation and production. The test first consisted of 40 (pictorial and non-pictorial) written items. It aimed at assessing interpretation (20 items) and production (20 items) abilities. For the sake of validating the content of the test, the items were piloted with 20 intermediate learners to determine item facility, item discrimination, and choice distribution. The analyses resulted in the elimination of ten problematic interpretation and production items.

After reviewing and rewriting the items, finally 30 grammar structure items were selected for the final version of the test. To do so, the test included thirty items (i.e., ten items for I wish (past and present), five items for conditional sentences (type 2), and fifteen items for relative clauses (types 1, 2, and 3)). A time allocation of 30 minutes was estimated for the
final version of the test. Furthermore, the reliability of the test was calculated through KR-21 method which turned out to be 0.77. It should be mentioned that the final version of the test consisted of fifteen pictorial and non-pictorial items for both the interpretation the production sections, comprising five items for each aimed structure in the study. To make sure that the students had no familiarity with the target structures, five participants who answered at least two structures correctly were omitted from the study. The treatment took ten sessions. The posttest was administered after one week; it was the same as the pretest.

In the first week, the PET was administered in order to ensure the homogeneity of the learners. Then these sixty participants were pretested with a teacher-made test to examine the participants’ interpretation and production knowledge of the target structures before the commencement of the study. Then, the participants were assigned into two similar experimental groups. The main study lasted three weeks. In the second week, instruction sessions were started.

It is worth mentioning that all the instruction and administration of the assessment measures in the study groups were done by the second writer of the paper to control for teacher variable and to ensure the elimination of possible differences in the implementation of the treatments by different teachers.

For treatment, two separate packages of PI and CR materials were produced (see Appendix B). One group received the aimed structures based on the CRG tasks in ten sessions; every session lasted about 30 minutes. The procedure for preparing CR materials were based on Bankier (2001) and based on his claim in line with suggestions proposed by Willis and Willis (1996).

3.1. Teaching the C-R Package

Students were given a text. In order to activate their content schemata, the teacher talked to students and involved them in the topic of the text to have a richer task interaction.

Then, the learners were asked to read the text for meaning. To make sure if the students had grasped the meaning, they were asked to respond to four simple true/false comprehension questions.

The target structures were underlined in the text.

The students took a glance at the aimed structures and were asked to answer three questions provided based on the related structure. For example:

- In line 7, do you think that “proteins” is the object of the sentence?
- The underlined sentences in the text include relative clause. How are they formed?
Then, the students were requested to state or present a rule for what they had found. Next, the researcher elaborated on that special form by giving explanation about how that form works and demonstrating its use.

Finally, the learners were asked to answer two production questions.

3.2. Teaching the IP Package

The second experimental group also received instruction of the target structures in ten sessions. The procedure for preparing IP materials was based on VanPatten (1996, 2002) guidelines.

The members of this group were exposed to IP materials consisting of:
The students were given a brief script of metalinguistic information about the aimed structure form, and they elaborated the structures by more examples.

Then, they were given some explicit explanation about the typical processing problems that learners usually have in interpreting or producing the related structure. For example:

- Incorrect:
  - The man who (m) I saw him was Mr. Jones.

(The pronoun him must be removed. Before who (m) functions as the object of the verb saw).

Next, the learners were required to do the structure input activities that were made up of referential tasks (8 pictorial and non-pictorial sentences) and affective tasks (3 non-pictorial sentences) presented in written and oral modes.

Referential activities are defined by VanPatten (2002) as "those for which there is a right or wrong answer and for which the learner must rely on the targeted grammatical form to get meaning" (p. 766). In contrast, the affective tasks are aimed at providing more exemplars of the target form in the input by engaging learners in processing information about the real world.

It is necessary to mention that the participants in IP group were not required to produce target forms. VanPatten (1996, 2002) suggests that an initial exposure to explicit instruction is combined with a series of activities, consisting mainly of tasks that encourage the comprehension of the target structure rather than its production. These activities have been suggested to help learners to create form-meaning connections in input and hence process grammar for meaning. They only had to participate in recognition and interpretation practices.

Next, the participants of each group had the same test which they had in the pretest for the posttest. It was considered to have a balance between the two packages in the explicit
information about the structures, the vocabularies, and the number of activities. Note that at the beginning a much larger number of PI and CR activities were developed than what was really needed. The packages were then reviewed by two Iranian EFL teachers who had several years of experience in teaching grammar. The fruitful views of the teachers resulted in identifying some difficulties, decreasing the number of activities, and changing or omitting some of the pictures and ambiguous sentences.

4. Results and Discussion

The data gathered from the pretest and the posttest included accuracy scores of six target structures. For each participant, separate total scores were calculated for the interpretation and production sections of the tests on the two administrations (the pretest and the posttest). As for 30 sentence-level interpretation and production items, a correct response received one point and each incorrect response was assigned a zero point. Therefore, the range of scores for each item was zero to one, and the range of total scores of each test was zero to thirty. In addition, a second rater rated the two posttests to achieve the inter-rater reliability. The correlation coefficients, calculated to determine inter-rater reliability for the ratings of the posttests, turned out to be acceptable, ranging between 0.989 and 0.994. The high inter-rater reliability possibly was because of the consistent method of scoring and interpretation of scales.

First, the raw scores of participants on the pretest were submitted to an analysis of t-test to compare the average-scores for the effect of the pretest. In the meantime, an analysis of t-test was used to examine the main effects of instruction on the posttest to determine which instruction had impact on the participants’ performance on the posttest. The result of the analysis yielded some significant effects for IPG group in comparison to CRG group. In other words, the gain scores were significantly different between the groups, indicating that they did not perform equally on the posttest.

To answer the research question, the raw scores of participants on the posttests were submitted to repeated measure analysis. As shown in Table 6, there was no significant difference between the groups before the instruction, reflecting that the differences among the groups on the posttests were not due to their prior knowledge of the target structures. Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations of gain scores from the pretest to the posttest. However, it was found that the IP group had a higher mean score than the CR group.
In order to investigate whether IP and CR groups improved regarding their performance on the target structures, the within-group changes over time were analyzed. The means and standard deviations of the groups’ raw scores on the two test administrations revealed that both treatment groups improved from the pretest to the posttest. In this regard, the IP groups’ mean scores on the two test administrations were compared using paired-samples t-test. It is found from the significant t values that IP group improved significantly from the pretest to the posttest.

To answer the research question, the raw scores from the pretest and posttest were submitted to repeated measure analysis with the significant level set at F<.05. Accordingly, the results of repeated measure analysis revealed a significant difference in how IP and CR groups [F=5.67, α=0.05] performed on the posttest (Table 2), indicating that the groups did change over time. In fact, IP was more effective on the participants’ performance. The effect size for the result was also large enough to be significant.

Table 2 Repeated Measure on the Posttest

<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>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>factor1</td>
<td>16124.008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16124.008</td>
<td>4573.441</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>factor1 * groups</td>
<td>20.008</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.008</td>
<td>5.675</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error(factor1)</td>
<td>204.483</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3.526</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 shows the graph line of the performance of each group over the time. It shows how each treatment groups’ mean goes up from the pretest to the posttest.
Figure 1 Groups’ Performance over time
The result of repeated measure analysis was PI>CR. the PI groups outperformed the CR groups on their posttest performance.

5. Interpretation and Production Data
In addition to the research question, to show the differences among groups regarding their performances on the interpretation and production sections of the posttest, the interpretation and production scores of the participants on both groups were submitted to MANNOVA.

Accordingly, Table 3 shows the means and the standard deviation of interpretation and production parts on the pretest and posttest. It is clear from Table 3 that gain scores were not equal for two groups on the interpretation sections of the posttest. It was revealed that IP group has a higher mean (M=12.76) than CR group (M=11.30) on the interpretation tasks of the posttest. However, it was found no significant differences in production performance on the posttest and the result was as follow: IP=CR.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Interpretation and Production Tasks (Pretest and Posttest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IPG</th>
<th>CRG</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>inter.pre</td>
<td>.2667</td>
<td>.1333</td>
<td>.2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter.post</td>
<td>12.7667</td>
<td>11.3000</td>
<td>12.0333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pro.pre</td>
<td>.1000</td>
<td>.2000</td>
<td>.1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pro.post</td>
<td>11.6000</td>
<td>11.4000</td>
<td>11.5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the differences between the groups in their performances of interpretation and production tasks were investigated by applying MANNOVA analysis on the pretest and the posttest.

Table 4 The Results of MANNOVA Analysis
6. Conclusion

The finding is line with Cadierno (1995), Benati (2005), and Qin (2008) studies that showed the successful effect of IP in altering learners’ processing default strategy. The study also indicated that IP group outperformed the CR on interpretation tasks. This is in line with VanPatten and Cadierno’s (1993) study that showed an advantage for IP in the accuracy of interpretation ability.

It was found that the IP group improved significantly not only in interpretation but also in production tasks although they were not allowed to produce the forms during the instruction phase. This finding is in line with VanPatten’s (2002) argument that IP helps L2 learners modify their underlying system and maximizes their intake by pushing them away from incorrect processing input, which results in improving the accuracy of both comprehension and production of grammar features.

As the two groups received the same kind of explicit information, the structured input activities could be the possible reason of better performance of the IP group. So, it can be concluded that IP is a successful form-focus instruction which helps learners to make form-meaning connections.

### Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Corrected Model</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>inter.pre</td>
<td>32.267</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td>1.165</td>
<td>.203</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>inter.post</td>
<td>8688.067</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8688.067</td>
<td>5747.998</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>pro.pre</td>
<td>1.350</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.350</td>
<td>10.440</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>pro.post</td>
<td>7955.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7955.000</td>
<td>1677.223</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .011)
- b. R Squared = .269 (Adjusted R Squared = .256)
- c. R Squared = .020 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)
- d. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.015)
The findings are in contradiction with Allen (2000), Erlam (2003), Nagata (1998), and Toth (2006) that showed there was no advantage for IP in fostering learners’ interpretation ability. Although in the present study the CR groups’ performance improved on the production tasks, the result was not significant enough to claim that the instruction was fruitful for them. It is in contrast with Qin’s (2008) finding which showed significant improvement both in comprehension and production tasks.

As VanPatten states, although IP claims to be a successful model of comprehension, it can also affect production of EFL learners because it does not ignore the role of output. Based on the findings of the study input processing had a positive effect not only on the interpretation tasks, but also on the production tasks in spite of the fact that the learners were not allowed to produce sentences in the instruction phase. However, the effects were not equal for the two skills. The impact on the learners’ interpretation ability was more positive than on their production knowledge. This is in line with Van Patten’s (1996, 2004) important contribution to SLA about the role of IP and its centrality in associating meaning to form.

It is essential to say that in the present study the participants showed more interest to input processing instruction. The IP group was eager to answer the interpretation exercises. To sum up, the type of follow-up activities used after introducing a grammar form by giving explicit information had an effective role in the improvement of learners’ interpretation and production abilities.

On the basis of the findings of the study, the combination of both interpretation (referential and affective) and production tasks can be more helpful especially for the improvement of learners’ production ability. Engaging learners in both interpretation and production tasks may be more effective and may results in better performance in comparison to the approaches in which either interpretation or production tasks are used.

As far as the pedagogical matter is concerned, the study contributes to the role of form focused instruction in EFL classes. The result of this study might provide a useful tool that can guide instructors and educators in selecting the appropriate kinds of form-focused instructions in pedagogy. Some of the participants of this study in CR groups were dissatisfied with the production activities they had. It might be due to their instruction which asked them to involve in output practices early in their treatment. Finally, it can be concluded that though CR activities may be invaluable regarding preparing learners to notice the form in input, they cannot be sufficient and should be used together with other kinds of activates.

Therefore, teachers need to know more about the techniques of FoF. So it would be reasonable to allocate some time to train the teachers, in this regard. The result may also
encourage the designers of any language programs to provide opportunities for FoF, especially IP which focuses more on interpretation tasks. So, the need for IP is felt especially in Iranian classes in which the teachers require learners to take much time answering the production activities.

References


**APPENDIX A**

**Interpretation Section of Grammar Test**

Part A: Choose the best answer.

1 - What……..you do if you were the head of your company?
   a) will  b)would  c)shall  d)should

Part B: Read each statement. Choose the best Persian translation that expresses the message implied in each sentence.

1. The girl who was injured in the accident is now in the hospital.
   a) دختری در تصادف زخمی شده و هم اکنون در بیمارستان است
   b) دختر در تصادف زخمی شد و الان در بیمارستان است
   c) دختری که در تصادف زخمی شد هم اکنون در بیمارستان است

Part C: Read each sentence. Select the drawing which matches best with each sentence.

1 - A building which was destroyed in the fire has been rebuilt.

![Building image](image)

Production Section of Grammar Test

Part B: Complete the sentences with the verbs in parentheses:

1 - I don’t have enough time right now, so I won’t write my parents a letter. I’ll try to do it later. I want to write them, but in fact I just don’t have enough time right now. In other words:
   If I ………………. (have) enough time right now, I ………………. (write) my parents a letter.
Part B: Combine the two sentences. Use the second sentence as an adjective clause:
1- The taxi driver was friendly. He took me to the airport.

Part C: write sentences beginning I wish….
1- I don’t have a mobile phone and I need one. I wish …………………

APPENDIX B  Samples of Referential and Affective PI Tasks (Relative Clause Type 2)
I. Look at the picture. Select the sentence that describes it correctly.
a) AMTRAK which is Oakland’s subway connects San Francisco to Oakland.
b) AMTRAK connects San Francisco to Oakland. It’s Oakland’s subway.

II. Read a text about Proteins.

All living cells contain proteins. This means that proteins are necessary for the life of every living organism. The word protein which has been originated from a Greek word means first because they are considered to be the most important part of the living matter.

Proteins are chemical compounds which are made of chains of amino acids. Plants make their own amino acids and can, therefore, make their own proteins. Animals make some amino acids but not all which are necessary for life. These amino acids which animals cannot make themselves are called the essential amino acids.

1. Answer the questions with true or false.
1- All creatures need proteins to survive. --------

III. Complete these sentences with whom or which.
1- This is the patient……. The doctor treated.

IV. You are going to listen to some sentences in English. Listen carefully and write “True” if it is true about you, but write “False” if it is not.
a. I would like to live in a place which there is plenty of sunshine.

Samples of Consciousness-Raising Activities (Relative Clause Type 2)
I. Read a text about Proteins. See text in input processing tasks
1. Answer the questions with true or false.
1- All creatures need proteins to survive. --------

2- In line 3, do you think that “protein” is the object of the sentence?

3- In line 6, do you think that “amino acids” is the object of the sentence?

II. Combine the two sentences. Use the second sentence as an adjective clause. Use who/which.
1. I met a girl. She writes detective stories.
Title

A Translation Quality Assessment of Scientific Texts based on House’s Model: A Case Study on Translation of “The Holographic Universe”

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Abstract

The main aim of this study was to apply House’s translation quality assessment model for the study of a scientific Persian translation text in the genre of physics namely “The Holographic Universe”. The basic tenet of her model is preservation of meaning across two different languages which lead to functional equivalence of source text and its translation. The present research postulated that as the scientific texts are classified under the covert translation of House’s model therefore, the selected text must be translated covertly. In order to support this hypothesis, firstly 90 paragraphs have decided on at a random selection from the source text and then the parallel translations were drawn from the target text. Based on House’s model, the genre and the function that are followed from the source text profile were determined. Furthermore, the target text genre and function were identified to be the same as the source text. Finally, by the genre assistance, analysis and comparison of source and target text profile, the quality of Persian translation was established. The analysis results revealed that the ideational functional component and to a much lesser degree, the interpersonal ones were affected through changes in the translation. Also, it showed that, the translator applied a cultural filter. The research results disclosed that translation was covert. Moreover, after the comparative analysis of two texts in this research the researcher could achieve a categorization of House’s denotative meaning of elements.
Keywords: Translation Quality Assessment, Functional Equivalence, House’s Model, Overt Translation, Covert Translation

1. Introduction
Translation evaluation is among the most addressed research topics in translation studies but the main difficulty associated with translation evaluation is its very subjectivity (Bowker, 2001). The question is how do we know when a translation is good? This simple question addresses both to assess the quality of a target text based on the theory of translation. Therefore, the evaluation of a translation as good or poor is an important issue and problematic subject (Bowker, 2001) because the main issue is how to measure and express this quality.

Judgments on the quality of a translation depend on a variety of factors. Except linguistic elements, the translator’s interpretation of the text, the reason of the translation, the readers, variety of publishing and marketing policies which are social factors affect the translation quality and make the task of criticism difficult (House, 2001a).

It is important that an evaluator be aware of the difference between (linguistic) analysis and (social) judgments (House, 2001a). It has been repeatedly said that the aim of each translation work is to present a good translation or a good target text. Before assessing a translation, evaluators or the people who assess translation quality are confronted with a question. The question is how do we know when a translation is good? Nevertheless, what are the criteria to say that one translation is good, bad, or even poor? “This question is one of the most important questions to be asked in connection with translation and it is crucial to attempt to answer this question on the basis of a theory of translation and translation criticism (House, 2001b, p.127)”.

In assessing a translation the criteria listed will be different, depending on the aim of the evaluation and on the theoretical framework that people apply when they assess translation quality (Schäffner, 1998).

“Hardly any translation scholar working within a linguistic model in the 1990s (at least in Europe) applies the traditional methods of the 1960s (ibid, p. 2)”.

There have been many attempts to find the way(s) in order to evaluate the quality of a translation besides, various methods have been proposed during the recent years, which show a crucial improvement in this field of study.
It seems that from among these different translation quality assessment (TQA) approaches the German scholar Juliane House’s model is one of the most recent and applicable ones, “because, text typological considerations are an important aspect in translation quality assessment that is largely, ignored in the linguistic model (Schäffner, 1998).

“The task of the model for translation quality assessment is therefore not to ask whether a particular translational blueprint, task, or attempt is or was licensed, but to assess as objectively as possible what has emerged from the set of circumstances inside which the translation task or purpose was conceived (House, 1997, pp.164-165)”.

House introduces two types of translation: overt and covert. Covert translation is the translation type to be chosen here for the assessment of translated text (TT) called جهان هولوگرافیک، whose source text is entitled “ The Holographic Universe”. On the concept of covert translation House states:

“A covert translation is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture. A source text and its covert translation text are pragmatically of equal concern for source and target language addressees. In the case of covert translation texts, it is thus both possible and desirable to keep the function of the source text equivalent in the translation text (House, 1997, p.69)”. Functional equivalence is only possible in covert translation and translator may apply a cultural filter (House, 2009b).

Another feature of House’s translation quality assessment model is the distinction between a covert translation and a covert version:

“Given the goal of achieving functional equivalence in a covert translation, assumptions of cultural difference should be carefully examined before any change in the source text is undertaken (House, 1997, p.71)” “But a covert version is by definition an inadequate translation in that the application of the cultural filter is unjustified (ibid, p.73)”.

The present study aims to apply House’s translation quality assessment model in assessing the Persian translation of “The Holographic Universe”, an American author Michael Talbot’s famous book.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Review of approaches to Evaluating the Quality of Translation

In the following different approaches to assessing the quality of translation will be elaborated. They fall into a number of distinct categories: “Anecdotal and subjective,
including neo-hermeneutic approaches; response-oriented approaches; text-based approaches (House, 2009b, p.222)

2.1.1 Anecdotal, Biographical and Neo-hermeneutic Approaches

Impressionistic reflections on the quality of a translation express “the faithfulness to the original “, “retention of the original’s special flavor,” “preservation of the spirit of the source language”. They may concentrate on “the natural flow of the translated text” and “the pleasure and delight of the reader (House, 1997)”.

There are two different kinds of criteria in these subjective judgments: “how far a translation captures what the original writer intended to convey” or “how far a translation makes effective sense for its readers (House, 2009a:43)”. Proponents of this approach consider the quality of a translation dependent on the translator and his/her personal knowledge (House, 2009a) on the other hand, propagators of this approach believe that the quality of a translation can be linked to the “human factor” and the translator’s comprehension and interpretation of the original text and her decisions. To sum up, most of the anecdotal approaches to the evaluation of translation emphasize the belief that a quality of a translation depends largely on the translator’s subjective interpretation and transfer decisions, which are based on his linguistic and cultural intuitive knowledge and experience (House, 1997, p.3)

“We can state that the subjective, and new-hermeneutic approach to translation evaluation can only shed light on what happens between the translator and (features of) the original text. With regard to the other aspects, it is unenlightening, as it represents a narrow and selective view of translation one-sidedly emphasizing one aspect of translation: the process of comprehension and interpretation on the part of the translator. In concentrating on the individual translator’s process of comprehension, the original text, the translation process proper, the relation between original and translation, the expectations of the target text readers are not given the attention they deserve, and the problem of distinguishing between a translation and various types of versions and adaptations is not even recognized (House, 1997, p.3)”.

2.1.2 Response – oriented, Behavioural Approaches

Adherents of the second view of translation quality assessment aim at a more “scientific” way of evaluating translations. Response – based views of translation evaluation is influenced by American structuralism and behaviourismNida’s (1964) pioneering work.

Response – oriented approaches to evaluating translations focuses on determining the dynamic equivalence (House, 2009a) i.e. “the manner in which receptors of a translation
respond to the translation should be “equivalent” to the manner in which the source text receptor’s respond to the original (House, 2001a, p.244)”. Nida states in House another set of criteria: “the correctness with which the receptors understand the message of the original, the ease of comprehension and the involvement a person experiences as a result of the adequacy of the form of the translation (1997, p.4)”. But the question is whether it is possible to measure an “equivalent response”.

“The major weakness of all response-based suggestions for translation evaluation is the weakness of all behaviour-centered approaches: the ‘black box’, the human mind is not taken into account, such that, for instance, tests involving expert judges, must take criteria for granted that need to be developed and made explicit in the first place”.(House, 1997, p.5).

“the response-oriented approach to translation quality assessment all have nothing to say about the relationship between original and translated text, nor can they shed light on whether a translation is in fact a translation and not a version, an adaptation or another secondary textual product derived from an original text”(House, 1997, p.6).

2.1.3 Text – based Approaches

2.1.3.1 Literature – oriented Approaches: Descriptive Translation Studies

This approach is oriented towards the target text. The quality of a translation is evaluated based on the function of the translation inside the system of the target culture literature (House, 1997).

The major problem with taking this approach is summarized by House in one question: “On which criteria are we to legitimately say that one text is a translation, another one not, and what exactly are the criteria for judging the merits and weaknesses of a given ‘translation’?(p.8)”.

2.1.3.2 Post – Modernist and Deconstructionist Approaches

Scholars belonging to these approaches try to examine translation from a philosophical and sociological point in order to assess unequal power relations reflected in the translation. They also argue that translators are more visible for revealing ideological and institutional manipulations of the original (House, 2001). They focus on “hidden process of selecting texts for translation, and the reasons for, and effect of, certain strategies of translation (House, 1997:9)”. This certainly shows the translator’s power through their translation in shaping national literature and its canon (House, 2001).

2.1.3.3 Functionalistic and Action and reception – theory Related Approaches

Reiss and Vermeer (cited in House, 1997) the adherents of this approach claim that it is the “skopos” or purpose of a translation which is overriding important.
Given the primacy of the purpose of translation, it is the way the target culture norms are the crucial yardstick in assessing a translation (House, 2001a).

It is in fact very similar to the response-oriented approaches the functionalistic approach is not concerned about the relationship between original and translation, nor is it concerned with establishing criteria for delimiting a translation from other textual operations. As it stands, functionalistic approaches are solely concerned with the relationship between (features of) the text and the human agents concerned with them” (House, 1997, p. 16).

2.1.3.4 Linguistically–oriented Approaches

This approach is oriented towards the translation text which “the source text linguistic and textual structure and its meaning potential at various levels (including the level of context of situation in a systematic framework), is seen as the most important, indeed constitutive factor in translation (House, 1997, p. 16)”.

House’s approach can be located within these linguistically-oriented approaches. An influential linguistic – textual approach belongs to Reiss (1971). She claims different types of texts based on Bühler’s three functions of language: content – oriented texts, form – oriented text, conative texts and audio – medial texts (cited in House, 1997). Reiss expresses in House that “it is these textual types which have to be kept equivalent in an adequate translation (1997, p. 17)”. Moreover, for determining the textual types, the source text should be analyzed carefully but as House states Reiss’s suggestions are not explicit enough because she does not indicate how can verify language functions and an original text types (House, 1997).

Linguistic textual approaches take the relationship between the original and translation seriously, but differ in their capacity to provide detailed techniques and procedures of analysis and evaluation (House, 1997). A key tenet of House’s approach is expressed in the following statement: “The notion of equivalence is the conceptual basis of translation and, to quote Catford, ‘the central problem of translation practice is that of finding TL (target language) equivalents. A central task of translation theory is therefore that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence’ House, 1997, p.25).”

House (1997) focuses on functional equivalence. She states that “The fundamental characteristic of a translation is that it is a text that is doubly bound: on the one hand to its source text and on the other hand to the recipient’s communicative conditions (p.24)”.

The Leipzig school (Ottokad, GertJäger, AlbrechtNeubert) investigates translational process and focus on linguistic mechanisms of transfer. A relevant approach for translation quality assessment belongs to Neubert (1968). He claims that equivalence is a relation
between texts, source texts and target texts and it is only communicative values that can be equivalent also, textual equivalence which is the basis of the equivalence at lower – level units (House, 1997).

Newmark’s linguistic textual approach in 1981 and 1988 is noteworthy. His distinction is between semantic and communicative translation as House’s overt and covert translation. In the nineties, Hatim and Mason (1990), Bell (1991), Gutt (1991) and Baker (1992) attempt to look at translation from the perspective of linguistics which make them valuable for translation quality assessment (House, 1997).

Hatim and Mason (1990) describe register and discourse analysis, text linguistics as well as pragmatics and semiotics. They believe that register analyses into the communicative dimension of context are insufficient (ibid).

Hatim and Mason also distinguish another dimension in order to supplement register analysis, which refers to as “semiotic”, including considerations of genre, discourse and textuality (ibid).

In (1996) Sara Viola Rodriguez tested House’s model on ideational and interpersonal English source – texts translated into Portuguese from a wide range of provinces. She also selected one of the essays in Tom Wolf’s “*The Purple Decades*” namely “*The Me Decade and the Third Great awakening*” This published in the United States in 1982. After considering the source text and target text, she chose Luiz Fernando Brandao’s version, published by LPM, Brazil, in 1989 in order to verify the practical value of House’s translation typology.

In (2003) Harris Hermansyah tried to look into two models of the socio – semiotic approach which was inspired by Halliday’s Systemic – Functional linguistics. This approach focuses on the importance of context of situation and context of culture. Hermansyah attempts to find the similarities and the differences between Juliane House’s and Roger T. Bell’s model. His research results show that House’s model utilizes register variables for translation quality assessment, while Bell’s model exploits the ideational, interpersonal and textual, in translation as language Meta functions.

Other researchers which are done in Iran in 2010 on the application of House’s model for evaluating literary and psychology texts are Abdi, mohebbipour, and Heidary. The findings showed that House’s translation quality assessment model is an applicable one in assessing the translation of variety texts and can predict the overt or covert types of translation; however, same results were not found for assessing the scientific texts in Iran.

In the light of the aforementioned review of the literature, it can be concluded that however, translation evaluation is done in many ways and by many means but it seems that
there are no common yardsticks in assessing translation quality and thus translation evaluation of a particular text does not yield unified results. So the researcher intends to focus on only scientific text as an informative text type and the researcher applies House’s translation quality assessment model on assessing the Persian translation of a scientific text in the genre of physics. Furthermore, it aims at finding a common yardstick for conducting translation quality assessment, using House’s mode.

2.2. Research Question and Hypotheses
To focus more clearly on the process of research the following research question was formulated.
Is the Persian translation of “The Holographic Universe” covert considering House’s model of translation quality assessment?
The hypothesis is as follows,
The Persian translation of “The Holographic Universe” is covert.

2.3. Theoretical Framework
The present research was carried out in descriptive area of translation studies and was qualitative. This study used House’s (1997) translation quality assessment model. The proposed theoretical framework in this study includes four levels: (a) Language/Text (b) Register (c) Genre and (d) Function of the individual text.

3. Method
3.1 Materials
The American author Michael Talbot’s famous book in the genre of physics namely “The Holographic Universe” written in 1991 and its only Persian translation which belongs to Dariush Mehrjui, an Iranian scenarist and director, were selected. The translated text was provided from Hermes publishers. It should be mentioned that this scientific text contains three chapters. To accomplish this study a need existed to have comparable data, for that reason, 90 paragraphs from the original text and the parallel translation has been selected.

3.2 Procedure
In order to carried out the current study the researcher the following steps:
First the data was collected from the original and translated text. The researcher decided on at a random selection of the paragraphs. As mentioned above the text had three chapters. Thirty paragraphs have been selected from the beginning of its three chapters. In general, 90 paragraphs were singled out. Second, the parallel translations were drawn from the target text
to be compared and contrasted. Then, based on House’s model, the genre and function that follow from the source text profile were determined. Furthermore, the target text genre and function was identified as the same as the source text. The segments were studied and contrasted several times to identify based on House’s (1997) model which kind of overtly and covertly erroneous errors are employed. After classifying overtly and covertly erroneous errors under the related categories they were tabulated. By the analysis of the source and target text profile and by genre assistance the quality of Persian translation was established. But it should be pointed out that the researcher encountered some difficulties in analysis of overtly erroneous errors of the model because there was no distinction in sub categories of denotative meaning of the model.

4. Data Analysis
In the present study the data gathered from a public scientific book. 90 paragraphs were selected. Moreover, the parallel translation has been chosen. Then the original and their translation were compared. The current study has a descriptive design and the data was analyzed based on House’s translation quality assessment model to see if the selected scientific text namely “The Holographic Universe” was covert. According to the model of the study the function of the original text were identified and then after comparing the two texts the function of the target text were assigned. But there were some mismatches which did not belong to House’s classification of overtly erroneous errors. It means that the mismatches could not put in House’s classification of omissions, additions, wrong selections and wrong combinations. Hence, it is noteworthy to mention that after the analysis the researcher was achieved a classification of denotative meaning of overtly erroneous errors.

4.1 Analysis of the Original book
Due to the aforementioned research question and the design of the study, the source text analyzed to identify the function of the original text and then the source text and their translation was compared to ascertain the function of the target text.

● Field
The original book is a scientific text which presents a remarkable new theory of reality. Michael Talbot explains the theory behind a holograph and how it provides a model for aspects of brain function and for whole areas of quantum physics.

● Tenor
Author’s Temporal, Social and Geographical Provenance is unmarked contemporary educated middle – class standard American English.

Author’s Personal Stance:
Its author is originally a science fiction author. He wrote it for the general, non – specialist public.

Social Role Relationship:
There is asymmetry between the author and the reader, since the text is an exposition of facts provided by the author who explicates his point of view. It is both designed to address physicist and the general public.

Social attitude:
Formal, i.e. marked by social distance between the author and the reader

- Mode

Medium
Simple: Written to be read

Participation:
Simple: Monologue

- Genre

Physics book in which the author attempts to demonstrate facts in physics such as unsolved riddles of brain and body and tries to explain his own theory behind a holograph.

4.1.1 Statement of Function

The function of this text consisting of the two components, the ideational and the interpersonal

As the number of identified paragraphs are very long and cannot be listed in this section, only sample instances shown in the following.

4.2 Comparison of Original and Translation

Some of the original sentences and their parallel translation are presented in the following tables as samples. The tables show overtly erroneous errors.

Table1: Sample Instances of Omissions and Additions of House’s Overtly Erroneous Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Persian</th>
<th>Omissions</th>
<th>Additions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He reasoned that this was why memories of so</td>
<td>به همین دلیل است، که این می‌شود</td>
<td>He, Kept, his sampling</td>
<td>به مغز خطور می‌شود</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Farsi</td>
<td>Creative Translation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A woman found herself in her kitchen and <strong>could</strong> hear her son playing outside.</td>
<td>یکی از زنها خود را در آن حیاط و می‌تواند صدا یک این بازی که بیرون آن گوش داشته باشند.</td>
<td><em>he could</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>He</strong> could not <strong>eradicate</strong> their memories.</td>
<td><strong>آن</strong>، هیچ گاه، نرفته است. <strong>همه</strong> چه دیگرانی نیز <strong>چه از ناحیه</strong></td>
<td>Verb form and Meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pribram’s thinking was further solidified by his and other researcher’s inability.</td>
<td>نظریات پریبرام را [یزوهشیا] <em>دیگری</em> نیز [چه در ناحیه] خود او و [چه دیگران] که [کنند.</td>
<td>Creative Translation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>He</strong> discovered that not only did no such one-to-one correspondence exist.</td>
<td>[و] [عاقبت] به این کشف نابینا آماده که هیچ چیزی [یک] [یک] [بینهای] [می‌تواند یک] به [که] [یک] [میان] [تصویری] که [چشم می‌بیند] [نحوه] آی که آن [تصویر در] [بین نام] [تصویر] [برای] [بین نام] [یک] ندارد.</td>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His experiments presented once again a serious challenge to the standard understanding of.</td>
<td>این ازمیشها <strong>همه‌ای</strong> [درک] [و] <strong>فم</strong> [معمول] [می‌زیابد از اینکه] بیش و قوه بصری چگونه عمل می‌کند بیش می‌شناسد.</td>
<td>Creative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>many insignificant events kept cropping in his sampling.</strong></td>
<td><strong>و در آن ظاهر می‌شود.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
how vision works.

They suggest that…

You can actually walk around a holographic projection and view it from different angles as you would a real object.

To the naked eye

By analyzing 90 paragraphs from among 530 cases of mismatches, it is resulted that 170 were in omissions about %32/07 and from 530 cases of mismatches 352 were related to additions about %66/41.

Table 2: Sample Instances of Substitutions of House’s Overtly Erroneous Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Persian</th>
<th>Substitutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You will get two sets of waves that expand and pass through one another.</td>
<td>۲ دسته امواج هم مرکز پیدا می شوند که از هم عبور کرده ایرانیته می گردد.</td>
<td>Substitution is between two verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After all, patients who had had portions of their brains removed for medical</td>
<td>به هر حال بیمارانی که مغز آنها را به دلایل پزشکی بر می داشتند حیات خاطرات خاص</td>
<td>Substitution between a verb and a noun phrase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Considering all the obtained data from among 530 cases of mismatches, 8 cases were contained substitutions about % 1/50 and they were all fall in the case of overtly erroneous errors.

4.2.1. Statement of Quality
As the analysis above demonstrated there were noticeable overtly erroneous errors between source and target text. In additions, mismatches were observed in situational dimensions which based on House (1997) covertly erroneous errors play an important role in identification of function. In the following table, all the details about situational dimensions of source text and translation are available; also, the mismatches in these dimensions are shown in highlighted.

Table3: Source Text and Target Text Profile Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Source Text Profile</th>
<th>Target Text Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject Matter:</strong></td>
<td>Scientific</td>
<td>Scientific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Action:</strong></td>
<td>General and Popular</td>
<td>General and Popular</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In line with the purpose of study which is showing the application of House’s translation quality assessment model on the selected scientific book, Table (3) clearly shows two covertly erroneous errors; the mismatch between the author’s provenance and stance i.e. science fiction author and that of the translator's which is film director and screen writer. The other one is observed in social attitude which in translation is more formal than the source text.

It seems that this text would be a case for a covert translation and translator may have been applied a cultural filter consciously or unconsciously thus, the translation may be translated covertly. The table (3) indicates that despite of mismatches which mentioned above it is demonstrated that the function of source text and its translation is equal. Based on the collected data and their comparison analysis it was shown that translation was found less
precise and less explicit than the original text. That is the translation is weaker on the ideational functional component. It means that the translator may be applied a cultural filter to make it easier for readers to understand this difficult scientific text which overemphasizes that the Persian translation of “The Holographic Universe” as a scientific text was translated covertly.

4.3. Results

As earlier mentioned, 90 paragraphs of the source text and their parallel translation was selected. Due to the identification of function they compared along the situational dimensions moreover, overtly erroneous errors were considered. The following figures show the results of this comparison.

**Figure 1: Categorization of Overtly Erroneous Errors**

As figure (1) shows the vertical line represents the number of overtly erroneous errors devoted to each category, and the horizontal line indicates the mismatches of denotative meaning between source and target text. As it is shown additions and omissions perceived the most amount of errors respectively, whereas substitution ones perceived the least.

As aforementioned, a comparison analysis of source text and its translation along with the situational dimensions was used to identify covertly erroneous errors. The figure (2) shows the results of this comparison.

**Figure 2: Categorization of Covertly Erroneous Errors**
As shown in figure (2) two mismatches were observed between source text and its translation in situational dimensions. The first one is mismatch between author’s provenance and stance and translator’s. The other one is in dimension tenor which shown the source text and target text social attitude.

As aforementioned, when data analysis had carried out in this research the researcher encountered difficulties in identification of mismatches related to the categorization of denotative meaning of source text and target text. As House believes (1997) overtly erroneous errors are resulted either from a mismatch of the denotative meanings of source and target text elements or from a breach of the target language system. She classified (1997) cases of denotative meaning of elements only into omissions, additions and substitutions consisting of either wrong selections or wrong combinations of elements. The problem was here, because there was not a clear distinction in sub categories of this type of errors. In other words, House did not mention that which type of errors are omissions, additions or substitutions. Hence, after the comparative analysis of two texts in this research the researcher could achieve a categorization of denotative meaning of elements which the following table shows this.

**Table 4: Categorization of Denotative Meaning of Overtly Erroneous Errors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wrong Selections</th>
<th>Omissions</th>
<th>Additions</th>
<th>Substitutions</th>
<th>Shifts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not translated</td>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>Disagreement on Verbs and Pronouns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>Sentences</td>
<td>Verb Form and Meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal pronouns</td>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>Main clauses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>Punctuations</td>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>Creative Translations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As table (4) shows denotative meaning includes wrong selections which classified into omissions, additions, substitutions and shifts by researcher. In all cases where the meaning and message cannot transfer accurately or shifts in meaning is occurred it calls an error but in cases where a slight changing in meaning is seen it may be a mismatch.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

As the analysis above demonstrated numerous mismatches have been discovered along the comparison of source and target text. The mismatches observed in situational dimensions (field, tenor, mode) although some overtly erroneous errors have been found. Considering these findings, it could be concluded that the function of the analyzed scientific text and its translation in the genre of physics as it was expected, consists of two components: the ideational and the interpersonal.

Moreover, having tested the hypothesis, the researcher found that there was not a classification in denotative meaning of overtly erroneous errors. Thus, after comparison analysis of source text and its translation the researcher have reached to a classification of them. Having analyzed the findings of both covertly and overtly erroneous errors and of a statement of the relative match of the ideational and interpersonal functional components of the textual function, the researcher could done the final qualitative judgment to test hypothesis of the study.

The outcome of the present study can be interpreted in the light of what House (1997) believes about covert translation and translation quality. She does not seek a “good” or “bad” translation. Indeed, thinking in terms of ‘adequate’ or ‘inadequate’ pieces of translation submitted to evaluation. Also, she (1997) stated that in a covert translation equivalent is necessary at the level of genre, and at the level of the individual textual function, but the original and a covert translation need not be equivalent at the level of language/text and register, i.e. the original can be manipulated using a cultural filter.
Although there have been some research studies in the literature regarding the application of House’s translation quality assessment model on Persian translation of different text types, the current study could be considered as an additional support for those stated claims by using the model. Finally, it is worth mentioning that as the scientific texts are classified under the covert translation of House’s translation quality assessment model after the comparing original text and the translation the above-mentioned findings were achieved according to House’s model.

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Assessing Writing Quality: Vocabulary Profiles in Place of Holistic Measures

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Abstract

This study investigated the potential of vocabulary profiles as an alternative to holistic measures of writing quality. 108 students in four intact classes of Arak University participated in this study. They were majoring in English Literature and English Translation. The students were asked to write a composition on a general topic. These compositions were entered into VocabProfile software to establish vocabulary profiles. To obtain holistic scores for writing quality, two raters assessed these compositions against Jacobs et al.’s (1981) ESL Composition Profile. Then, holistic scores were correlated with and regressed against vocabulary profiles. The findings of the study revealed that students’ vocabulary profiles correlated weakly with holistic scores. Vocabulary profiles explained 17 percent of the variance in holistic scores. Since the highest correlation between vocabulary profiles and holistic scores explained only seven per cent of the variance in holistic scores, it was concluded that vocabulary profiles cannot replace holistic measures of writing quality.
Keywords: Vocabulary profiles, Writing quality, Holistic measures, Vocabulary knowledge, Vocabulary size, Vocabulary depth, Lexical richness, Vocabulary in use

1. Introduction

Students of English Literature and English Translation Bachelor of Arts (BA) programs pass several writing courses. During these courses, they write many compositions whose quality must be assessed by the instructor in terms of content and language. Currently, these compositions are assessed holistically. Holistic measures of writing quality are subjective. The reliability and the validity of such measures are also challenged. Furthermore, holistic assessment is a laborious and time consuming feat which occupies a substantial portion of an instructor’s time. In addition, these assessments do not provide an objective and tangible record of a learner’s progress in writing.

Lexical items build bridges between the content and the language of a text. And, research indicates that lexical richness of a composition is strongly correlated with holistic judgments of the quality of that piece of writing (Engber, 1995). VocabProfile is an online adaptation of Laufer and Nation’s (1995) Lexical Frequency Profiles (LFP) which is used to analyze L2 compositions in terms of richness of vocabulary. Its output tells us what percentage of the words in a composition belongs to the 1st and 2nd thousand most frequent words list, academic words list, and off-lists words (Cobb, 2007). As measures of lexical richness are closely related to holistic estimates of writing quality, these vocabulary profiles can be used to assess the writing quality of L2 learner compositions. These profiles could perform as objective, reliable, and valid measures of writing quality without requiring too much time and effort on the part of the instructor. Furthermore, the output of this software provides an objective and tangible record of a learner’s progress in writing.

Therefore, this study sought to examine the potential offered by these vocabulary profiles as a measure of writing quality. To this end, student compositions were used to establish vocabulary profiles. These profiles were then correlated with and regressed against holistic quality scores assigned to these compositions.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Two lines of scholarly research contribute to this study. First, developments in the area of L2 vocabulary knowledge assessment point toward the use of measurement instruments which
assess a learner’s vocabulary knowledge in real contexts of use. VocabProfile is one such instrument which is based on Laufer and Nation’s (1995) LFP and is used to analyze lexical richness of L2 compositions written for communicative purposes. Second, research in the area of assessing writing quality reveals that holistic judgments of writing quality are heavily influenced by lexical features of the compositions. Therefore, it is argued that appropriate measures of lexical knowledge can substitute holistic measures of L2 writing quality. VocabProfile is an online adaptation of LFP which measures the lexical richness of L2 compositions and can be used for this purpose without suffering from the disadvantages of holistic quality assessment. Holistic scoring of L2 compositions is subjective, unreliable, and extremely labor intensive and time consuming.

2.1. Assessing vocabulary knowledge

From a review of different vocabulary tests devised for research and assessment purposes (Laufer & Nation, 1995; Meara & Buxton, 1987; Schmitt, 1998), one gets the impression that three aspects of lexical knowledge, namely size, depth and lexical richness (Cameron, 2002) are currently getting the most of attention.

Some tests are more concerned with measuring the breadth/size of the learners’ vocabulary knowledge, that is, the number of words a person knows. These vocabulary tests associate word knowledge with the ability to link form to meaning (word recognition). In this binary approach to lexical knowledge, if a student recognized a word, he or she is said to ‘know’ it (Laufer & Nation, 1995; Schmitt, 1998). Clearly, there is much more to knowing a word than just recognizing it (Meara, 1992; Nation, 1990). Some scholars claim that most traditional vocabulary tests like TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or vocabulary size tests (Meara & Buxton, 1987; Nation, 1983, 1990) measure only partial knowledge, mainly recognition.

Currently, an ‘all-or-nothing’ view of lexical knowledge has been replaced with an assertion that vocabulary knowledge consists of several levels and dimensions of knowledge. A multifaceted view of word knowledge has led some researchers to develop instruments to measure learners’ “depth” of vocabulary knowledge. Learners’ depth of knowledge refers to the quality of their vocabulary knowledge or how well they know particular words (Greidanus & Nienhuis, 2001; Hunt, 1998; Laufer & Nation, 1995; Read, 1988, 1993; Vermeer, 2001; Wesche & Paribakht, 1996; Wolter, 2001). Some researchers (Paribakht & Wesche, 1993, 1997; Read, 1993; Viberg, 1993; Wesche & Paribakht, 1996) have devised tests to capture as many aspects of word knowledge as possible, such as basic understanding, full understanding, correct use, sensitivity to collocations and associations.

Despite disagreements over the description of ‘the ability to use a word’ as knowledge or control, researchers generally agree that word comprehension does not automatically predict correct use of the word and that productive use of word knowledge in spontaneous speech and written expression constitutes an important part of lexical competence (Cameron, 2002). In the field of language teaching and testing, where goals and methods are primarily defined in communicative terms, assessing vocabulary knowledge through decontextualised test items is disputable. There is a need to complement discrete vocabulary tests with embedded measures of the learners’ ability to handle words in context.

Recently, lexical richness also known as ‘vocabulary use in context’ (Read, 2007) or ‘vocabulary size reflected in use’ (Laufer & Nation, 1995) has stimulated some interest as an aspect of vocabulary knowledge. In line with this development, Laufer and Nation (1995) presented a new test, the Lexical Frequency Profiles (LFP), which measures "the proportion of high frequency general service and academic words in learners' writing … seen as being a measure of how vocabulary size is reflected in use" (p. 305). This measure of lexical richness is based on the degree of difficulty of the words used in compositions, as measured by their levels of frequency in daily language input (Broeder et al., 1988; Vermeer, 2000).

Laufer and Nation’s (1995) LFP shows the percentage of words in the learners’ writing samples that come from different word frequency levels. In other words, LFP determines the relative proportion of words that fall into different frequency levels. LFP utilizes four word frequency levels: the first 1,000 most frequent words, the second 1000 most frequent words, the academic vocabulary, and the less frequent words that are not in any of the other three lists. The four categories are labeled as 1K, 2K, AWL, and Offlist respectively. Laufer and Nation rely on West’s (1953) GSL word list for their 1K and 2K levels. As for their academic vocabulary level, they draw on Coxhead’s (2000) AWL list. The AWL is a list of 570 word families containing vocabulary that is not in the 2000 most frequent words of English, but which is frequent and of wide range across a variety of written academic texts from a variety of disciplines, thus in a sense complementing GSL. Less frequent words that are not included in West’s GSL or Coxhead’s AWL are treated as off list.

To compare a text’s vocabulary against the three vocabulary lists of LFP, Nation (2005) developed Range package which consists of a computer program and the three LFP lists.
Cobb (2007) adapted this program to the web for free online access under the name VocabProfile. Once a text has been typed into the program window, VocabProfile determines what percentage of the words in the text is covered by each of 1K, 2K, and AWL lists.

As it objectively defines word knowledge sophistication in terms of frequency levels, LFP provides a more detailed picture of the different types of words a learner has control over, and can be used to compare groups from different educational systems. Since there is no need for subjective decisions regarding what is a topic, subtopic, elaboration, and thematic unit, LFP is more reliable than other less frequent richness measures. Learners’ errors are not considered in the LFP calculation. Its main strength is that as a measure it focuses directly on lexis, putting aside at least to some degree, the influence of grammar. It has the additional advantage of being almost completely computerized, except for the preparation of the written texts as computer input (Laufer & Nation, 1995).

Laufer and Nation (1995) reported that LFP provided similar stable results for two pieces of writing by the same person, discriminated between learners of different proficiency levels, and correlated well with an independent measure of vocabulary knowledge. This showed its reliability and validity as a measure of the ability to use vocabulary in context.

Above discussion of vocabulary knowledge and measures used to assess it demonstrates that LFP as an assessment tool measures lexical knowledge in contexts of use with communicative purposes and, in comparison to vocabulary size and depth measures, is more desirable and theoretically sound.

2.2. Vocabulary knowledge and holistic assessment of writing quality

Lemmouh (2008) examined the relationship between lexical richness and the grades on essays produced by Swedish university students of English. His aim was to see to what extent lexical richness is a predictor of overall essay quality. Using Laufer and Nation’s (1995) LFP, he analyzed essays produced by 37 advanced learners of English. The measure calculated the proportion of advanced vocabulary in the essays. The same essays were holistically rated by faculty teachers for writing quality. The essays were awarded fail, pass, or pass with distinction grades. Essays which obtained ‘pass’ grades were compared to essays which received ‘pass with distinction’ grades in terms of mean difference. Results of the study indicated that there was no significant mean difference between ‘pass’ and ‘pass with distinction’ essay types in terms of lexical richness. He also investigated faculty teachers’ essay assessment procedures through a 14-item questionnaire. Results of this analysis revealed that faculty teachers’ assessment of essay quality was primarily based on content
and grammar features rather than lexical features. However, failure to include essays with ‘fail’ grades jeopardizes the credibility of this study. Had failed essays been included in the analysis, a significant mean difference might have been observed. The author has also failed to check the correlation between lexical richness scores and holistic quality assessments.

Llach and Gallego (2009) assessed the receptive vocabulary of 274 primary school Spanish learners of EFL after a total of 629 hours of instruction. Then, they investigated the relationship between the receptive vocabulary size and the quality of written compositions. Two vocabulary tests were administered to estimate the size of the receptive vocabulary. Students were given thirty minutes to complete an English composition task. The compositions were rated holistically by two independent raters. Profiles for 1st and 2nd thousand most frequent words correlated significantly with writing quality scores (0.54 and 0.50 respectively). The knowledge of the 1st and 2nd thousand most frequent words of English accounted for 29 and 25 percent of the variance in the essay quality scores respectively.

Baba (2009) aimed to identify the language abilities that are needed to explain the construct of summary writing. The central focus of her study was lexical proficiency in L2. Five L1 and L2 abilities were controlled for. They consisted of general L2 proficiency, L1 writing proficiency, L1 vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension in L2, and the length of summaries. A size test and a word definition test were administered to estimate the participants’ English vocabulary knowledge. 68 Japanese undergraduate students were asked to write summaries in English of two English texts. 60 minutes were allotted for each summary. The essays were holistically scored on a five-point scale. A lexical diversity index was calculated for each essay. Vocabulary size and word definition ability had moderate correlations of 0.40 and 0.51 with summary writing performance respectively. However, lexical diversity did not have a linear correlation with summary writing performance. After controlling for the five language abilities, L2 vocabulary size and lexical diversity did not make a unique contribution to L2 writing. In contrast, word definition ability showed a unique relationship with summary writing performance which was not completely explained by other L2 abilities. Summary writing in L2 logically requires reading and comprehending of L2 texts. L2 reading comprehension itself is strongly related to and affected by vocabulary knowledge (Qian, 1999, 2002). The author has explained L2 summary writing in terms of another skill which itself begs explanation. As the focus has been on lexical proficiency, inclusion of L2 reading comprehension in the regression analysis as a predictor does not seem justified. That is, reading comprehension has unduly eaten away variance in writing performance which otherwise might have been explained by lexical proficiency measures.
Crossley and McNamara (2012) explored the relationship between the linguistic choices made by L2 writers and human judgments of writing proficiency. Graduating Hong Kong high school students were required to write essays for the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE). 1200 of these essays comprised the corpus for this study. The essays were holistically graded by groups of trained raters from the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority. Using an advanced computational tool, the essays were also analyzed in terms of linguistic features. Text length effects were controlled for. The study proceeded with the regression of quality assessments against linguistic features. In the regression analysis, five variables of lexical diversity, word familiarity, content word frequency, word meaningfulness and aspect repetition emerged as significant predictors of L2 writing proficiency. The combination of the five variables accounted for 26 percent of the variance in the evaluation of the essays that comprised L2 writing corpus. The authors concluded that highly proficient L2 writers produce texts that, rather than being more cohesive, are more linguistically sophisticated.

Engber (1995) investigated the effect of lexical richness and lexical errors on reader judgments of the overall quality of timed essays. Learners in the intermediate to advanced range of an intensive English program who intended to enroll in universities and colleges in the United States participated in the study. 66 timed essays resulting from the essay portion of a placement examination were collected for analysis. Four lexical richness measures were calculated for each essay: lexical variation, error-free variation, percentage of lexical error, and lexical density. Ten teachers who had been previously trained in holistic scoring were asked to judge the writing quality of essays using a 6-point scale. Moderate significant correlations were observed between lexical variation and error-free variation and holistic quality scores (0.45 and 0.57 respectively).

The aim of Becker’s (2010) study was to understand what linguistic and discourse features of writing distinguish lower-level writers from more-advanced writers. Participants included 43 ESL students enrolled in Intensive English Program courses at a university in US. The participants included students from three different levels: low intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced. The students were required to produce essays for the writing section of an end-of-semester achievement test. Two trained instructors scored each essay in terms of 10 linguistic and discourse features. The one-way ANOVA for scores on the 10 measures revealed that, among indicators of lexical sophistication, average word length and type/token ratio distinguish the three writing proficiency levels from each other.
Cheung, Chung, and Skoufaki (2010) used corpus data to examine the relationship between lexical variation and holistic essay grading. The corpus consisted of 2000 writing samples produced by Taiwanese learners of English who had taken the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT). Lexical variation was measured through the calculation of Guiraud index for each text. These texts were then graded holistically for writing quality. One way ANOVA indicated that all Guiraud measures differed significantly across writing quality score bands. The post-hoc tests showed that all Guiraud indexes differed significantly across all pairings of the score bands. All Guiraud indexes correlated weakly but significantly with writing score bands. The authors concluded that lexical variation does not play an important role in the holistic grading of writing samples.

Lee (2003) investigated vocabulary use in writing. The subjects were 65 Intermediate ESL learners of a secondary school. They came from various L1 backgrounds. A two-section vocabulary test was used to measure the subjects’ vocabulary knowledge. Following a reading activity, the subjects wrote a composition. The investigator scored the compositions holistically. 13 percent of recognized vocabulary was productively used in writing samples. The investigator then taught some target vocabulary to the participants. The subjects were asked to produce a second writing. These compositions were scored by the investigator. 63 percent of recognition vocabulary was productive in post-instruction writing, compared to 13 percent in pre-instruction writing. A one-tailed paired t-test showed a significant increase in the production of recognized target vocabulary in post-instruction writing. 23 days after vocabulary instruction, the subjects performed a delayed writing. No significant loss was found for recognized and productive vocabulary in delayed writing in comparison to post instruction writing. A native speaker teacher judged the compositions in post-instruction and delayed writing to be generally better than those in pre-instruction writing. These compositions manifested overall improvement in writing quality because of using higher level and more varied vocabulary.

Nadarajan (2011) conducted a study to determine the relationship between lexical richness and holistic scores of academic writing, to investigate how instruction facilitates academic word use in L2 English compositions, and to compare lexical richness in L1 and L2 students writing. 129 L1 and L2 students taking English Composition class at an American university participated in the study. 387 online writing assignments were elicited from the participants at three separate stages. The LFP was used to analyze the essays in terms of lexical richness. Instructors assigned holistic quality scores to the compositions. With regard to vocabulary, the control group received meaning based instruction and treatment group attained rule based
instruction. No significant relationship between academic word use and holistic scores was observed. There was a significant difference within the three sets of essays in terms of the average percentage of academic words. This indicated that vocabulary instruction helped L2 learners increase the use of academic vocabulary in their writings.

Putra (2009) employed correlation analysis to explore the degree of association between vocabulary size and writing ability. 32 EFL learners who had taken a reading skills course at an Indonesian university participated in this study. Receptive (Nation, 1983, 1990) and productive (Laufer & Nation, 1995, 1999) Vocabulary Levels Tests (VLT) were used to measure subjects’ lexical knowledge. A timed writing task was administered to gather composition samples from the participants. Three evaluators assigned holistic quality scores to these compositions. The average correlation between receptive vocabulary size and writing ability was at 0.43, and productive vocabulary size had a correlation of 0.48 with writing ability. Productive and receptive vocabulary sizes respectively explained 23 and 19 percent of the variance in writing quality scores.

To enhance the authenticity of timed writing tests, East (2006) suggested allowing students access to support resources during these tests. To investigate the effect of access to a bilingual dictionary on good writing in German writing tests, he elicited writing samples from 47 participants under two conditions, one with and one without a bilingual dictionary. The essays were compared in terms of lexical sophistication, lexical accuracy and holistic test score. Lexical sophistication was measured by means of the LFP. A quantitative analysis of words looked up in the dictionary was used to determine lexical accuracy. The findings of the study showed that lexical sophistication increased in "with dictionary" tests. However, no improvement in test scores was observed. This implied a lack of relationship between lexical richness and holistic writing assessments.

Ferris (1994) explored the relationship between 28 quantitative, lexical, and syntactic features of L2 compositions and holistic assessments of those texts. The participants were 160 ESL students from four L1 groups Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese, and Spanish. In the context of a university placement examination, the students were asked to produce a composition in response to a prompt about the effects of culture shock. Three independent raters evaluated each composition for quality on a 1–10 scale. T-test analysis demonstrated that students who were at higher levels of L2 proficiency used more of the targeted lexical and syntactic features in their compositions than did those at lower levels. Number of words, synonymy/antonymy, word length factor, passives, and 3rd person/impersonal pronouns made
unique contributions to the variance in the holistic scores (37.6, 6, 3.3, 2.5, and 0.9 percent respectively).

Llach (2005) stated that lexical errors are rated as important communication distracters, and conducted a study to investigate the negative consequences of lexical errors on the assessment of the written production. A group of 19 intermediate ESP students at Universidad de La Rioja in Spain were asked to write a business letter in 50 minutes. They were taking a course on Business English which focused on the writing of commercial letters. In each text, the number of lexical errors was divided by the total number of words in that composition to arrive at the percentage of lexical errors. The number of lexical errors of each type was divided by the total number of words to calculate the percentage of lexical error type. Two English teachers were asked to assign holistic quality scores to each composition on a 6-point scoring scale. The results of the study revealed a significant correlation of -0.78 between percentage of lexical errors and quality scores. This implies that as writing score increased, percentage of lexical errors decreased. Of the semantic, syntactic, orthographic and pragmatic lexical errors, a significant correlation of -0.55 was observed between the semantic lexical error type and quality scores. The more semantic lexical errors, the less were the scores of the essays.

This review of research reveals that the size of vocabulary knowledge is clearly related to holistic estimates of writing proficiency (Llach & Gallego, 2009; Baba, 2009; Putra, 2009). Some studies report an improvement in holistic writing quality scores due to vocabulary instruction (Lee, 2003), yet others protest that access to lexical support during writing process does not lead to improvements in the quality of compositions as assessed by holistic measures (East, 2006). At a general level, lexical features contribute to the variance in the holistic writing scores (Ferris, 1994), and lexical errors have strong negative consequences for judgments of writing proficiency (Llach, 2005). As the focus of this study, the relationship between lexical richness and holistic assessments of writing quality has garnered conflicting results. While some studies report significant relationships between the two variables (Engber, 1995; Becker, 2010; Crossley & McNamara, 2012), others contradict them with weak correlation or lack of any relationship (Cheung et. al., 2010; Lemmouh, 2008; Nadarajan, 2011). Results of the present study contribute to the resolution of this controversy and, as such, address an area which is in need of further empirical investigation.

A review of measures used to assess vocabulary knowledge indicates that, as a more desirable and theoretically sound assessment tool, LFP can be utilized to measure lexical knowledge in contexts of use with communicative purposes. A review of studies conducted
in the field of second language writing indicates a relationship between vocabulary knowledge and holistic judgments of writing quality. Since vocabulary knowledge has considerable influence on holistic judgments of writing quality, it is necessary to find out learners’ vocabulary knowledge. Based on these two assertions, it is hypothesized that a strong relationship between vocabulary profiles as a measure of lexical knowledge and holistic measures of writing quality justifies the use of these profiles as an alternative to holistic assessments of writing quality.

3. Method
3.1. Participants
The study involved 108 English Literature and English Translation students registered in 4-year BA programs at Arak University. They were the students of four intact classes available to the researcher. So the study used availability sampling. Though some of the participants came from different parts of Iran with different dialects and languages such as Lori, Kurdish, and Turkish, they were reasonably proficient in spoken Persian language. In addition, all participants were literate in Persian since all literacy related activities at schools are carried out in Persian all through 12 years of education prior to university. Of these participants, 31 were freshmen, 33 were sophomore, and 44 were seniors. Their age ranged from 18 to 24. As for gender, 73 were female and 35 were male. 38 of them were majoring in English Literature and 70 were studying in English Translation major.

3.2. Instrumentation
Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (1982) was administered to assess the general language proficiency of the participants. Upshur (1966 cited in Simner, 1999) observed a correlation of 0.89 between TOEFL and the MTELP. Also, Baldauf and Dawson (1980) found that MTELP is a reliable and valid measure.

Three instruments were used to measure three dimensions of the students’ English vocabulary knowledge: the Vocabulary Levels Test (Nation 1983, 1990) for passive vocabulary size; the productive version of the Vocabulary Levels Test (Laufer & Nation, 1995, 1999) for controlled active vocabulary size; and the LFP (Laufer & Nation, 1995) for lexical richness in free written expression.

Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey’s (1981) ESL Composition Profile was used by two raters to holistically assess the quality of the same writings that students submitted for the analysis of vocabulary profiles. The measure consists of five sections
including content with 30 points, organization with 20 points, vocabulary with 20 points, language use with 25 points, and mechanics with 5 points. Scores for five sections are added up to arrive at a writing quality score.

3.3. Data collection and analysis

MTELP (1982) test of general language proficiency was administered along with the recognition version of VLT in a class session of 90 minutes. It took 20 to 30 minutes to complete the VLT test. Students spent 50 to 60 minutes to do the proficiency test. After a three week interval, the productive version of VLT was administered. They needed 20 to 30 minutes for this test. In the same session, the students were allotted 60 minutes to write an argumentative opinion essay on a topic of a general nature which dealt with a controversial issue. The topic did not require expert knowledge of a particular subject matter. The students were instructed to produce a passage of at least 300 words in the hour they were given to write. No aids were allowed. All of the statements required the candidates to think carefully in order to construct a coherent argument.

For the test of free active vocabulary, learners’ compositions were prepared for entry into computer as follows. The first 300 words of all essays were keyed into a word processing program. All incorrect uses of lexical items were deleted, taking care to distinguish between grammatical and lexical errors. Items were marked as correct when the lexical item elicited was semantically correct. If the learner used it in a wrong grammatical form, for example the wrong tense, it was marked as correct. When a word was clearly used incorrectly, it was omitted, as it could not be considered as part of the subject's productive lexicon. If, on the other hand, it was used correctly but misspelled, the error was corrected in order to make the words recognizable by the computer program and the word was considered as familiar to the subject. Spelling mistakes were corrected so that the proportion of low frequency words would not be skewed upwards. A wrong derivative of a word was not considered an error since all the derivatives forming one word family have the same frequency. For example, wrong verb tense, singular instead of plural form, or wrong prepositions were considered as grammatical errors and were not deleted. Furthermore, proper nouns were deleted because they were not considered part of the learners’ vocabulary knowledge. Foreign language words were also deleted, except for those that have come into common use in English.

Once the cleaning up operation was complete, the first 300 words of each text were entered into VocabProfile (Cobb, 2007). For each text the profiler calculates the percentage of words of the text that fall into the first thousand most common words list (K1), the second
The thousand most common words list (K2), the Academic Words List (AWL), and off-list words group (OL).

The writings which were fed into VocabProfile software were holistically scored by two experienced raters against Jacobs et. al.’s (1981) ESL Composition Profile. Inter-rater reliability was checked to be 0.91. To have a single writing quality score for each individual, the average of the two scores awarded by two raters was used as a measure of writing quality.

4. Results

The mean of proficiency scores was 70.32 and standard deviation (SD) was 12.00. Proficiency scores were distributed normally.

The mean of passive VLT scores was 59.78 and a SD of 13.14 was observed. The distribution was normal. For productive VLT scores, the SD was 12.27, mean was 39.48 and the normality of the distribution was verified. The mean of scores on LFP’s K1 index was 89.22 and SD was 3.35. The scores were distributed normally. A mean of 5.61 was observed for LFP’s K2 profile and the SD was 2.29. Scores on K2 were distributed normally. The mean and SD of scores for LFP’s AWL index were 3.51 and 2.10 respectively. The normal distribution of scores on AWL was verified. An SD of 1.46 was observed for LFP’s OL profile. Mean was 1.63 and the distribution of OL scores was normal. As for writing quality measure, the mean was 67.29 and SD was 10.79. Writing quality scores were normally distributed.

Table 4.1

Correlation between LFP indexes and passive VLT and productive VLT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Passive VLT</th>
<th>Productive VLT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K1</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>-.275(**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>-.184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWL</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>.329(**)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Significant negative correlations between K1 index and passive VLT (-0.27) and productive VLT (-0.33) were observed. As for K2 index, no significant correlations between K2 index and passive VLT and productive VLT were obtained. For AWL and OL profiles, significant positive correlations between AWL and OL indexes on the one hand and passive VLT (0.32 & 0.44) and productive VLT scores (0.34 & 0.31) on the other were observed (Table 4.1).

There were significant correlations between writing quality scores and LFP indexes K2 (-0.26), AWL (0.26), and OL (0.18) (Table 4.2). Correlation between K2 and writing quality scores was negative which means the higher one’s reliance on K2 in written expression, the lower his achievement is on writing quality measure. There were positive significant relationships between AWL and OL profiles and writing quality scores which indicates the higher one’s score on AWL or OL, the higher his score is on writing quality measure.

**Table 4.2**  
Correlation between LFP indexes and writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>K1</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (1-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K2</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (1-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AWL</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As significant correlations were present, writing quality scores were regressed against LFP indexes to estimate how much of variance in writing quality scores was explained by LFP profiles as a whole and individually. LFP indexes as a whole explained 17 percent of the variance in writing quality scores (Tables 4.3 & 4.4). Individually, K2, AWL, and OL contributed 7.1, 6.7, and 3.2 percent to variance respectively. Beta values for the individual indexes were not significant (Table 4.5). Beta indicates the effect that one SD unit change in the independent variable has on the dependent variable.

**Table 4.3**

*Model summary of regressing writing against LFP indexes*

<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>.380(a)</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>10.17830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Predictors: (Constant), OL, K2, AWL, K1

**Table 4.4**

*ANOVA of regressing writing against LFP indexes*

<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>1803.943</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>450.986</td>
<td>4.353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>10670.57</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>103.598</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12474.51</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Predictors: (Constant), OL, K2, AWL, K1   b Dependent Variable: Writing
Table 4.5

Beta values for the regression of writing against LFP indexes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>-4020.685</td>
<td>2876.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1</td>
<td>40.893</td>
<td>28.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWL</td>
<td>41.883</td>
<td>28.706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OL</td>
<td>41.654</td>
<td>28.928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Dependent Variable: Writing

5. Discussion

The mean and SD of proficiency scores were 70.32 and 12.00 respectively, and scores were normally distributed. This indicates that the study sample is homogeneous in terms of proficiency and is a representative sample from the population.

Significant correlations between K1, AWL and OL profiles on the one hand and passive VLT and productive VLT scores on the other were obtained which is in line with what literature suggests. Correlations between K1 index and passive VLT and productive VLT were negative. No significant correlations between K2 index and passive VLT and productive VLT were obtained. Negative significant relationships between K2 index and passive VLT and productive VLT were expected. Lack of expected significant relationships between K2 index and passive VLT and productive VLT may be due to the fact that K2 words, being less frequent than K1 words, are not used by students as extensively and differentially as K1 words. Thus, it may be that the participants made relatively equal reliance on K2 words in their writing, hence reducing the discriminatory potential of the measure. A 0.07 Asymp. value for normality of distribution of K2 scores was barely above the significance level lending support to above argument of barely normal distribution of scores. As for AWL and OL indexes, significant positive correlations between AWL and OL indexes on the one hand and passive VLT and productive VLT scores on the other were
observed. In line with what literature suggests, these positive relationships indicate that more proficient L2 speakers, compared to less proficient speakers, tend to use more of less frequent words beyond GSL’s 2000 most frequent words in their writings.

Though moderate correlations are observed between LFP indexes and passive VLT and productive VLT, it can be said that overall LFP profiles (especially K1, AWL, and OL) constitute a valid measure of lexical knowledge. Laufer and Nation (1995) observed similar significant relationships between K1, AWL and OL indexes on the one hand and productive VLT scores on the other. However, the strengths of correlations were different in the two studies. While we observed -0.33, 0.34, and 0.31 indexes for correlations between K1, AWL and OL profiles on the one hand and productive VLT scores on the other, Laufer and Nation (1995) obtained -0.7, 0.7, 0.6 indexes in their Composition 1 and -0.7, 0.6, 0.8 indexes in Composition 2 for correlations between the aforementioned variables. This may be because of the fact that for establishing LFP indexes Laufer and Nation (1995) used compositions written under exam conditions for entrance to university. This ensured that the students tried their best in writing the compositions. In contrast, for this study LFP profiles were established based on passages elicited in regular class sessions with students cognizant of the research nature of the assignment. Some students might have taken the assignment and the tests lightly as they knew that the results would not affect their future. Among the advantages of LFP as a preferred measure of word knowledge, it was mentioned that it tests vocabulary knowledge in contexts of use with clear communicative purposes. The communicative purpose that made Laufer and Nation’s (1995) subjects do their best on compositions seems to have been absent in the case of the participants of this study.

K2, AWL, and OL elements of LFP correlated significantly with writing scores. These results are indicative of the fact that less reliance on the 2nd thousand most frequent words and more use of AWL and OL words is associated with better writing performance. LFP indexes as a whole explained 17 percent of the variance in writing quality scores and K2, AWL, and OL each explained 7.1, 6.7, and 3.2 percent of the variance in scores respectively. This indicates that performance on LFP profiles is related to and, to a limited extent, explains holistic assessments of writing quality. However, since the relationships are not strong enough and the afforded explanation of holistic scores is not sizeable, one cannot suggest these vocabulary profiles as an alternative to holistic judgments of writing quality.

A limitation of this study was that writing of compositions occurred during the regular class work and the participants were informed of the research nature of the writing assignment. It is possible that participants might have taken the writing and the tests lightly.
Other similar studies mostly had used writings that were submitted to university for admission purposes under strict exam conditions (Crossley & McNamara, 2012; Engber, 1995; Becker, 2010). This might explain the moderate correlations observed throughout the study whereas similar studies had yielded higher correlations. As it was argued in the literature that LFP measures vocabulary knowledge in contexts of use with real communicative purposes, it is suggested to use compositions written for examination or admission purposes. In such cases, participants are more likely to do their best and consequently provide the investigator with more dependable raw data.

As for the other studies which, similar to the present study, have yielded weak correlation or lack of any relationship between lexical richness and holistic quality scores (Cheung et al., 2010; Lemmouh, 2008; Baba, 2009) some explanations are required.

To examine the relationship between lexical richness and holistic essay scores, Lemmouh (2008) assigned ‘fail’, ‘pass’, or ‘pass with distinction’ grades to compositions written by Swedish university students of English. No significant mean difference was obtained between ‘pass’ and ‘pass with distinction’ essay types in terms of lexical richness. Failure to include essays with ‘fail’ grades seems to have jeopardized the credibility of this study. A significant mean difference might have been observed if essays with ‘fail’ score had been included in the analysis. The correlation between lexical richness scores and holistic quality assessments has not been checked either.

In a bid to identify the language abilities that explain the construct of summary writing, Baba (2009) focused on lexical proficiency in L2, controlling for general L2 proficiency, L1 writing proficiency, L1 vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension in L2, and the length of summaries. Lexical diversity did not have a linear correlation with summary writing performance. Neither did lexical diversity make a unique contribution to the variance in L2 writing. However, summary writing in L2 logically requires reading and comprehending of L2 texts, and L2 reading comprehension itself is strongly related to and affected by vocabulary knowledge (Qian, 1999, 2002). That is, L2 summary writing was explained in terms of another skill which itself begs explanation. Since the focus of study was on lexical proficiency, L2 reading comprehension cannot justifiably be included in the regression analysis as a predictor. Otherwise, reading comprehension would unduly devour variance in writing performance which otherwise might be explained by lexical proficiency measures.

Cheung et al (2010) examined the relationship between lexical variation and holistic essay grading. Lexical variation, measured through the calculation of Guiraud indexes, correlated weakly but significantly with three writing score bands. One way ANOVA showed that all
Guiraud measures differed significantly across the score bands. The post-hoc tests indicated that all the Guiraud indexes, which differed significantly across the score bands, also differed significantly across all pairings of the score bands. These findings run counter to the correlation analysis. The point is that writing scores were grouped into three score bands and then correlated with lexical variation. Had actual score for each composition been correlated to Guiraud indexes of the same piece of writing, significant results would have been observed. In addition, lexical errors were not removed in the process of calculating Guiraud indexes. Engber (1995) indicated that estimates of lexical variation would differ significantly before and after excluding lexical errors. Had this point been taken into account, the correlations between the lexical variation indexes and holistic grading would be higher. Llach (2005) demonstrated the strong negative influence of lexical errors on holistic estimates of writing proficiency.

6. Conclusions
To conduct an examination of LFP profiles’ validity as a measure of word knowledge against passive VLT and productive VLT as already established measures, correlational analysis was carried out. Significant moderate relationships between vocabulary profiles and passive VLT and productive VLT were interpreted, with some explanation, as evidence that vocabulary profiles could be regarded as a valid measure of vocabulary knowledge.

Significant relationships between LFP indexes on the one hand and writing quality scores on the other, showed that, to a limited extent, vocabulary profiles are related to holistic estimates of writing proficiency but not so strongly, as to be used as an independent measure for assessment purposes.

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Title

Beautification of Epic and Lyrical Imageries in William Shakespeare’s Sonnets

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Abstract

The delicate and elegant spirit of mythology or epic in William Shakespeare’s sonnets leads him towards mysterious lyrical narrations. His mysterious narrations mention typical human being who concerns with the source and origin of life. An origin which retells this truth that what causes the continuity of human life is physical and spiritual nourishment and training of our children; therefore, the function of the sonnets concerns with, in addition to inspiration of delicate sentiment to men, humanistic and social principles, particularly the aspects of training human being. This study regards interference of lyrical-epic spirit in the sonnets, and it represents some examples of these companionships in order to show the beautification of the sonnets. In other words, the shadow of other texts is felt over lyrical-epic concepts of Shakespeare. Thus, he willingly or unwillingly is under the influence of other literary text with mythological-lyrical concepts. In addition, he exploits and creates them by his own methods, and renders them in a new and beautiful way by exploitation of his own literary inventions.

Keywords: Beautification, Lyrical-Epic Imageries, William Shakespeare, Semiotic, Sonnet
1. Introduction

Significantly, Shakespeare alters many criteria of playwright, and endows them with other forms and figures; because each era has a peculiar form and figure in terms of sagacity horizon. Accordingly, it can be said that Shakespeare treats in the same way in his lyrical narrations which represent in the literary kind of the sonnets. In other words, he deviates from the preceding criteria of sonnet and lyric, while writing his sonnets, and did distinctively change them with regard to his contemporary typical spirit and cultural, and social necessities. Actually, this alteration in previous criteria and confirmation of new literary formulas and criteria are to be seen on the side of all authors in the field of literature. The point is his sonnets that have occasionally been inspired by epic spirit, and approaches the atmosphere and space of mythologies, although this is mostly in plays. From this viewpoint, the imagination of this poet leads to the creation of distinctive compounding, synthesis, and configuration of imageries and narration; a configuration that can be discussed as lyrical-epic imageries. Bakhtin (1981) puts it “language, as a treasure-house of images, is fundamentally chronotopic” (p. 251). In other words, in some parts of Shakespeare’s sonnets, the imageries which are created by the poet are both including lyrical (romantic) characteristic features or impressive spirit and multiple meanings or ambiguity of myth or epic. Also, the English sonneteer is the same playwright in the field of literary kind of sonnet. However, in these two literary kinds, the point is that the thought and discourse of the poet is invariant, and his atmosphere, analysis, and imageries are a little different. Due to the fact that the spirit of the sonnets needs delicateness and tenderness and a play needs irony and humor.

Here, the primary point is that this kind of compounding of lyric and epic, and fresh criteria in his romantic and epic narrations should be considered in the imageries of his sonnets. One of the similarities between Shakespeare’s romantic narrations and literary kind of epic is the structure of fictionality; in other words, his sonnets try to express a character or characters through word, and lead to his own peculiar conclusion by a detailed description and study of them. Likewise, Shakespeare not only carries on representing his own romantic and humanistic feelings and sensations in the literary kind of lyrical sonnets, but also in this representation of feelings, he never forgets long humanistic destinations or impressive expectations. Thus, he does the same task in sketching the great humanistic issues and feelings; by the same token, an epic poet often represents in one’s own epic or tragedies. He continuously addresses his addressee as human being, and segregates from his limited
feelings in order to spread his intellectual circle over all men’s thoughts and expectations. Accordingly, romantic sonnet, which is occasionally the spot of expression of specific, individual, and temporary feelings, transfers to be a kind which represents a narration of eternally humanistic feelings in the sonnets. It should be considered that universal and humanistic love and expectations have occupied a great place in great epics, such as Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh and Homer’s the Iliad; however, this love is woven in the warp and woof of the epic texts; and it becomes one internal part of the long narration of epic. Moreover, this peripheral romantic narration is signified as lower meanings without regarding long narration of epic. For example, in Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh, when the love of Zal for his beloved Rudabeh is considered beside the long narration of Shahnameh, it connects to the story of bravery and valour of Sam and Rostam; consequently, these two characters are unified with the whole national goals of Iran. In addition, the love of Helen for her beloved Paris is narrated in the Iliad. If it is narrated in isolation, this love is a childish affair; however, if it is studied in connection with the whole stories of the Iliad, it will be found a national worth and color.

Accordingly, the consequence of the sonnets is similar to epic texts, because if a sonnet is considered in isolation, it signifies individual feelings of the poet, and it becomes the entertainment of the audience; but if the sonnets is considered with regard to allusions and references to texts (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 253) beyond the text of the sonnets, and they can find their own valuable spot. Significantly, these sonnets occasionally reveal their own references to mythologists and epic narrations laconically. Therefore, in studying the imageries of Shakespeare’s sonnets, it is necessary to study both the internal and external texts and aspects of the texts of the sonnets. The chief point about the aspects that goes beyond the text of the sonnet is that all literary texts (occasionally historical and philosophical texts) and ritual beliefs can be studied as the external texts and aspects of the texts.

Therefore, the sonnets will be studied in a suitable place; it is like a puzzle that all its unlimited pieces will be found and placed next to each other. Another point of lyrical-epic imageries is that language is moderated in terms of the choice words, because such an atmosphere should infuse with and suggest both epic and romantic feelings, neither mere subtle and delicateness of the sonnet nor mere severity of epic is necessary; therefore, the poet should establish moderate words in his sonnets in order to represent these epic-lyrical imageries. The essential reason, however, is that the choice of words should be on the side of or through the form of its narration and fictional sonnet; otherwise, the poet’s narration becomes so severe that is not similar to sonnet, and sometimes so delicate and subtle that is
separated from epic spirit. Therefore, the task of artists and poets that deal with creation of a compounding work is more difficult than those who work a specific genre. However, Shakespeare’s era leads to the creation of compounding works, because the society of that period almost segregate from class society, and way and manner of lives of society come closer.

This article contributes to lyrical-epic imageries of texts. These imageries are intertexts, and disclose great varieties of portrays. Therefore, the study of signification or semiotic emphasizes intertextuality of the text or “interweaving of texts”(Juvan, 2008, p.13). This combination tries to reveal Shakespeare's beautiful language, based on semiotics of the sonnets; therefore, "the subfield of semiotics that deals with art is called beauty” (Barthes, 1981, p. 161). A text comes into existence by its bond to other texts; or Bakhtin (1981) puts it “the word lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context” (p. 284). Texts interchange with each other, or they continue a dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280) that has no beginning and no end. He says, "I live in a world of others' words" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 143). When a text comes into a dialogue with other texts, he cannot resist dialogical (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 256) interactions, or cannot find the door to exist; in other words, “it enters into an intense interaction, a struggle with other internally persuasive discourses” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345-346)

Bakhtin (1994) shows that, "poems can be just as 'novelistic,' that is, polyphonic or dialogic" (p. 262-63). Signs are closely connected with lyrical and epic signs in order to show a "dialogic interaction" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 90) or a large number of connected signs. Kristeva's intertextuality discusses about "literary word as a dialogue among several writings" (Kristeva, 1980, p. 65); therefore, she (1984) argues: “inter-textuality denotes this transposition of one (or several) sign system(s) into another” (p. 59-60). And the texts of the sonnets are running through “transformations and/or productions” (Kristeva, 1986, p. 87), and rewriting "already said" significations (Barthes, 1986, p. 168).

Barthes’(1977) saying "the very plural of meaning"(p. 159) shows that a text is full of other limitless spoken and written signs and texts. Beautification of lyrical-epic images shows the second layer that is beyond Saussure's "first-order system of language"(as cited in Allen, 2004, p. 42).Barthes’ (1972) words “Myth is a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a second-order semiological system”(p. 113) emphasizes significations of imageries.

2.Discussion
Lyrical-epic imageries show intertextuality of the text. Shakespeare composes his “own word” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345), and previous poets’ words. This study will disclose that Shakespeare used signs that had already come into existence before in a beauty way. Bakhtin (1984) shows "the dialogic sphere” (p. xxxvii) in which signs come into existence. His assertion makes prominence that “the word enters his context from another context, permeated with the interpretations of others” (1984, p. 202) reveals the closely beautiful connection in the significations.

Sonnet fifteen, therefore, asserts that everything fight against time for the sake of the youth's beauty. The speaker writes the youth's beauty in a poem in order to save and protect the youth from time. He does all these things for love of youth. "And all in war with Time for love of you,” (line 13) furthermore, combines the epic and lyric images in order to reach youth. In doing so, he makes the youth's beauty survive. Therefore, this image of love for the youth that includes surviving the youth reminds us horticulture in order to disclose his love of youth in the line of the poem. The speaker implants the youth in his poem "I engrafts you new" (line 14) of sonnet fifteen in order to evolve again and again. Farmers pick a part of a plant, and implant it. This new plant grows, and blooms fresh flowers. This can be continued more and more. The speaker also does the same. He makes the youth survive by implanting his beauty in his poem. As a result:

[gardening was a conventional image for fathering children, even in aristocratic circles. [...] a 1596 letter from the Spanish agent Antonio Perez to Penelope Rich, then pregnant, with greetings to her pregnant sister and sister-in-law: 'she gave yow not those delicate shapes to keep them idle, but rather that you should push fourth unto us here many buddies of those divine bowties. To those Gardners [the three husbands] I wished all happiness for so good tillage of their grounds'. It should also be remembered that Priapus was the tutelary deity of gardens. (Duncan-Jones, 1997, p.142)

This "war with time for love of you" can be interpreted through the statement of Achilles in Homer's Iliad, "forever risking my life in war" (March, 2001, p. 25) in which he refuses the requests of his friends for fighting in the battle with Troy. Achilles was angry from Agamemnon, and very sad from the death of his dear friend Patroclus in war; therefore, he joins the war finally, and was killed. Line two of the couplet "as he takes from you, I engraft you new" and other sonnets that assert the immortality of the youth's beauty in the poems are under the influence of Homer's Iliad. Sea-goddess Thetis said to Achilles that if you fight in Trojan war, your name remains forever as a courage warrior, but if you return to your
homeland, your name will be forgotten after your death. Accordingly, Shakespeare used this Homeric subject in order to make his own poems and love immortal.

In sonnet twenty-eight, the day fights against the night, and the night fights against the day. They fight a constant war without interval. "But day by night and night by day oppressed" (line 4) suggests that they both are in a repeatedly winning and defeating. Day cannot accepts night's superiority and vice versa. However, "do in consent shake hands to torture me" (line 6) discloses that day and night are unified in order to fight a battle against the speaker. "The one by toil, the other to complain/how far I toil, still farther off from thee" (lines 7-8) reveal that day makes the speaker become exhausted, and night causes speaker to grieve for his separation from the friend. In contrast, the speaker praises day and night that day is glaring even in the cloudy weather and night is beautiful without stars. However, "But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,/And night doth nightly make grief's length seem stronger" (sonnet 28, lines 4, 14) show the constant and long oppression of night and day against the speaker, in spite of the speaker's praises of day and night.

And "each, though enemies to either's reign/do in consent shake hands to torture me" remind us the tradition of the battle between day and night in Petrarchan poems. The group of day and night act against the speaker, although day and night fight against each other. Therefore, "Shakespeare may have known Spenser's translation of J. van der Noot's Theatre for Worldlings (1569), which opens with a woodcut showing black and white dogs, representing day and night, attacking a white hind, symbolizing Petrarch's Laura" (Duncan-Jones,1997, p. 28).

"Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war" (line 1) of sonnet forty-six suggests that the speaker's eye and heart fight over the acquisition of the youth's "sight." Eye says that the youth's "sight" is his big right, but heart asserts that the youth's "sight" is his huge property; in other words, the eye's proportion of the youth's "picture" is greater than heart and vice versa. Actually, eye resists heart from gaining over the youth's picture's sight, and heart rejects eye's right of acquisition. Then, heart reveals that he is a strong box that maintains the youth's picture, and even pointed eyes cannot pierce into that box. In contrast, eye declares that heart's assertion is not true, and the youth's beauty belongs to him, or "and says in him thy fair appearance lies" (line 8). This battle imagery between eye and heart can be interpreted through representation of legal terms, and "a quest of thoughts" or jury is responsible to reach a verdict. In this court, eye and heart defend themselves. At last, "their verdict is determined" (line 11). Jurors that are "all tenants of heart" decide that both eye and heart have right to have the youth's picture. "As thus: mine eye's due is thy outward

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part./And my heart’s right, thy inward love of heart" (lines 13-14) reveal the solution that the youth's exterior glance belongs to eye, and his interior affection or warmth belongs to heart. Therefore, a sign moves to a network of signs, and it has no way to exit from those boundless texts. Roland Barthes says that a sign is a text in which signified is deffered forever. A sign, as a text, is written again and again, and creates continuous signifiers. The syntagmatic relations are needed in order to rewrite a text. In addition to the relations and contradictions of a sign system, other syntagmatic layers are also included in a text. Therefore, the juxtaposition of other sign systems also enters into the layers of a text. A text is rewritten by considering other syntagmatic relations. As a result, the beauty and beauty of the signs can be demonstrated.

Furthermore, Eleanor Hommond's (1923-2012) *Anglia* (2009) contains an issue of the debate between the heart and the eye. This English version is about the well-known topic that was considered by English medieval literature. Hommond's introduction regards the French *Dèbat duoueret de l'oeil* as the source of this English version. In addition, some examples regarded this topic are also considered in the introduction. The source of this argument between eye and heart is attributed to classical writers like Plato's text "that love is created in the soul of man by the medium of the eye" (Hanford, 1911, p. 161).

Medieval courtly poets made this argument join to the courtly love's method, in which rare classical similarity can be matched with their distinctive form of conceit. Love penetrates and injuries the heart through the entrance of the eye. This consideration is introduced by the Provençal lyric which was expanded by Chrestien de Troyes (1135-1183). This conceit of French love poem transformed to Italy, Germany, Spain, and England. In England, it expanded as a general idea in courtly poems. Both heart and eye join together in order to establish love and naturally the lover's hurt. And Chrestien's text includes female lover's talking to herself: "She at first accuses her eyes of treason for having admitted the image of the loved one to her heart; but, since one does not love with one's eyes, she confesses that they are not to blame. Who then is? Herself, that is her heart, without whose wish the eyes see nothing" (Hanford, 1911, p. 161). This leads to a formal argument, and the eye and heart continue the debate themselves in terms of their own personification. *Dieputatio inter coretOovulum* seems to be the first formal debate between eye and heart which should answer the duty for sin, not for love. Therefore, the heart begins the dispute by accusing the eye of being the source of evil, the tinder and the spur of sin. The eye denies the charge, affirming that it is the heart's faithful servant but follows its commands. The evil which enters the eye does not corrupt the heart unless the heart consents. Then reason comes...
and renders judgment. Both are guilty but not in the same degree; for the heart is the cause of sin, the eye but the occasion. (Hanford, 1911, p. 161-2)

Philippe de Grève has been considered as the authority of debate and some manuscripts respectively. This responsibility toward love and sin is inferred from the participation of heart and eye in the progress of love. Therefore, Philippe uses Chrestien and some secular poets. This debate is in a close relationship with the Visio Fulberti (1238 AD), the famous Latin issue of the debate between the body and soul. Both poetries' principles of the dispute are almost the same: "The soul accuses the body of having brought its destruction by sin; the body replies that it was the mere passive instrument" (Hanford, 1911, p. 162). This argument between the body and the soul can be as far back as Democritus (460-370 BC).

The debate becomes common by the end of the twelfth century. Therefore, the battle of thirteenth century issue of daughters of God expanded to an argument between justice and mercy. The ant and the fly, as a fable, developed as a conversation. The value and worth of clerks and soldiers, as lovers, turns to be the combat's subject between two girls, as two angles. Thus the dispute between heart and eye has been under the influence.

Philippe de Grève's French version has been influenced by the representation and translation of the Latin "with something less of scholastic subtlety and a touch of the romantic coloring which so often appears in the debates in their passage from the Latin to the vernacular. Thus the heart reinforces its charge of treason with a very pregnant instance" (Hanford, 1911, p. 162). Bonevesin da Riva's (1240-1313) debate between the body and soul is another instance for the debate between heart and eye. Huon de Meri's (1200-1250) Tornoiement de L' Antéchrist (1235) duplicates the influence.

Francis Davison's (1575-1619) Poetical Rhapsody (1602) contains a dialogue between the lover and his heart, and a dialogue between "the lover's Flaming Heart and His Ladies's Frozen Breast" (Hanford, 1911, p. 165). They are parallel to the dialogue between the soul and the body in the identical compilation. This literary dispute tradition survives into the Elizabethan period. It was employed, therefore, in Robert Greene's 1558-1592) A Quip for an Upstart Courtier (1592) which was applied in dramas.

In addition to epic imageries, lyrical imageries are also joined in order to make lines beautiful. Line one "o that you were yourself, but love you are" of sonnet thirteen, and "o thou, my lovely boy" of sonnet one hundred twenty six reveal the warm relationship and friendship between the speaker and the youth. The speaker unveils his feeling and devotion toward the youth by disclosing his friendship and affection towards him. For this reason, he genuinely cares about the issue that the youth's beauty should be continued. "Dear my love"
in line thirteen asserts his affection towards the youth. He wants to show that the youth pays no attention to his own beauty, in spite of the speaker's love.

"Dear my love" attests that the youth's love is far away from decaying a house of beauty. "Who lets so fair a house fall to decay" (line 9) of sonnet thirteen also refers to this point that a beautiful body is a splendid and noble house that should be kept and uplifted. It is unpleasant to see a sweet face or beautiful house being destroyed forever. These lines "but love you are" (line 1) and "fair a house" (line 9) asserts the parallelism between love and beauty.

The association of the pinnacle of lyrical image "dear my love, you know" (line 13) with business term like "unthrift" (line 13) reveals that the friendship between the youth and the speaker is very far away from wasting beauty. "So should that beauty which you hold in lease/find no determination: then you were" (lines 5-6) of sonnet thirteen discloses that the beauty that nature lends the youth in a contract should be transformed to a son before its end coming. Thus, in this sonnets and many sonnets of Shakespeare, the speaker suggest the youth to get married and bear a beautiful boy in order to inherit the youth’ beauty. This inheritance of beauty, in addition to physical beauty, covers all aspects of human life. The youth’s physical and spiritual beauty should be accompanied and lived in his son. It can be interpreted that men should train their children beautiful aspects of humanistic life in a well-organized way. Consequently, all these beauties do eternally continue to live in beautiful sons, physically and spiritually."O, none but unthrits" says that the youth should be generous and free in lending his beauty to others, and those who waste their beauty, ignore their eternal beauty. Here, "husbandry in honor" (line 10) emphasizes this point.

"O that you were yourself, but love you are" (line 1) begins a philosophical approach toward the youth's identity or perfect beauty. The youth is changing constantly, is it possible for the youth to have a constant identity and perfect beauty. The speaker's friendship toward the youth in "dear my love" makes him want genuine self of the youth. Therefore, he wishes that the youth's self remains alive. And his pure beauty continues to live even after his death. The worth of the speaker's friendship is revealed in the couplet, because the youth's true self and beauty remain eternal. Here, the very close association of dear love and eternal beauty is attested.

Sonnet eighteen, “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day” (line 1) reveals a true love relationship between the speaker and his friend. The youth is compared with summer, but he is considered better than summer in "thou art more lovely and more temperate" (line 2), although summer is pure and perfect in tradition. In Greek mythologies, Adonis, god of
fertility, was a beautiful baby, and Aphrodite and Persephone wanted to have him; then, it was decided that each goddesses have him half the year. Aphrodite, with whom Adonis spend beautiful times, loves Adonis afterwards, because "the time that Adonis spent in the arms of Aphrodite was the living, burgeoning time of spring and summer" (March, 2001, p. 35). Summer is also considered as a rich and an abundant time in Sophocles' Ajax: "Snow-packed winter yields to fruitful summer" (March, 2001, p. 67) shows the adorable, pleasant, and beautiful times of summer. These lines remind the effect of the myth of Demeter and Persephone:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer’s lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed
And every fair from fair sometimes declines
By chance or nature’s changing course untrimmed:
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow’st,
Nor shall death brag thou wand’st in his shade,(Sonnet 18, lines 1-11)

Demeter and Persephone, mother and daughter, were two Olympian immortal goddesses, but Hades, or "in his shade" in the sonnet, kidnapped Persephone and took her to the place of mortals. Demeter sought for her and found her. But she must spend four month with Hades, because she ate seeds. And "[f]or the rest of the year, the spring and summer months of life and growth and harvest, Persephone lived joyously with her mother" (March, 2001, p. 253). In the sonnet, the youth is "more lovely and more temperate" and a "fair" one who should always be fair. He remains in an "eternal summer" in order to become eternal. All these care for immortality and eternal fair and loveliness of the youth in the lines reveal the admiration and love of the youth. "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day" can be interpreted through John Milton's (1608-1674) Paradise Lost (1667) in which Hephaestus' fallen from Olympus is described: … from Morn

To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,
A Summers day; and with the setting Sun
Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,
On Lemnosth' AegaeanHe . (Paradise Lost, 1, pp. 742-6)
Here, Milton associates summer with pleasure, loveliness, calmness, and mortality. He fell from the beautiful pinnacle. Therefore he became remote from his source. In the mythology of the myth of Hero and Leander by Musaeus (of the late fifth or early sixth century AD) also, two lovers meet each other in summer. Here also summer brings pleasure and happiness. "When in eternal lines to time thou grow’st" (sonnet 18, line 12) asserts this subject that the youth is superior, because he lives forever in this poem.

In sonnet twenty, speaker declares that nature bestows beauty to a woman, and it portrays her face with cosmetic, casual, and exterior beauty. In contrast, the youth's beauty is the pinnacle of natural beauty that predominates speaker's affection and desire. The youth has an amiable heart of a woman; however, not a woman who is unfaithful. The youth's eyes are more glaring and less ogling than women in "an eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling" (line 5) reminds us the representation of the worth of eye in Sir Philip Sidney's (1554-1586) Astrophel and Stella (1580s), and Michelangelo's "judgement of the eye" (Tatarkiewicz 3, 2005, p. 300). When he looks at something, it turns to be something valuable. He has masculine aspects and complexion that directs men's eyes and agitates women's looks exist in "Which steals men’s eyes and women’s souls amazeth" (line 8). This line is under the influence of the tradition that indicates significance of sight in seeing and judging beauty.

Nature, first, creates the youth as a woman; then, she loves him. For this reason she turns the youth into a man."But since she pricked thee out for women’s pleasure,/Mine be thy love and thy love’s use their treasure" (sonnet 20, line 13) suggest that women can be given pleasure by the youth, but speaker remains in love with him. Therefore, speaker's love towards the youth has priority over other women's pleasure. Here, speaker's affection is in focus and nothing else. The youth should pay attention to speaker, because he wants just the youth's internal affection and heart, and deliberately bestows his physical body to women is revealed in "mine by thy love and thy love's use their treasure" (line 14).

In Petrarchan sonnets, a man loves a woman's beauty and virtue. And English sonneteers of Shakespeare's era versify the worth of a woman that is addressed by a man. From sonnet one to one hundred twenty five, Shakespeare employs this Petrarchan traditional love but a love towards a man. Michelangelo's, an Italian poet, love poems are written for a male addressee. Unlike previous sonnets, this sonnet only focuses on speaker's love towards the youth. Michelangelo met Roman Tommaso Cavalieri in the late 1532, and felt a love feeling towards him. He wrote poems to represent the worth of their friendship. English translation of Michelangelo's poem eighty-three shows this: "I see in your beautiful face, my lord, what
in this life words cannot well describe; with it my soul, still clothed in flesh, has already often risen to God" (Ryan, 1998, p. 103). Sonnets forty-nine, sixty-one, eighty-three, and ninety of Michelangelo reveal the elevated longing and aspiration of Michelangelo's relationship with Cavalieri.

Petrarchan imageries and conceits influence Shakespeare's sonnets, although Shakespeare modifies them in order to invent beauty ones. Shakespeare's variation and deviations from Petrarchan conceits can be considered in sonnet one hundred and thirty:

My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips’ red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks,
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound.
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress when she walks treads on the ground.(Sonnet 130, lines 1-12)

Most sonneteers use Petrarchan traditions in order to make their own beloved as beautiful and ideals. Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella*, influenced by these traditions in which he praises Stella's beautiful skin, eyes, or in another example, "Rollins compares Poems, Written by the . . . Earl of Pembroke(1660), […] : 'One Sun alone moves in the skye,/Two Suns thou hast, onein each eye;/Onely by day that sungives light./Where thine doth rise,there is no night'" (Duncan-Jones, 1997, p. 374). Although Shakespeare changes Petrarchan conventions, the speaker's beloved is beautyally beautiful. "And yet byheav’n I think my love as rare/As any she belied with false compare" (lines 13-14) assert finally that in spite of all these comparisons, the speaker's love towards his beautiful lady continues to exist.

"Coral is far more red than her lips’ red" (sonnet 130, line 2) is a convention that were used by sonneteers. For example, this use of coral can be traced in "Richard Barnfield (1574-1620), Cynthia, With Certaine Sonnets(1595), […]',His teeth pure Pearle in blushingCorrell set’"(Duncan-Jones, 1997, p. 374). In addition to Barnfield, Shakespeare considers some poems of poets like Bartholomew Green (1530-1556), Henry Constable
Richard Linche (1570-1601), and especially Thomas Watson's (1555-
1592) Hekatompathia of 1582.

"I grant I never saw a goddess go" (line 11) reminds us the ancient Greek goddesses whose walking makes them recognizable. Unlike Petrarchan convention that compare beloved and goddesses, the speaker says my love cannot gait like a goddess, but she walks on the earth. This line reminds us this myth that goddesses walk on sky and come from heaven.

Source of sonnet one hundred fifty-three and one hundred fifty-four is the diversification of a fifth century A.D. epigram. The signs of Greek poet Marcianus Scholasticus' (fifth century AD) poem can be found out in these sonnets. This poem describes the stolen of Cubid's love brand. This source can be as far back as this epigram, and the sonnets: are ultimately alternative variations on the central conceit of an epigram in the Greek Anthology (Planudean Anthology) attributed to Marcianus Scholasticus (fifth century A.D.) […] Marcianus's epigram (in [James] Hutton's translation [1940- 41, 386]) is as follows: 'Beneath these plane trees, detained by gentle slumber, love slept, having put this torch in the care of the Nymphs; but the Nymphs said one to another: "Why wait? Would that together with this we could quench the fire in the hearts of men" But the torch set fir even to the water, and with hot water thenceforth the Love-Nymphs fill the bath'. (Atkins, 2007, p. 375)

These two poems are also influenced by Anacreontic poems of Anacreon (582-485), a Greek poet of love poems. Sonnet one hundred fifty-three is under the influence of the myth of Cupid, the love-god, and Diana, the goddess of chastity. The damsel of Diana steals Cupid's brand and casts that brand into a fountain. This fountain gets the energy and heat of the brand and turns to be a fountain which cure ill men. Line nine "[b]ut at my mistress’ eye love’s brand new fired" attests that the speaker sees that the brand lights again by his beloved's look and eye. The Cupid wants to prove the brand; therefore, he puts the brand to the speaker's breast so that the speaker becomes sick. The speaker discovers that his only cure is the source of new fire or "mistress' eye," not the water. This can be found out through Sidney's Astrophel and Stella concerning flame of fire in eyes of Stella.

"And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove/Against strange maladies a sovereign cure" (lines 7-8) more represents historical changes in England. Merchant Adventures Company shipped to Asia and North America, and began to find New World from Edward VI's time. It continues to ship and bring many treasures from New World in Elizabeth I's era. It caused many disease brought to England by these transformations. Therefore, [s]trange maladies suggests 'exotic' maladies, diseases possibly contracted through contact with strange, or foreign, women. Syphilis, 'pox', or morbusgallicus, was always viewed as an
exotic disease, whether brought to Italy or England from France, or to Europe from the New World, or even the other way round. (Duncan-Jones, 1997, p. 423)

It says that the speaker falls in love, and the fire of beloved's look can help him. It seems that being loved and being a lover are "exotic." The speaker is sick of love of the mistress, and this illness can be cured by the light of her look. This is influenced by the attempt of English people to cure and remove the "exotic" disease and epidemic by burning everything on fire.

Line nine"But at my mistress' eye love’s brand new fired" remind us the Petrarchan conceits. They include "the mistress's eyes as darting forth fiery beams" (Duncan-Jones, 1997, p.424). Cupid's brand is "holy fire of love," and "mistress eye" is "love's brand new-fired"; therefore, mistress' ablaze glint eye can heal the speaker. This also shows the representation of Sidney’s Astropheland Stella's the light and fire of Stella's eye, because Shakespeare's sonnet sequence is under the influence of Sidney’s Astrophel and Stella. This adoration of eye or sight is one of Shakespeare's beauty. Here, eye can mediate, find, and decree the beauty of a thing.

3. Conclusion
The sonnets of Shakespeare show a reflection of a society in transition from a fully typical mythological spirit to a society with spectrum of variety of classes. Such a poet, lived in this social context, represents imageries of lyrical nature which have their roots in love goddesses of mythology, become a flowing and indeterminate state in critical readings, and can have different essential interpretations in every era. The tendencies of these imageries to humanistic mysteries lead to the expansion of interpretations of his sonnets in a special way in which motley and colorful concepts and senses reflect all fundamental wishes, pains, joy, and sorrows of human being. He reveals the life of his contemporary human being whom is less in thought of the continuity of humanistic contemplation and the status of friendship in his narrative sonnets. Accordingly, he reminds the reader that human life is exposed to serious problems by coded exploitation of continuity of generation in the imageries. And he should consider and ponder on the continuity of typical humanity under any circumstances, and receive his own provident thoughts by the use of one’s own feeling, intellect, and mind. Shakespeare ponders on the basis of humanistic life instead of margins of humanistic life that represent the status of pluralism of human. That is, the substantial thoughts of human that leads to the integrity of humanistic frank ideals and appetences. He continuously talks about
humanistic beauty and subtleties, and put irregulars and ugliness away; therefore, his reader ponders over one’s own strong points, and not fear one’s defects and weaknesses. Therefore, sonnets of Shakespeare have been studied in order to disclose beauty texture and signification of the sonnets. This article focuses on the signs of the sonnets as beauty texts in connection with other related signs in the same sonnet and other preceding texts. It discloses that lyrical and epic imageries of Shakespeare's sonnets are an intertext of ancient and preceding texts. The sign of imageries is studied as ceaseless wide varieties of previous signs.

References

Title

Textbook Evaluation: Evaluation of True To Life

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Abstract

This study evaluated ‘True To Life’ the textbook which has been taught in Kish institute for many years. The purpose of this study is to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the book toward the language program in the Kish institute. The merits and demerits of the textbook are discussed in detail with reference to 24 common criteria from 3 textbook evaluation checklists: 1) Daoud, A.M., and Celce-Murcia, M. (1979); 2) Byrd, P. and Celce-Murcia, M. (2001) and 3) Miekley J., (2005). This study examined criteria in two stages; firstly, an external evaluation that offers a brief overview of the materials from the outside (cover, table of contents, introduction) and secondly, a closer and more detailed internal evaluation. The results of this evaluation show that the book despite having merits has some weaknesses that need to be modified in order to be more suitable to the learners and context in which is being taught. Suggestions regarding the kind of activities, the way of presenting grammatical points, content of reading text, the way of presenting related items and other important issues are discussed. The findings of this study, contribute to development of language learning and teaching. It can also help textbook and material designers by deepening of our understanding of the important criteria for English language materials and textbooks designing.

Key words: Evaluation, Textbook, True To Life, Checklist

1. Introduction

In every teaching context, textbooks play an important role in imparting learning and assisting teachers to fulfill their responsibility. According to Riazi (2003, p. 52), "textbooks
play a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning and are considered the
next important factor in the second/foreign language classroom after the teacher." Textbooks
are among the most important resources utilized to achieve the aims of a course which are
based on the learners' needs. However, they should not become the aim of the course
themselves and set those aims (Brown, 1995). Regarding the importance of the textbooks,
one should make sure that those books meet appropriate criteria. In Cunningsworth’s (1995,
p.7) words, we should ascertain that "careful selection is made, and that the materials
selected closely reflect the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program".

One of the methods which can help us in achieving the aforementioned goal is the
evaluation process. As Nunan (1991, p. 209) pointed out the selection process can be greatly
facilitated by the use of systematic materials evaluation procedures which help us to be
ensure that materials are consistent with the needs and interests of the learners they are
intended to serve, as well as being in harmony with institutional ideologies on the nature of
language and learning.

Evaluation and selection of textbooks is a complex process that is carried out for many
reasons in many different ways. The question of whether and how to use textbooks in
teaching English as a second language (ESL) has long been debated among professionals in
the field, even with the development of new technologies that allow for higher quality
teacher-generated material demand for textbooks continues to grow (Gariner, 2002, para.1)
There are many reasons for evaluating textbooks. Sheldon (1988) has offered several reasons
for textbooks evaluation. He suggests that the selection of an ELT textbook often signals an
important administrative and educational decision in which there is considerable
professional, financial, or even political investment. A thorough evaluation, therefore, would
enable the teaching staff of a specific institution to discriminate between all of the available
textbooks on the market. Through evaluation, teachers will also become familiar with the
content of available textbooks and recognize the weaknesses and strengths of them.
According to Cunningsworth (1995; cited in Quang, p.97) among reasons for evaluation these
two are very important: 1) to adopt a new course book, 2) to identify particular strengths and
weaknesses in course books already in use, so that optimum use can be made of their strong
points, whilst their weaker areas can be strengthened through adaption or by substituting
material from other books. Littlejohn (1998) also claims that by analysis and evaluation of
materials we will be able to see inside the material and to take more control on their design
and use.
Textbooks not only provide a framework for teachers and help them in achieving the goals of the course, but also would serve as a guide to the teachers when conducting lessons (Tok, 2010).

According to Ansari and Babai (2013): Teachers, students and administers are all consumers of textbooks. All these groups, of course may have conflicting views about what a good/standard textbook is. However, the question is where they can turn to for reliable advice on how to make an informed decision and select a suitable text book . (Ansari & Babai, 2013, para. 10)

Mukundan and Nimehchisalem, also pointed out: As language teacher, we may have to evaluate textbooks either for selecting or for adapting them. Textbooks may be evaluated implicitly (following the evaluators’ impressionistic judgment) or explicitly (using an instrument). An instrument that is used for evaluating a textbook is referred to as an evaluation checklist or checklist. The criteria in a checklist can facilitate the evaluation of textbook and make it more objective… Checklists are useful instruments that can help teachers and syllabus designers before, while and after using textbooks in a target learning-teaching context. (Mukundan And Nimehchisalem, 2012, p. 458)

Many checklists are available. Although there are some checklists which are valid and reliable, they may be lack of practicality, some are too long which reduces their economy, others are too sophisticated which makes it very challenging for novice teachers to use them (ibid. p. 458).

As Makunndan and Ahour (2010) pointed out evaluation procedures should not be too demanding in terms of time and expertise and must be realistically useful to teachers. So every teacher can easily do it.

Cunningsworth (1995) and Ellis (1997) have suggested three different types of material evaluation namely ‘predictive’ or ‘pre-use’ evaluation (examines the future or potential performance of textbook), ‘in-use’ evaluation (examines material that is currently used) and ‘retrospective’ or ‘post-use’ evaluation of textbook (that has been used in any respective institution).

This paper is going to have a retrospective type of evaluation of the book named True To Life which had been taught in Kish institute for many years, and to check its characteristics against a collection of criteria proposed by a number of researchers in three checklists. The aim of this study is to determine the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the book toward language program in the institute.

2. Checklists for Evaluation
To achieve the aforementioned goal, I have selected three checklists for evaluation of this textbook which are as follow:


The issues that have been considered and addressed in these checklists are 1) fit between the textbook and the curriculum, 2) fit between the textbook and students, and 3) fit between the textbook and teachers. If a program does not have clearly articulated curriculum statements about purposes and methods, the fit between curriculum and textbooks can be hardly to achieve. Fit between textbook and students relate to the needs of learners, content, examples, exercises or tasks presentation /format that should be appropriate and suitable to learners. Fit between textbook and teacher relates to our teachers’ ability to handle the material and whether our teachers find out that the textbook meets their needs and preferences for teaching materials? (Celce-Murcia, 2001, pp. 416-418).

The Miekley Textbook Evaluation Checklist is based on recent research in second language instruction and checklists for general textbook evaluation. For example researches show that in addition to teaching top-down strategies, graded readers must also provide L2 readers with sufficient examples of these techniques and challenge learners to think critically about what strategies they use (Moran 1991; Auerbach&Paxton, 1997; Salataci&Akyel, 2002; cited in Miekley, 2005, p. 2) This checklist was also constructed using elements of Byrd’s (2001) and Skierso’s (1991) checklists. The most vital aspect in it was Byrd’s emphasis on the text being a good fit for teachers, students, and the curriculum all of which are important as educators seek to use materials and methods appropriate to their particular context. Although Sheldon (1988) suggests that no general list of criteria can ever really be applied to all teaching and learning context without considerable modification, there are some common criteria in these checklists that can be helpful for evaluating this textbook and many others in variety of situations.

3. Evaluation of True To Life

We will examine the text book through the aforementioned checklists in two stages: firstly, an external evaluation that offers a brief overview of the materials from the outside and
examines the organization of materials stated by the author or the publisher including claims made on the cover page and information in introduction and table of contents. This kind of evaluation gives information about the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context of use, presentation and organization of materials, and authors’ opinion about language and methodology, use of audio-visual materials, vocabulary list and index, cultural aspects, tests and exercises included in the book; secondly, an internal evaluation, in which the following factors are examined: a) the presentation of the skills, b) the grading and sequence of the materials, c) authenticity or artificiality of the listening materials, d) authenticity or artificiality of the speaking materials, e) inclusion and appropriateness of tests and materials, and f) appropriateness of the materials for different learning styles and claims made by the authors for self-study.

3.1. External Evaluation of True To Life

True To Life (TTL3 Kish) is a Class Book has written by Ruth Gairns and Stuart Redman, published by Collie & Slater Press in 1995 and the sixth printing in 2000. This edition is licensed for distribution and sale in Iran only. This book is designed for Adults pre-intermediate level (intended audience) and has other components such as: personal study workbook, teacher’s book, class cassette set, personal study cassette, personal study CD. In this book the introduction section is totally omitted, but there is the introduction section in the teacher’s book in which the author explained in detail the aims of the book, key features of the course, and etc. As authors state in the blurb of Class Book and in introduction of Teacher’s Book:

“True To Life is a course designed especially for adult learners of English and is built around topics, language, tasks, and approaches to learning which adults learners will find relevant, stimulating and enjoyable”.

3.1.1. Key features of the course are:

- Original content and tasks which will engage the interest of adult learners
- Use of learners’ own knowledge, experience and creativity
- Development of grammar and vocabulary through interactive tasks review and development in every unit
- Wide range of cross-cultural material
- Dual level recordings, offering a choice of shorter or longer and more Challenging version of many listening tasks
- Grammar Reference at the back of the class Book
- Visual dictionary in the personal study workbook, for additional vocabulary development
- This book consists of 24 units, providing upwards of 72 hours of class work, depending on the options followed.

By checking the table of content and the course review section we realize that every unit includes four parts: language focus, vocabulary, topics and review section (except unit 1 every unit has a review of two previous units).

In this book there is no regularity for presenting language items. For example in some units there is no reading text, some units have a dialogue section and in some units there is no dialogue section or reading passage at all. The activities also are different among units. So, teachers have to explain about every activity. As Nation (2010,p.9) argued there are several advantages to having a set format: the lessons are easier to make, the course monitoring is easier, learning the lessons will be easier because the learners are familiar with learning procedures and can predict what will come next. In addition the teachers don’t have to explain or comment for every activity. But in this book there is no set format. Furthermore, most of activities that relate to the writing skill are restricted writing (such as fill in the blanks) rather than free writing. In this book the authors have tried to present different culture of countries around the world, but since this book is distributed in Iran only, it is better some activities be adapted (omitted) in order to be more appropriate to learners’ culture (e.g. some pictures). In addition I think at least in one lesson, one of the Iranian’s cultures should be presented unless we may judge the book is culturally biased.

3.1. 2. The teacher’s book provides:

- Guidance on potential language difficulties
- A complete answer key to the exercises in the Class book
- Four photocopiable formal tests, each test covering six units of the Class Book
- Tape scripts of the Class Book recordings which may be photocopied and given to learners.

External evaluation of this book shows that it is potentially appropriate and the material is organized as the author explained, the paper quality and binding is appropriate although there is a need for micro evaluation by the checklist evaluation.

3.2. Internal Evaluation of True To Life

After a close examination of the three checklists, these criteria (1-24) were found to be almost common and more important for evaluation of a textbook. The areas these checklists
are concerned for textbook are as follows: subject matter or content; vocabulary and structures; exercises and activities, Physical makeup and illustration.

3.2.1. Subject matter or content

1. Does the subject matter cover a variety of topics appropriate to the interests of the learners for whom the text book is intended?

Topics in True To Life have been chosen for adults’ interest and relevance to adult around the world. Most of the topics are based on the learners’ needs for speaking and listening in English for example: how to buy something, how to write a letter or massage, expressing the feeling and so on, but there are a few specific topics for reading text or dialogues in a regular way in each unite.

2. Is the subject matter presented either topically or functionally in a logical organized manner?

Every unit has four parts: language focuses, vocabulary, topics and review. In each unit learners have to use language with the vocabularies and the grammatical points that the authors introduced in that unit. For example: in the first lesson (p.9), when the language focus is on present simple and the vocabularies are related to work and study, learners are asked to ‘How do you organize the place where you study or work?’ (by presenting pictures of things they need to produce sentences about organization of their work place or study room). So, they should use present simple for habitual work and facts.

The authors have tried to present the topics from more useful (for adult learners) to less useful subjects that is accompanied by frequency data. In the first lesson they present topics about the things learners always use, and works they always do, and then how to ask question of people (factual information, their attitudes and etc.) to be socially appropriate and grammatically correct. They also present the grammatical points from simple to more difficult: First, simple present, then, present continues, next, past simple, and etc.. However, arranging and sequencing structural syllabus is a controversial matter. A less complex structure is not necessarily more useful, or a more complex structure is not necessarily less useful.

3. Are the reading selections authentic pieces of language?

Mishan, (2005, cited in McDonough, 2013, p.27)) offer a set of criteria by which the authenticity of texts might be assessed in the context of language learning material design:

a. Provenance and authorship of the text
b. Original communicative and social—cultural purpose of the text
c. Original context of the text
d. Learners’ perceptions of and attitudes to the text and the activity pertaining to it. Authenticity also may have different meaning in variety of situations. As Pham (2007, p.196, Cited in McDonough, 2013, p.27) states “What is authentic in London may not be authentic in Hanoi”.

In True To Life, the authors have limited amount of reading material in the Class Book (but increase it in the Personal Study Workbook). So, some units include reading passages which are about the famous people, facts, and there is also a Further Reading Section with interesting and enjoyable topics. Since the learners’ main use of English language will be limited to the reading and listening passage they encounter in the classroom (because it is an EFL setting), the reading passages are too short. The listening texts can be regarded as authentic too.

4. Is the material accurate and up to date?

In this book grammatical points in each unit are linked to an interesting topic or practiced in the real world setting rather than mechanically and outside any context (as in traditional material). Topics and function (language use), grammar and skills can also be brought together. However, it seems that up to date topics will be more appropriate to learners. For example texts which are more related to new technologies, internet, and satellite programs seems to be more attractive, or chatting with a friend through internet are more useful than writing a letter to a friend.

3. 2. 2. Vocabulary and structures (Grammar)

5. Are the new vocabulary words presented in a variety of ways?

In True To Life vocabulary is not treated as a separate section because it forms an intrinsic and fundamental part of every unit and a wide range of vocabulary activities is included in it. In the Class Book and even in the Personal Study Workbook, vocabulary learning skills are introduced and developed such as lexical storage and record keeping, contextual guesswork, word building, collocation, and etc. There is also a visual dictionary includes thirteen pages of illustrations for learners to label. That is a personal dictionary which is easy to compile, and genuinely self-access with the aid of bilingual dictionary.

West (1955), in an article, referred to the tendency of putting related items together to teach as “catenizing” and stated that these items can be interfere to each other. Teaching all parts of the body together, teaching a range of colours together and teaching the series of numbers together are examples of catenizing. In TTL in lesson 5 the authors presented then ames of all parts of the body together. In spite of findings of Higa (1963) and Tinkham(1993) that show presenting related items such as near synonyms, opposites and lexical set together in a
lesson has the effect of making learning more difficult than it should be, there is still a tendency to present such items together in most course book.

6. Are the grammar rules presented in a logical manner and in increasing order of difficulty?

In this book, the grammatical structures are presented from easy to more difficult and also based on their frequency of occurring. For example: simple present, present continues, past simple, present perfect, reflexive pronoun, … and passive.

As the authors stated on the blurb and in the introduction, this book is designed specifically for adult learners. Since adult learners will learn English or any second language better by deduction rather than induction, the author should have presented the grammatical points in a way to take learners attention to those points. In other words, the grammatical points should be presented explicitly. For example: by presenting them in a box and offering a formula and some examples of those grammatical points. Although, the authors refer learners to grammar reference section, but learners may don’t look at the reference and the pages that are not belong to their course. For instance: sixth activity in unit 7, on page 44 asked learners to distinguish between the comparative and superlative adjectives by induction. “What is the rule for the use of each one?”

7. Are students taught top-down techniques for learning new vocabularies?

In some units top-down strategies are explicitly introduced to learners. For instance: exercise 3 on page 121 explains these issues to learners: sometimes it is possible to guess the exact meaning of a new word from the context, sometimes it is possible to guess the general meaning, and sometimes it is very difficult to guess the meaning. Examples: … If they are new try to guess the meaning of these words as they appeared in the story … Beside in the Teacher manual there are some instructions for teachers that can be used for teaching such techniques.

3. 2. 3. Exercises and activities

8. Are there interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate?

In this book there are a large number of open-ended and interactive tasks which allow learners to draw on their knowledge of the world and to be creative. Since this book focuses more on speaking and listening rather than reading and writing skills, there are a lot of opportunities for learners to use the new vocabularies introduced in various exercises in each lesson. Some activities in the book get students to use their imagination and to work in pairs.
or groups to complete a task or an activity by using the vocabularies or grammatical points introduced in the lessons.

9. **Are top-down and bottom-up reading strategies used?**

There are listening and reading passages in this book in which students have to use top-down and bottom-up strategies for understanding the information of the texts or the meaning of a particular word or realizing a specific word in a recording to fill in the blanks in some exercises. In some units that have a reading text, learners are asked to find the main ideas or gist of the text or some information by offering few questions (inferential questions). For instance: exercises 3 and 4 on page 45: *Read the text and answer the questions*, students should answer to true/false and some questions that relate to their understanding of the text.

10. **Do the activities facilitate students’ use of grammar rules by creating situations in which these rules are needed?**

The exercises at the beginning of each unit concentrate on consolidation grammar and vocabulary, later exercises focus on skills development, with a space at the end of each unit for the learners to record their problems and progress in English. Furthermore, in every unit there are exercises that made students use those grammatical points or structures. For instance exercise 4 on page 91: *Here are some more unusual situations how many explanations can you think of for each one? ‘He has not had a bath for ten years. This exercise have students explain this sentence by using present perfect tense, for and since which are the language focus of this lesson. (the answer could be: He has been a tramp for ten years).*

11. **Does the book provide a pattern of review within lesson and Cumulatively test new material?**

The final section of each unit provides review and developmental activities based on the two previous units and there are also four formal tests in the Teachers’ Book. Each test covering six units of the Class Book respectively. Although the most proportion of the every unit devoted to the speaking and listening skills, the tests totally relate to the reading and mostly writing skills (restricting writing) and a few tests concerned pronunciation and words’ stresses.

3. 2. 4. **Physical make-up and Illustrations**

12. **Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learner?**

This book includes some photographs and charts which some of them will help students to understand the text or exercises and are integrated into the text. Furthermore, in some units
students are asked to interpret those pictures. As Hill (2003) states photograph or diagram should incorporate in to a task and make learners to comment on it/interpret it in some way. But in some units, pictures are not only helpful, but also may confuse learners. For instance the pictures in the unit 3 page 18 are not quite clear and students may not be able to find the pictures associated to the vocabularies that should be matched with them.

13. **Is the text attractive (i.e. cover, page appearance, binding)?**

As I mentioned above, this book is designed for adult learners, but in some units there are some exercises that I think are not attractive or suitable for adult learners. For instance: exercise 1 on page 35, *Creative thinking* asked learners to draw as many pictures which include a circle in them (example: a pair of glasses). I don’t think such activity to be a creative activity for adult learners, but could be for children. Another example could be on page 25 (*your creative experiences*) in which the pictures don’t bring the sense of creativity to learners. The paper quality and binding is almost appropriate for using one or two semesters that learners have to use it.

3.3. **Teacher’s Manual**

One of the components of this book is teacher’s manual which helps teachers to present the activities and exercises by various options in it. Now, we will examine the teacher’s manual by some criteria in the three checklists: general features, methodological guidance, supplementary exercises and materials, linguistic background information and context.

3.3.1. **General Features**

14. **Does the manual help the teacher understands the rational of textbook (objectives, methodology)?**

The Teacher’s Book has an introduction section in which authors have stated the objectives of the book in detail. Furthermore, it not only offers teachers away through which the activities presented, but also provides a wide range of ideas that will enable them to approach and extend the activities in different ways. Some of them include worksheets which can be photocopied and distributed in the class. There are also several options for presenting activities to learners and guidance on potential language difficulties learners may have.

15. **Are correct or suggested answers given for the exercises in the textbook?**

At the end of each unit there is an answer key section which includes answers related to every activity which can help teachers and prevent mistaken answers they may offer to students. There is also a Test Answer Keys section at the back of the teacher’s manual that includes all answers of four tests in the manual.

3.3.2. **Methodological Guidance**
16. Are teachers given techniques for activating students’ background knowledge before reading the text?

Some techniques for presenting activities or exercises are given in the teacher’s manual. For instance in second exercise on page 33 DIY SURGERY that includes a reading text, teacher before presenting or asking students to read the text, should work on first activity that consists of a group of vocabularies related to that text. The initial vocabulary activity prepares the learners for the text by pre-teaching of important items, and the final activity expands on the use of reflexive pronouns in the text through the matching exercise and personalized practice. Besides, there is a section that prepares teacher how to present this activity to learners. For example: “Teach the word DIY (Do –It- Yourself): Ask learners what kind of DIY things people usually d;: After eliciting several examples, you might suggest ‘How about operating on yourself?’; Then ask them to read the text; Follow with a whole class reaction and discussion; using the questions in the book”.

17. Does the manual suggest adequate and varied oral exercises for reinforcing points of grammar presented in the textbook?

There are several options (two or three) for some exercises in this book that explain how to present those exercises to learners. These various exercises help teachers for eliciting, make students work to each other in pairs and groups and have them practice the grammatical points introduced in the units.

18. Does the manual help the teacher with each new type of lesson introduced?

As I mentioned above, there is no regularity on presenting exercises among units and each unit has different structure, although some of them are the same. So, for each activity or exercise there is a specific instruction or option for presenting or teaching them.

19. Does the manual provide practical suggestions for teaching pronunciation and intonation?

In some unit there are exercises that work on pronunciation, word stress and intonation and for each exercise there is some practical suggestions of how to teach the items, in which without those suggestions, the teacher may not be aware of how to teach them. For instance: in unit 3The Scene(on page 24),there are a list of vocabularies that students should match them with the pictures, although, there is no instruction for transcription of vocabularies, their pronunciation or stress of compound word, or even introducing compound words, there are such instructions in the teacher manual with detail explanation of compound words.

20. Does the manual provide suggestions to help teacher introduce new Reading passages?
There are some worksheets that consist of reading text with some comprehension questions with using some strategies such as guessing the meaning of words in the text or using dictionary, etc. Furthermore, at the back of the textbook (Class Book), there are few reading passages for further reading. However, as mentioned above, this book has concentrated on listening and speaking more than reading and writing skills. There are also some reading passages in the personal study work book, but the teacher’s manual does not provide any suggestions to teachers to introduce new reading passages.

21. Dose the manual advice the teacher on the use of audiovisual aids?
Visual materials can facilitate and be employed by teachers and learners to enhance language learning in classroom, specifically when the situation is EFL setting in which there is no opportunity except the classroom activities for learners to be engaged with language. In the teacher manual, however, there is no recommendation for using audiovisual aids to teachers.

3.3.3. Linguistic Background Information

22. Dose the manual provide information on grammar to help the teacher explain grammatical patterns in the lesson and anticipate likely problems (i.e. data from contrastive analysis and error analysis)?
At the end of the Class Book there is a grammar reference section in which all the grammatical points introduced into 24 units of the book, are explained in detail based on the learners’ proficiency levels. Although this book is introduced in Iranian context with EFL students who have common L1(mother tongue), I didn’t see any specific explanation based on the data from contrastive analysis or error analysis of errors that students may commit such as pronunciation of sounds like/θ/ or/ð/. Nation(2010, p.89) in a guideline format on environment and needs suggests that, “the activities should take account of whether the learners share the same first language” .He also stated a series of principle that course designers or teachers should take in to account, “the course should help the learners to make the most effective use of previous knowledge” (ibid.,p. 47). He argued that if for example cognate vocabularies include in a course, the learners will progress in a short time which is good for their motivation.

3.3.4. Context

23. Is the textbook appropriate for the students who will be using it?
Hutchinson and Torres(1994; cited in Quang, n.d.,p.96) argued that “no teaching learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook”. So, educators must prioritize the factors most crucial to their situation.
This book is appropriate to Iranian adults’ learners of English, but it needs some modification to be culturally more suitable to them. For example by omitting some pictures or exercises, or as I mentioned above, by presenting explicitly grammatical points to learners, and addition of up to date and more interesting reading texts and providing more instructions for exercises and activities for the learners who want to work on this book by themselves and also providing various teaching materials to meet the needs of different learners and learning styles (e.g. audiovisual materials) and etc.

24. Are the textbook and teacher’s manual appropriate for the teacher who will be teaching from them?

I think that this teacher’s manual is generally appropriate for the experienced and professional and even for inexperienced teachers, because it explained every exercises and activities and also offer some options for presenting materials to learners.

4. Conclusion

ELT textbooks have an important role in the success of language programs. As Sheldom (1988,cited in Jahangard,2007,p. 148) suggests that “textbooks represent the visible heart of any ELT program”. The use of an evaluation procedure or checklist can lead to a more systematic and thorough examination of potential textbook and to enhance outcomes for learners, instructors, and administrators. In other words Evaluation of textbooks is a way to improve the textbooks and materials employed in the program and help teachers to use them in a way to be more appropriate and suitable to learners and teachers.

True To Life reflects a multi-syllabus, and manages to integrate the four skills without neglecting other aspects of ELT such as vocabulary development and sentence structures. Furthermore, it covered productive and receptive skills through a wide range of strategies such as top-down, bottom-up, skimming and scanning. But it has some weaknesses that needs to be modified and more justified to the learners and context in which they are to be taught, such as more organized sequencing exercises and activities, presenting grammatical point explicitly, more clear pictures, providing equal time regarding of four skills (four strands: meaning- focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning and fluency activity ),more clear instruction in textbook for learners who want to work independently by themselves in order to improve autonomy in them, more working on pronunciation specifically those sounds that can be problematic to Iranian’s students such as (θ ,ð),including cognate words lists in the units or teacher’s manual which can be helpful to learners’ progressing in a short time and is good for motivation (Nation,2010, p.48),reviewing vocabularies among units, using of visual aids (video, films), including up
to date reading texts with topics related to new technologies and etc., avoiding of presenting items that may interfere to each other (e.g. introducing all parts of body in one unit), using of learners’ previous knowledge in the course and presenting material in a way to be suitable for different learning style. In addition, “material evaluation is only one part of a complex process and it can be judged successful, after classroom implementation and feedback” (McDonough, 2013, p.62). For this reason we need some data from learners and teachers who work with this book to judge it.

References


Title

Task-Based L2 Learning: Writing - to-Learn and Recalling from Texts in Iranian Junior University Students

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Biodata

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Abstract

This study was an attempt to examine the effects of three different tasks or study conditions (reading-discussion-only/no writing, restricted writing: answering study questions, and extended writing: analytic essay writing or summary writing) on students' learning from text (immediate versus delayed recall). To this end, 90 male and female junior students, majoring in English, from three different branches, namely: Teaching, at Najaf Abad Islamic Azad University, English Literature, at Isfahan University; and Translation at Shahreza Islamic Azad University were chosen to read, write about and take a series of tests on 4 passages. The subjects were primarily screened by a TOEFL test, and they were divided into three groups of 30, on the basis of their equivalencies in their obtained scores. Analyses of students' writings indicated their varying approaches to studying and writing about the passages, and revealed that there exist significant differences between these three conditions. When recall was further analyzed for the number of idea units, more of them appeared in the subjects' written protocols writing extensively beforehand, in both the immediate and delayed conditions. Time also did reach
significant effect on students' performances. Implications for assessing and teaching writing - to - learn tasks are suggested as well. The findings of the study are expected to be of significant importance to teachers, course designers, and test makers.

**Keywords**: Task-based Learning, Restricted Writing, Extended Writing, Immediate Recall, Delayed Recall

1. Introduction

1.1. Origins of Writing- to- Learn Approach

Writing has always been the focus of many scholars' attention in applied linguistics and language teaching, and also due to its frequent application by non-specialized people (Zamel, 1987). For Rivers (1981) writing involves individual selection of vocabulary and structure for expression of personal meaning. She looks at writing from two perspectives, as a major skill and as a service skill which integrates the other language skills.

Chastain (1988) also takes two aspects of writing into consideration: as a means of communication and as a means of learning language, when she notes writing as a basic communicative skill and unique asset in the process of learning a second language. Chaudron (1987) takes writing as a process whereby the writer discovers meaning instead of merely finding appropriate structures in which to package the already developed ideas. Widdowson (1983) considers writing as a communicative activity and as an interactive process of negotiation.

Writing involves the recursive processes of drafting, revising, and editing (Shih, 1986). As it also includes writing tasks that direct students to take an evaluative and analytical stance toward what they read. Writing is often required as a mode of demonstrating knowledge (e.g., in essay exams, summaries) and is also used by instructors as a mode of prompting independent thinking, researching, and learning (e.g., in critiques, research paper) (Shih, 1986, p. 621).

Writing tasks should build upon knowledge students already possess but should also be designed to allow new learning (Williams, 1977). According to Zamel (1992), giving students the opportunity to write about what they find interesting, significant, moving, puzzling may help them realize that their understanding of complex texts evolves as they (re)read and that written reflection makes this learning possible.
Hudelson (1984) illustrates how bilingual children learn by brainstorming and writing about the content they are about to study before they read their textbook, thus establishing a connection, a set of expectations, and background knowledge that facilitates comprehension. Writing allow students not just to learn about something in a particular text, but to learn about how one learns (Bruner, 1973). This is what Bruner (cited in Raimes, 1983) meant when he described as essential to learning the act of climbing on your own shoulders to be able to look down at what you've just done and then to represent it to yourself (p. 537).

Santa and Havens (1991) suggested that meaningful writing should bridge new information and old knowledge structure, provide authentic authoring tasks for an uniformed audience, encourage minds – on – learning, facilitate conceptual organization and restructuring, and promote metacognition (cited in Holliday, Yore, and Alvermann, 1994). Writing to learn, according to Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), needs to emphasize knowledge - transformation models of writing that embody the canons of evidence, plausible reasoning, interpretive frameworks, and higher order thinking. Of course, the inherent difficulties of representing multidimensional thoughts in unidimensional written space may put very drastic limitations on the writing to learn process (Holliday, Yore, & Alvermann, 1994).

Ozdoba (1992) suggests writing is not an isolated activity that can only be used in language arts. She believes that writing to learn can be in all subject areas and can be the key that unlocks the door segregating our curriculum, through which students can explore connections with prior knowledge and connections with subject areas. Philips (1993) holds that writing / discussion is viewed by the teacher as offering greater benefits to facilitate learning for both teacher and students than discussion - only.

Discussions of how writing aids learning have overlooked two significant issues: that different writing functions require different kinds of engagement with ideas and information, and that although writing is assigned in various subject areas, it serves a range of pedagogical purposes, only one of which concerns generation and reformulation of ideas, that enables students to understand and remember the material they read (Durst, and Newell, 1989 p. 384). Working out of constructivist theories of making meaning (e.g, Spiro, 1980) and language and learning theory (e.g, Britton, 1970; Vygotsky, 1962), studies of writing and learning have sought to compare the limits and constraints of restricted writing to more extended writing (DurstandNewell, 1989).
1.2. Extended Writing vs. Restricted Writing

An extensive research literature examines the restricted writing (known as *adjunct questioning*) following reading (e.g., Anderson and Biddle, 1975; Andre, 1979; Rickards, 1979). There are also a number of studies investigating the effects of extended writing on comprehension (e.g., Bretzing and Kulhavy, 1981; Shimmerlik and Nolan, 1976).

Newell (1984), Newell and Winograd (1989), Langer and Applebee (1987), and Marshall (1987) maintain that when completing a series of short-answer questions (as restricted writing), students narrow their focus to specific points without integrating content across questions, and as a learning tool, comprehension questions seem most appropriate for short-term retention of facts.

In Britton's function theory (1971), extended writing such as analytic writing is more than a discourse structure used to carry ideas as a kind of cargo from writer to reader. With analytic writing, however, students have access to a different kind of tool for understanding new ideas and information: a focused examination of relations among ideas and events (Durst and Newell, 1989, p. 385). On the whole, these studies suggest that teachers need to consider what kinds of learning they wish to encourage in students, and select the appropriate writing tasks (Durst and Newell, 1989, p. 386).

1.3. The Effect of Task on Learning

Studies examining the effects of reading and writing on learning have analyzed various types of writing tasks (note-taking, question answering, personal responses, formal analyses of texts, essay writing, etc.) (Many, Fyfe, Lewis and Mitchell, 1996, p. 12).

In 1984, Newell, lamenting the lack of empirical backing for writing as a mode of learning, examined the effects of notetaking, short-answer responses, and essay writing on three measures of learning: recall, concept application, and gain in passage-specific knowledge. He found that essay writing enabled students to “produce a consistently more abstract set of associations for key concepts than did notetaking or answering study questions,” (p. 275) and provided a possible explanation for such a finding based on Emig’s notion of the connective nature of writing:

[A]nswering study questions required planning at a local level rather than at a global level. While answering study questions may require a great deal of planning, the writer can only consider information in isolated segments. Consequently, while a great deal of information is generated, it never gets integrated into a coherent text, and, in turn, into the students’ own thinking. Essay writing, on the other hand, requires that the writers, in the course of examining evidence and marshaling ideas, integrate elements of the prose passage into their
knowledge of the topic rather than leaving the information in isolated bits. This integration may well explain why students’ understanding of concepts from the prose passage was significantly better after writing essays than after answering study questions. (Newell, 1984, p. 282)

Researches, reviewed by Shanahan and Tierney (1990), document that more extended responses are linked to greater learning, and there is some indication that different types of tasks lead to different types of learning. So, the types of learning fostered by restricted writing (comprehension questions) and three kinds of extended, informational writing (note-taking, summarizing, and analytic writing) will be different (Durst and Newell, 1989, p. 384).

1.4. The Effect of Repeated Writing on Memory and Recall

As Naka and Naoi (1995) pose, various memory aids are used to remember things. Some, such as reminder notes, are external, while others, such as mental rehearsing, are internal. A memory aid that is commonly used by the Japanese is repeated writing or rehearsal by writing, which involves writing down to-be-remembered items over and over on a piece of paper, on a table top, or even in the air (Naka and Naoi, 1995, p. 201). Naka and Takizawa (1990), did find a repeated-writing effect. They studied the effect of rehearsal with and without writing on recall and recognition of three different types of item-namely, words, syllables and graphic designs, and did reach the same result in which writing did lead to better recall and facilitated learning.

The studies have found that the majority of students' writing was undertaken for the purpose of helping students remember information and to discover whether students had learned relevant content (Applebee, 1981, P. 60). Because subjects' learning and recall performances tend to be correlated (Underwood, 1954), tests of immediate recall provide an additional opportunity to learn (Slamecka and Katsaiti, 1988). By establishing a repertoire of strategies and techniques for incorporating writing into reading / study process, students are able to increase the quantity of their encoding, retrieval and application of content area knowledge (Reese and Zielonka, 1989). Accordingly, writing-to-learn can be applied in many situations including note-taking, writing paragraphs and longer passages, understanding diagrams and visual/graphic aids, summarizing and recalling.

1.5. Recent Writing-to-Learn Studies

Writing has generally been seen as having a minor role in promoting second language (L2) development. Like other output, writing has often been seen as the result of acquisition, rather than as a facilitating factor. It has also been considered perhaps the most distant reflection of the developing interlanguage, with spontaneous oral language a much better approximation.
As with the reconsideration of output more generally, writing has now come into focus as an activity that may promote as well as reflect L2 development (cited in Williams, 2012).

Manchón (2011) makes a distinction between three types of writing: learning to write in another language, using writing to learn the target language, and writing in order to learn a specific content area. Another useful way of conceptualizing the role of writing in language learning is Manchón and Roca del Larios’ (2011) mental model of the L2 writer. They demonstrate that L2 learners’ goal-setting behaviour with regard to the writing task, the aspects of the writing task they attend to, and the depth of problem-solving behaviour they engage in influence the potential benefits of writing for L2 learning.

Writing and writing instruction have often been viewed within the learning-to-write perspective (see Hyland, 2011, for an overview). Within this more traditional perspective, it is generally the last skill to be learned because it is only when L2 development is well along that L2 writing can be effectively taught. A contrasting perspective is writing-to-learn, which sees writing as a vehicle for learning (Harklau, 2002; Manchón, 2009, 2011a). Manchón (2011a) distinguishes between writing to learn content and writing to learn language. Within the writing-to-learn perspective, researchers have begun to ask if there is anything unique or special about written output that can facilitate L2 development. One way to explore this question is to focus on the processes of L2 development and examine the impact of writing at different points of development.

There have been relatively few direct studies directly comparing written and oral production, but their number has recently been increasing. Although the results of some of these studies are conflicting, it is argued that for those that demonstrate a facilitative effect for written production, results can be traced directly or indirectly to two inherent features of writing: (1) its permanence and (2) the slower pace at which it occurs in comparison to speaking (see Fig. 1). These two features permit more learner control over attentional resources as well as more need and opportunity to attend to language both during and after production (cited in Williams, 2012).
Writing tasks in these studies generally are assigned the highest involvement index. One study compared two reading tasks and a writing task, ascribing the highest involvement load to the writing task (Kim, 2008). The group that was assigned the writing task was the most successful in the initial noticing and learning of new words but she found no significant difference in retention rates. The post-test used in this study was the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS), which is particularly sensitive to levels of noticing. Thus, in vocabulary learning, as in language development more generally, written production may have a positive affect, particularly on initial stages of acquisition. Keating (2008) and Pichette, Serres, and LaFontaine (2012) had similar results: A writing task, assigned a higher involvement index than reading tasks, yielded higher word recall scores, but that effect faded with time.

Several recent studies suggest that the act of writing naturally entails both a greater need and a better opportunity for focus on form than does speaking in general, and oral discussion in particular (Ortega, 2005, 2010; Schoonen, Snellings, Stevenson and van Gelderen, 2009). According to Bulté and Housen (2009), writing is 5–8 times slower than speaking. An important consequence of this additional time is that writers can plan. As Kuiken and Vedder state, “the writer has the possibility to stop the grapho-motoric process and to concentrate only on either retrieval or on planning processes” (2011, p. 92). Writing may allow or even encourage the deployment of explicit, or even metalinguistic, L2 knowledge, which may not be available to them while speaking (R. Ellis, 2003; Schoonen et al., 2009; Wolff, 2000). Schoonen et al. (2009) note that “requirements of adequacy are felt more strongly in written language than spoken language, the latter generally being more tolerant of ‘errors’ or sloppy wording” (pp. 79–80). In short, writing seems to demand a greater level of precision than speech. Wolff maintains that it is this demand for precision that promotes language awareness, making writing a driver in language development. Writing “calls for constant interaction with linguistic knowledge. . . (that learners). . . already have; in calling up this knowledge, they probably restructure it and thus make it better available for further use” (2000, p. 219).

Yet the results of studies that have compared written and oral production have been mixed, especially regarding accuracy. Some studies have found higher accuracy in written production than in speaking (Ellis, 1987; Kormos, 2012). Others have found the opposite (Granfeldt, 2008) or no difference (Kuiken and Vedder, 2011). There is also a lack of consensus on measures of syntactic complexity and lexical variety (Lu, 2011; Norris and
Ortega, 2009). So, it seems that direct comparisons of written and oral production have yet to capture any consistent advantage for writing. Intermediate processes, rather than the written production itself, may provide a better way to observe how focus on form is accomplished in writing and through writing instruction.

Manchón (2011b; Manchón and Roca de Larios, 2011) shows how learners use the writing process to try out new structures. Weissberg (2000, 2006) has also documented the emergence of some forms in written production prior to oral production. Because writing leaves a permanent record, writers can try out their hypotheses in ways that can be monitored, reviewed, and compared to future input (Ellis, 2003; Schoonen et al., 2009; Tocalli-Beller and Swain, 2005). This cognitive comparison between forms, which is often described in L2 research as conducive to learning, is available for reflection and study.

Schoonen et al. (2009) describe the written page as a temporary extension of working memory although they caution that limitations on memory remain even in the context of writing. Kuiken and Vedder (2011) suggest that learners may use time to retrieve knowledge from long-term memory. It is probably safe to say that the cognitive window is open somewhat wider and learners have a richer opportunity to test their hypotheses when they write than when they speak. The written mode can be a lowerstakes arena in which to test out emergent forms. It is often less public than speaking, and because it is offline, offers an opportunity to edit. The participant in a study by Lam (2000) stated that he felt safer trying out new forms in writing first before using them in spoken interaction.

Studies examining the effects of reading and writing on learning have analyzed various types of writing tasks (note-taking, question answering, essay writing, personal responses, formal analyses of texts, etc.) (Shanahan and Tierney, 1990). Discussions of how writing aids learning have overlooked two significant issues: that although writing is assigned in various subject areas, it serves a range of pedagogical purposes, only one of which concerns generation of ideas, that enables students to understand and remember the material they read, and that different writing functions require different kinds of engagement with ideas and information (Durst & Newell, 1989, p. 384).

2. The Present Study

Having the above views in mind and since different writing functions require different kinds of engagement with ideas and information, the aim of this study is an examination of how discussion without writing, restricted writing (responding questions with short answers) and
extended writing (either analytic essay writing or summary writing) might affect students' learning from texts, to clarify to what extent different tasks lead to different kinds of learning. Overall, the present study, then, focuses on these questions:

1) Do the three different tasks, discussion – only/no writing, restricted writing: answering study questions, and extended writing (analytic or summary writing) affect students' learning from text? if yes, how?

2) Does essay writing condition have any superiority over the two other conditions in terms of students' learning?

3) Will students' learning from a text be affected by time, as measured by immediate and delayed passage recall?

To put in different words, the focal question in this piece of research addresses the effect of writing on students' learning over an extended period of time (one week). The study suggests the need for research that will disentangle these influences to identify the effects of pedagogy on learning from writing.

3. Method

3.1. Subjects

90 undergraduate male and female junior students majoring in English, from three different branches, called: Teaching (TEFL) at Najaf Abad Islamic Azad University, English Literature at Isfahan University, and Translation at Shahreza Islamic Azad University were chosen (out of 150 students) to read, write about and take a series of tests on four prose passages.

Subjects' selection was on the basis of their scores received in a TOEFL test so that for each score on one group there was nearly an equal score in the two other groups. So, the subjects were homogeneous with regard to the results of the proficiency test. Accordingly, the subjects were assigned to three groups of 30 and then each group from either branches was divided into three sub-groups of 10 each, on the basis of equal distribution of scores. Consequently, there were nine sub-groups of ten. Of course, each task from the three read-and-study conditions was assigned to each sub-group within the main group. In order to neutralize subject expectancy, the subjects were not informed of the aims of the study.

3.2. Materials

The materials used in this study included a second language proficiency test (TOEFL), and four reading comprehension passages each of which followed by a set of four questions. The
passages were excerpted from a book called: *Essay & Letter Writing*, written by L.G. Alexander.

### 3.2.1. Second Language Proficiency Test

The *TOEFL* implemented in this study was based on structure, written expression, vocabulary review parts and reading comprehension tests.

### 3.2.2. The Reading Passages

The passages were selected not only on the basis of content but also as being: 1) a discourse type of analysis (Applebee, 1981); 2) self-contained, that is, no reliance on graphics in the text; and 3) of about 430 words in length to insure that students could read it within a 15 minute period.

**Table 1  Characteristics of the Reading Passages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Number of Words</th>
<th>Idea-Units</th>
<th><em>Readability Level</em></th>
<th>Discourse Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourists</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47% - 52%</td>
<td>Reflective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cinema</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47% - 52%</td>
<td>Argumentative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stranger on the Bridge</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47% - 52%</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Walk on Sunday</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47% - 52%</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Fog Index of Readability (See Farhady, Iafarpour & Birjandi, 1994: 282).*

As Table 1 demonstrates, the passages were of different types as follows: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, and reflective.

### 4. Procedure

Subjects were primarily screened by an English proficiency test (*TOEFL* test) a few days before administering the main experiment. The experiment was conducted in the subjects' regular class by their regular English teacher. Three different study tasks for each passage: reading - and - discussion only, answering a set of four study questions for each passage, and writing an essay were designed. Because these assignments would enable students to interact with information contained in the passages in differing way, it was anticipated that each would lead to varying ways of thinking and reasoning about the context, and consequently, to varying levels of understanding and recall of the information (cited in Newell and Winograd, 1995).

**4.1. Reading-and-Discussion Condition (Without Any Writing)**
This condition allowed students to read and discuss the passages to monitor their comprehension, and it also served as a control against which to compare the effects of the writing tasks.

4.2. Restricted Writing Condition (Answering Study Questions)
The series of 4 questions containing textually explicit and textually implicit questions were assigned. These types of questions capture the relationship between the question and answer, that is, between the information presented in the passage and that required to answer a question (Pearson & Johnson, 1978). The subjects were expected to write one or two sentence-length response to the questions.

4.3. Extended Writing Condition (Analytic or Summary Writing)
For this task, students were asked to restate (summarize) the passages contents or to express their own interpretations and points of view about the passages (analytically, whenever possible) through which they had to move beyond citing information to reformulating passage content to support and explain their understanding. So, they were free to choose one of the alternatives.

Following a regular pattern, data collection for the experiment ran for a two-week period. On the first day, the students received directions for reading and studying the first passage in one of the three conditions. Immediately after accomplishing each task, they received directions to recall the passage. The next day and the following days went like this for the rest of the passages. Then, one week later they repeated the recall. Of course, in each stage of recalling, the title of the passages was given as a retrieval cue, without any access to the original texts.

5. Analyses of Recall Protocols (Data Analyses)
5.1. Scoring
To measure the subjects' understanding of the passage, they were asked to write down all they could remember about the passages they just read. To examine how these three tasks (the two writing tasks, and the reading-and-discussion only task) directed the subjects' thinking about the prose passages, the recall protocols were propositionally analyzed and matched against the ideas contained in the original passages, to examine the size of the reader's representation of a test or the density of ideas in the representation.
Here, **lexical propositions** are considered to be the clauses which express separable idea units. So, basically, each **idea unit** consists of a single clause (main or subordinate, including adverbial and relative clauses) representing a single event or state (Kintsch, 1974).

Each passage had previously been parsed equally into a total number of 40 idea units. Each **recall protocol** was scored for the presence or absence of the 40 idea units of each passage. Students were not penalized for their vocabulary and grammatical shortcomings. It means that only explicitly stated information in the subjects’ recalling was counted the ideas units. So, the students' performances on the texts were coded as 0 - 40 basis, in terms of the quantity of idea units (information) remembered and written by the subjects.

The subjects’ recall protocols were scored by two judges on the basis of the quantity of the information (proportion of the idea units) they had recalled from the original passages (both in the immediate and delayed recall conditions), to gain a perspective on how students approached the assigned tasks. Accordingly, the inter-rater reliability between raters, estimated by Kendall’s correlation coefficient, was .95 indicating a high correlation and ascertaining a great level of agreement.

**5.2. Design (Statistical Analyses)**

*One-way ANOVAs* for the effects of the tasks, for either of the passages, on each recall stage were carried out in isolation and also as a whole measurement of all passages in immediate and delayed recall of the three tasks altogether, accompanied with a *t-test* conducted for the comparison of the subjects' mean scores of the whole passages obtained in the two recall tasks of either of the three study conditions.

Furthermore, a three (study condition: discussion, study questions, and essay) by two (time: immediate and delayed) repeated measures ANOVA (2-way ANOVA) was employed to determine the interaction effects of the aforementioned factors on the overall recall of passage content. So, the design was a 2 X 3 factorial with repeated measures.

**6. Results**

To gain a perspective on how students approached the tasks, the subjects' recall protocols were scored on the basis of the quantity of the information they had recalled from the original passage. Setting a guideline, the subjects' written recalls were analyzed for the proportion of the **idea units**. Results for the features of the three tasks and for the effect of time on the subjects' recall tasks are presented in the tables of the following pages.
To explore the effects of tasks, the other aspects of the experiment were examined. The following tables (Tables 2&3) demonstrate the means and standard deviations of the subjects' written recalls of the four passages separately in terms of the three different task types (conditions).

The horizontal column presents the four passages in their abbreviated forms as follows: \( W \) stands for the passage entitled: A Walk on Sunday Morning, and is, in fact, the first letter of Walk. \( S \) stands for the passage called: The Stranger on the Bridge and Stranger is replaced by letter S. Besides, \( T \) and \( C \) stand for, Tourists and The Cinema, respectively. The vertical column indicates the three study conditions: \( W \) (essay writing), \( Q \) (answering questions), and \( R \) (reading-and-discussion only) conditions.

**Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations of the Idea Units Proportion in the Immediate Recall of the Three Study Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passages</th>
<th>Study Conditions</th>
<th>( W )</th>
<th>( S )</th>
<th>( C )</th>
<th>( T )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( X )</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>( X )</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>( X )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( W )</td>
<td>30.83</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>30.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( Q )</td>
<td>21.96</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>24.47</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( R )</td>
<td>18.87</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>20.80</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>18.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( d.f. = (2, 87) \)

\( F_{obs} = 114.58 \)  \( F_{obs} = 126.12 \)  \( F_{obs} = 119.49 \)  \( F_{obs} = 119.08 \)

\( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)  \( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)  \( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)  \( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)

\( F_{p} = .001 \)

**Table 3 Means and Standard Deviations of the Idea Units Proportion in the Delayed Recall of the Three Study Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passages</th>
<th>Study Conditions</th>
<th>( W )</th>
<th>( S )</th>
<th>( C )</th>
<th>( T )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( X )</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>( X )</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>( X )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( W )</td>
<td>25.33</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>25.47</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>24.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( Q )</td>
<td>16.37</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>15.97</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>15.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( R )</td>
<td>11.63</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>10.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( d.f. = (2, 87) \)

\( F_{obs} = 200.38 \)  \( F_{obs} = 263.51 \)  \( F_{obs} = 153.65 \)  \( F_{obs} = 217.72 \)

\( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)  \( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)  \( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)  \( F_{crit} = 3.09 \)

As it is clear, the patterns of recall of the idea units on the same day (immediate condition) is summarized by Table 2, whereas Table 3 reveals these patterns on one week later (delayed condition). The mean proportion of the idea units recalled seemed to provide further insights into the understanding of the effect of task (study condition) on recalling of the passage content.
Summarizing the results of Tables 2 and 3, an overall mean proportion of the idea units for the whole passages have been provided by Table 4 which reports the inferential statistics for the quantitative results of aforementioned scores, namely the means and standard deviations (SDs) of the subjects' written recalls in the three different task types.

**Table 4** Overall Mean Proportion of the Idea Units of the Whole Passages for the Three Study Conditions: Immediate Recall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>Study Conditions</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>F –Value</th>
<th>F-Value Critical</th>
<th>FP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31.18</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>(2.87)</td>
<td>236.37</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>(2.87)</td>
<td>236.37</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Delayed Recall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>Study Conditions</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>F –Value</th>
<th>F-Value Critical</th>
<th>FP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Delayed</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.96</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Delayed</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.84</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>(2.87)</td>
<td>236.37</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Delayed</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11.23</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5** Analysis of Variance Summary Table for the Subjects' Mean Scores of the Whole Passages for the Three Study Conditions

Immediate Recall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between – Groups</td>
<td>2203.1722</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1101.5861</td>
<td>236.3792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within – Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>4.6602</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2608.6139</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Delayed Recall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between – Groups</td>
<td>2927.2597</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1463.6299</td>
<td>333.9708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within – Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>4.6602</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3308.5722</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one - factor analysis of variance (one - way ANOVA) controlling for the effects of task was run to determine whether, overall, there were any significant differences between the mean scores for the idea units proportion (Table 5). The results were also compared in both recall conditions (i.e., immediate versus delayed), by being submitted to t - test (Tables 6,
As Table 4 displays, the F-value observed [Fobs (2, 87) = 236.37, P <.001] in the immediate recall and the F-value observed in the delayed recall [Fobs (2, 87) = 333.94, P <.001] both exceeded the F-value critical of the table [Fcrit = 3.09, P <.05], at the 5% level of significance.

There appeared to be statistically significant differences among the subjects' mean scores in the three study conditions. The Tukey's HSD (Honestly Significant Difference) test results demonstrated these discrepancies between W with R, W with Q, and Q with R conditions. Therefore, it was concluded, as it seemed to be the case, that the essay writing condition resulted in quantitatively superior recall, both in the immediate and delayed conditions, and the outperformance of the subjects in the essay writing task demonstrated the overall significant writing effect on the subjects' performances. So, the subjects differentiated in their recalls on the basis of the various task types, with the superiority of the writing condition over the two others. Looking at the other way around, a t-test was conducted as the proper statistical computation for assessing the differences between the subjects' mean proportion of the idea units recalled, in the two related conditions, namely, immediate and delayed recalls, within separate study condition.

Table 6 The Results of the T-Value Computation for "W" Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>T-Value Observed</th>
<th>T-Value Critical</th>
<th>Level of Significance for Two-Tailed Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>I.R</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31.18</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12.01</td>
<td>2.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D.R</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24.96</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12.01</td>
<td>2.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 The Results of the T-Value Computation for "Q" Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>T-Value Observed</th>
<th>T-Value Critical</th>
<th>Level of Significance for Two-Tailed Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>I.R</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12.34</td>
<td>2.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D.R</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.84</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12.34</td>
<td>2.045</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 The Results of the T-Value Computation for "R" Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>T-Value Observed</th>
<th>T-Value Critical</th>
<th>Level of Significance for Two-Tailed Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Regarding Tables 6, 7 and 8, the t-value observed for either of the three task types was above the t-value critical of the t-distribution table. Therefore, it was clarified that the discrepancies between the mean scores proved to be significant, according to which the subjects' mean scores in the delayed recall were statistically significantly lower than that of the immediate recall and the subjects' performances overwhelmingly seemed to be decreased in this condition. So, time did reach substantial significance.

Further analysis was carried out on the data. The subjects' rate of retention and remembrance in the three study conditions were calculated by subtracting the mean proportion of the idea units obtained in the immediate recall from the mean scores gained in the delayed recall (Table 9).

**Table 9 Subjects’ Rate of Retention and Remembrance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$\bar{X}$</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>$F$ -Value Observed</th>
<th>$F$ -Value Critical</th>
<th>FP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-6.22</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.87)</td>
<td>13.87</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-7.16</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-8.12</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 10 Analysis of Variance Summary Table for the Subjects’ Rate of Retention and Remembrance in the Three Study Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>53.6792</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26.8396</td>
<td>13.8726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>168.3208</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1.9347</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>222.000</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the above tables (Tables 9 & 10) illustrate the value of the observed F [$F_{obs}$ (2, 87) = 13.8726, $P < .001$] that was greater than the F-value critical of the table, at the 5% level.
of significance $[F_{critical} = 3.09, P < .05]$. It revealed significant differences between the mean scores in accordance with the Tukey's HSD test results through which these differences were characterized between W with R, W with Q and Q with R conditions. Again the subjects' performances on the writing condition were strongly better than the two others' performances, confirming the superior influence of writing condition.

To this end, a two (time: immediate and delayed) by three (study condition: discussion, study questions, and essay) repeated measures ANOVA (2-way ANOVA) was employed to determine the interaction effects of these factors on recall and consequently learning of the passage content.

In two-way ANOVA, the within-group variance (residual) is the same because it represents error variance. However, the between-groups variance can be the result of study condition, time, or their interaction. Therefore, there was a need to have a variance component for each of these factors. The Table displaying the results, would look like Table 11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation (Main Effects)</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-Value</th>
<th>Signifcant F</th>
<th>F-Value Critical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Condition</td>
<td>5103.592</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2551.796</td>
<td>564.360</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>2311.250</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2311.250</td>
<td>511.160</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>786.754</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>4.522</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8228.436</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>45.969</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the Table results show, the F-ratio for the effect of study condition exceeded the critical value. So, there was an overall significant effect for study condition [$F_{obs} (2, 174) = 564.360$, $P = .000 > F_{critical} = 3.04$]. Besides, the effect of time did reach substantial significance [$F_{obs} (1, 174) = 511.160$, $P = .000 > F_{critical} = 3.04$]. As it can be inferred, the F-ratio for the interaction effects of these two variables (Time XStudy Condition interaction) approached no significance [$F_{obs} (2, 174) = 2.968$, $P = .054 < F_{critical} = 3.04$]. These findings led us to pursue the direct line of inquiry into the effects of task on learning over an extended period of time (one week).

7. Discussion
To sum up, as it was mentioned before, the subjects were asked to write immediate and delayed recalls of the passages, to test the relationship between what students did during the study conditions and what they remembered later.

By conducting a study, Newell and Winograd (1989) demonstrated that the type of passage information recalled may be determined by the nature of manipulation. Put another way, rather than a general effect on learning, the nature of the writing task shapes what students will remember, which is in the same line with Shanahan & Tierney's (1990) indication that different types of tasks lead to different types of learning, according to which, along with findings of this study, the first research question was clearly verified. To extend this notion, one question is explored: Which of the three study conditions would allow students to remember passage for a longer period of time? Of course, an overall significant effect for essay writing condition resulted in allowing students to remember passage for a longer period of time.

As posthoc analyses revealed, differences among study conditions were the result of a strong effect for essay writing condition with the students recalling a higher proportion of idea units in this condition ($\bar{X} = 28.07$) than in answering study questions ($\bar{X} = 19.42$) and the reading-and-discussion only condition ($\bar{X} = 15.29$). One week later, overall recall of the idea units dropped considerably from 24.51 the same day to 17.34 one week later, with the essay writing condition group continuing to do better than the study questions, and the review only condition ones.

Generally speaking, these results for overall recall of passage content in both the immediate and delayed conditions were similar to Langer and Applebee's (1987) finding that, "Overall, the tasks involving writing led to better recall than did the read and study condition (review only)" (p. 123).

Accordingly, like the results of the Langer and Applebee's (1987) study, the foregoing analyses also indicated that the essay writing condition led to superior recall scores in both the immediate and delayed conditions according to which the second research question was absolutely confirmed. This measure of learning was a general recall of the prose passages - a measure that examines memory for information in the passages as a whole.

These findings made it possible for us to pursue a more direct line of inquiry into the effects of writing tasks on learning. Unlike Takahashi and Shimizu (1989) that did not find any writing effect, Langer and Applebee suggested that rather than a general effect, the effects of writing are highly specific - *writing is not writing is not writing* (1987, P.
Information that is manipulated through completion of an extended writing task (i.e., essay writing that explores relationships among ideas) is more likely to be learned and retained than information that is organized through completion of a general review task (i.e., answering study questions) (Newell and Winograd, 1989).

In general, the data for the mean proportions of the idea units of the study questions and essay writing conditions revealed how the subjects approached the two tasks. Because the study questions could often be answered in abbreviated manner, this condition allowed the students to focus on a more narrow set of information while the extended essay writing condition focused them to spread their attention over a wider spectrum of passage content (Newell and Winograd, 1989). These results seemed compatible with the study assumption that the essay writing required interpretation and proportionally more idea units (source material) from the prose passages to begin with, and the subjects in this case, had more passage-specific information to draw upon later when recalling the content of the reading passages (Newell and Winograd, 1989).

Overall, the students were more likely to write with a depth of understanding and with elaborated details when asked later to apply in the new situations, as a result of writing extensively about the passages. Writing extensively and analytically about the passages seemed to provide the students with a means for constructing relationship between ideas and information gleaned from the relevant prose passages. So, writing extensively was more facilitative of recall and it actually appeared to enable the subjects outperforming the two other study conditions. These results would seem to suggest that reasoning about content-area information during essay writing benefited the students, regardless of their ability level.

8. Conclusion

The findings analyses reported in the present study investigated the effects of the three study conditions on the students' immediate and delayed recall of information from prose passages. As previous studies (Langer and Applebee, 1987; Marshall, 1987), along with the findings of the present study, have demonstrated, the results suggest the considerable advantage that writing, whether restrictive or extended, offers students as a way to learn from text when compared to studying without writing. The underlying assumption for the research on the relationship between writing and learning is that the act of composing enables students to organize and then formulate meaning from what they have tentatively construed while
reading and studying (Durst and Newell, 1989). So, writing can become a powerful means of rethinking, revising and reformulating what one knows (Newell and Winograd, 1989).

Because of its pace and the permanence of its record, writing may aid in L2 development at several possible points: first, at the point of noticing and input processing, then, soon after the initial point of acquisition, as learners try out new and more complex forms, or familiar forms in new contexts, and finally, later in the process, as learners retrieve and use forms over which they do not yet have full control—in other words, in knowledge internalization, modification, and consolidation. The demand for precision and the opportunity to meet this demand stem from the two features that differentiate writing from other forms of language use (Williams, 2012). Clearly, writing is not crucial to second language learning in all contexts, but it has the potential to play a positive role. If we accept the possibility of the conversion of explicit to implicit knowledge, the potential impact of writing on L2 development increases considerably.

Of great importance is the very fact that extended essay writing enabled the students to recall a greater proportion of idea units than did answering study questions and reading-and-discussion only tasks. Writing was applied by the subjects and they benefited its advantages as a tool for learning when they were examined on the basis of the effects of the writing task on the recall of the reading passages. Recalling proportionally more idea units from the reading passages in students’ essays is an important reminder of the powerful effects of writing on learning from texts, through which encoding, retention and retrieval will be facilitated and enhanced.

9. Implications

9.1. Theoretical Implications

School writing studies (Applebee, 1981, 1984; Langer and Applebee, 1987) have consistently demonstrated that writing is rarely used to foster learning. For the most part, explanations for why teachers do not utilize writing tasks for scaffolding learning have centered on teachers' lack of understanding of the kinds of learning writing might engender, the lack of effective models of practice that include writing, the domination of testing focused on fragmented bits of information, and the fact that teachers are overwhelmed by the paper load (Langer and Applebee, 1987).

Curricular decisions seems to be one of the sources of dilemma teachers face in developing more thoughtful ways of reading and writing in content areas, to be based on
concerns both for coverage of content and for students' efforts to capture and make sense of content. Further theoretical work is needed to assess what is essential in each subject area, and how it can be introduced to all students in practical ways across various levels of schooling and instruction.

9.2. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study have certain implications for course designers, materials developers as well as teachers and practitioners. As the results of this study reveal, writing aids learning, with selective benefits when different writing tasks are implemented. Teachers need to consider what kinds of learning they seek in their students.

Students' memory for passage content benefit, when they write extensively about information. For instance, students may be possibly asked to write about specific concepts extracted from the text, by tapping personal knowledge, internalizing and integrating it with text-based information, and orchestrating their own interpretations in extended coherent written statements, as a means of learning from writing. When the instructional goal is to move students beyond what they already understand or to reflect on that understanding, this type of writing task seems most appropriate.

Both types of writing have many applications in classrooms, regardless of ability level, whereas study questions seem most appropriate for short-term retention of facts. They may be the tasks of choice when students need review a large amount of information in preparation for more demanding tasks (Newell and Winograd, 1989; Langer and Applebee, 1987). Selecting appropriate tasks that will benefit students relative to the goals of instruction, would be the teachers' craft as well.

Philips' (1993) belief should also be taken into consideration that writing / discussion is viewed by the teacher as offering greater benefits to facilitate learning for both teacher and students than discussion - only. Mastering content as part of learning to reason and argue for interpretation in various subject areas and academic levels is what may ultimately be most valuable for all students.

So, writing, through focusing on retention of information, can play an important role in learning content area information, while demanding researchers’ and teachers’ close contribution to significant reforms in school programs and highlighting a paramount emphasis on materials development compatible to students needs.

There seems to be two limitations and constraints of the present study, which would evidently suggest caution in terms of generalizing the results or suggesting pedagogical applications.
The method of assessment upon which the research findings were based, as one of the traditional measures called counts of the idea units, was the first limitation of the present study, since there was not any accessibility to another method or at least it sounded just the most feasible method to apply.

The last limitation of the present study was this very fact that it did not permit an examination of any certain and reliable way to check out the degree of students’ familiarity with the texts assigned to them. Although these limitations merely narrow the generalizability of the obtained findings, they did not invalidate them any way.

The focus, in this study, was only on four text types, albeit there are other different text types and written genres such as: information reports, procedures, expository and instruction texts, fables, simple stories, scientific texts, newspaper articles, poetry, etc., that can be other areas of investigation. In fact, more research in general - on the effects of different kinds of rhetorical organization of a single text (e.g., expository texts) - is called for.

Rather than conducting the present study on the basis of the subjects’ equivalencies of proficiency, another area of inquiry could be carried out on the subjects with differing initial knowledge to see whether the ability level as between-group variable interact and affect the students’ learning from texts. Of course, the students with different academic ability can be within the same class or of different classes and with different teachers and educators. It seems probable that different curricular schemes offer students access to different ways of organizing knowledge (Applebee, 1993; Goodlad and Su, 1992). To explore such relationships will require a research design that includes students of similar academic ability experiencing different curricular designs or students of different ability experiencing a similar curriculum.

The present study provided the results of the subjects’ recall in English, whereas definitely needed is the research that looks at the foreign language readers’ understanding of a text when they recall in their L1 (i.e., their native language). So, the effect of recalling either in L1 or L2 on the students’ learning from texts can be investigated as well.

Total words, T-units, and words per T-units (Hunt, 1977) could also be calculated for all the writing collected during the experimental portion of the study, using Meyer’s (1975, 1985) prose-analysis system and according to hierarchical structure of information.

To put an end, the passages used in this research were relatively short. It seems there is a great demand for some more research to be conducted for examining whether students’ performances shown in reading and writing about short passages is the same as their reading and recall of more longer passages.
References


Title

Implementing Reading Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners

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Biodata

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Abstract

Reading is by far the most important skill that should be enhanced not only in the first language but also second. In the process of second language acquisition, these skills must be paid special attention since in Iran access to some skills are limited, therefore an EFL learner with special care to accessible skills can compensate these limitations. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the effect of reading strategies (cognitive, metacognitive, compensatory, and testing strategies) use on EFL learners' reading comprehension success. Based on the purpose of the present study, two main research questions are addressed: (1) is there any significant relationship between EFL learners reading strategy use and reading comprehension success? (2) Are all EFL learners aware of all reading strategies? Results of the study showed that EFL learners frequently employed reading strategies in English reading process. Readers with the high proficiency level particularly used more strategies than readers with the low proficiency level to reach a higher level of reading comprehension performance. Moreover, the results show that most of EFL learners aren’t aware of all reading strategies. Implications of these findings for implementing effective reading strategy instruction in Iranian EFL context are discussed.

Keywords: EFL learners, Reading comprehension, Reading strategies

1. Introduction
Every day in our life we come to the point that reading is a genuine need for human, from reading a shopping list, flyers, bills, short messages on our cell phones to theoretical and academic text, therefore we come to the point that reading is by far one of the most important four language skills in every language in the world that isn’t enhanced with no trouble. Lots of articles, papers and books are written in the world, each consider one aspect of this skill to pave the way for ESL/EFL learners and teachers. On one hand, EFL learners who try to learn another language are always seeking for a way to reach the goal of language learning more straightforwardly, on the other hand, teachers endeavor to find ways to teach these skills to their learners more effortlessly. Clearly, reading is an important activity in every language class, but we can say it is the most pleasurable activity and a means of outspreading knowledge. The main differences in the arrogance to reading in recent years have been the prominence on providing assistance for learners in developing their skills in reading.

Teachers plan learning experiences to help their students develop habits of reading which will lead them to direct comprehension of the text, without translating into their native language. Recent research on the subject of reading has shown that reading is a complex cognitive activity and it can be seen as an “interactive” process between a reader and a text which leads to reading fluency. In the reading process, the reader interacts with the text as he/she tries to elicit the meaning (Alyousef, 2005) stated that various kinds of knowledge are being used: linguistic or systemic knowledge (through bottom-up processing) as well as schematic knowledge (through top-down processing).

Whenever learners “understand the meaning of text, get the message, remember the content, and apply the new-found knowledge” they improve their reading comprehension ability in English. There are some strategies that help them to develop this skill soon. Using reading strategies appropriately may be of great help to non-native readers because it can serve as an effective way of overcoming language deficiency and obtaining better reading achievement on language proficiency tests (Zhang, 2008). To have a clear idea regarding the use of specific strategies in the process of reading comprehension, this study investigates the role of reading strategies in reading comprehension success.

2. Literature Review

Reading is an interactive process combining top-down and bottom-up processing (Barnett, 1989); as a result, using appropriate reading strategies is very important since they can enhance reading comprehension. Since reading is a complex process, Grabe argues that “many
researchers attempt to understand and explain the fluent reading process by analyzing the process into a set of component skills” (1991, p. 379) in reading; consequently researchers proposed at least six general component skills and knowledge areas:

1. Automatic recognition skills
2. Vocabulary and structural knowledge
3. Formal discourse structure knowledge
4. Content/world background knowledge
5. Synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies
6. Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring

2.1. Types of Reading

2.1.1. Extensive Reading

There have been conflicting definitions of the term “extensive reading.” (Hedge, 2003, p.202). Some describes it as “skimming and scanning activities,” others refer to it as quantity of material. Hafiz and Tudor (1989) state that: the pedagogical value attributed to extensive reading is based on the assumption that exposing learners to large quantities of meaningful and interesting L2 material will, in the long run, produce a beneficial effect on the learners’ command of the L2.

In recent years researchers have shown affluent interest in extensive reading inspired by Krashen’s Input Hypothesis. Besides, there has been a growing interest in researching the value of extensive reading. Hafiz and Tudor (1989) conducted a three-month extensive reading program as an extra activity. The subjects were Pakistani ESL learners in a UK school and their parents were manual workers with limited formal education. The results showed a marked improvement in the performance of the experimental subjects, especially in terms of their writing skills. The subjects’ progress in writing skills may be due in part to “exposure to a range of lexical, syntactic, and textual features in the reading materials” as well as the nature of “the pleasure-oriented extensive reading.” (Hafiz & Tudor, p. 8)

Hedge believes that extensive reading varies according to students’ motivation and school resources. A well-motivated and trained teacher will be able to choose suitable handouts or activities books for the students. Hedge (2003) also states that since extensive reading helps in developing reading ability, it should be built into an EFL/ESL programs provided the selected texts are “authentic” – i.e. “not written for language learners and published in the original language” (p. 218)- and “graded”. Teachers with EFL/ESL learners at low levels can either use “pedagogic” or “adapted” texts. Moreover, extensive reading enables learners to achieve their independency by reading either in class or at home, through sustained silent reading.
Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) argue that SSR activity can be effective in helping learners become self-directed agents seeking meaning provided an SSR program is “based on student-selected texts so that the students will be interested in what they are reading. Students select their own reading texts with respect to content, level of difficulty, and length.” (p. 567) Another fact about extensive reading is that it helps SL learners in “exposing” to English especially when the class time is limited. Hedge briefs the advantages of extensive use in the following lines: Learners can build their language competence, progress in their reading ability, become more independent in their studies, acquire cultural knowledge, and develop confidence and motivation to carry on learning. (ibid, p. 204-205).

2.1.2. Intensive Reading

In intensive (or creative) reading, is a type of reading in which students usually read a page to explore the meaning and to be acquainted with writing mechanisms. Hedge argues that it is “only through more extensive reading that learners can gain considerable practice in operating these strategies more independently on a series of materials.” (ibid, p. 202) These strategies can be either text-related or learner-related: the former includes a consciousness of text organization, while the latter includes strategies like linguistic, schematic, and metacognitive strategies. Hafiz and Tudor (1989) differentiate between extensive and intensive reading:

In intensive reading activities learners are exposed to fairly short texts which are used either to represent specific aspects of the lexical, syntactic or discourse system of the L2, or to provide the basis for targeted reading strategy practice; the goal of extensive reading, on the other hand, is to ‘overload learners with large amounts of L2 input with few or possibly no specific tasks to perform on this material. (p. 5)

2.2. The Importance of Teaching Reading

Hedge (2003) states that any reading component of an English language course may include a set of learning goals for:

1. The ability to read a wide range of texts in English.
2. Building a knowledge of language which will facilitate reading ability
3. Building schematic knowledge
4. The ability to adapt reading style according to reading purpose (i.e. skimming, scanning)
5. Developing an awareness of the structure of written texts in English
6. Developing an awareness of the structure of written texts in English
7. Taking a critical stance to the contents of the texts
The last goal can be applied in an advanced level. Students, however, should be kept aware that not all Internet content is authentic since there are no “gate keepers” and anyone can post whatever he/she likes in this cyberspace. Consequently, students can check the authenticity of the text by looking at the following signs: whether the article gives the name of the author or no, the date of publication, the aim of the article, etc.

3. Statement of the problem
For most people all around the world, reading is by far the most important skill among the four language skills. The large number of different textbook materials and other reading sources like magazine, journals, newspaper, etc… denote the fact that reading is more significant than the other three language skills. In fact, the other three language skills can be fostered by positive achievement in the reading skill (Pulido, 2003). Future educational opportunities depend on reading comprehension success. Since in our country EFL learners have limited access to target language and there may be very limited opportunities for conversing with fluent speakers reading may assume high importance.

More specifically, as Barnett, (1989) states reading is an interactive process combining top-down and bottom-up processing; as a result, when learners use appropriate strategies they can improve their comprehension. According to Barnett, when readers approach a text to make sense of what they read they use a mental operation which is called strategy” (p. 66). In other words, reading comprehension requires the combination and application of multiple strategies or skills. Those strategies involve memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, social, and test-taking strategies (Chamot, 2005; Oxford, 1990, 1996; Zhang, 1993).

4. Research questions
The present study aims at finding the relation among reading strategies use and reading comprehension success. More specifically the following research questions were investigated:

1. Is there any relationship between the number of used reading strategies and reading comprehension success?
2. Are EFL learners quite aware of all reading strategies?
5. Method

5.1. Participants

This study was conducted using two groups of eighteenseven senior females who all were in the same level in an English academic institute named (ILI). between the range age of 17 to 20, with the same L1 background (Persian) and the same years of exposure to the target language which is English. The selection of the participants of the study was carried out based on the sampling procedure. Fifteen were assigned as experimental group, and Fifteen to the control group, another point that is worth mentioning here is that in the first phase of our study the number of the participants were equal however some participants in both group didn’t take part in some tests, therefore they were excluded from the study and as a result at the end of the study only fifteen in each group were remained constant.

5.2. Procedure

Very few studies have been done to investigate successful learners' awareness in using reading strategies. The present study aims to review the important issue by investigating the number of strategies that learners use in their reading comprehension, more specifically it seeks to find the relationship between the number of strategy use and reading comprehension success. To collect relevant data we have done our study in two phasestwo in one session and another in a separate session. Therefore, in the first phase of our study one group consisting of thirty sixEFL learners were assigned randomly as the participants for the present study. After running a reading proficiency English test, participants were divided into three groups of advanced, intermediate and low level based on the scores they receive. In this phase participants were also givena sheet to reflect upon and they were asked to check the items they employed while reading the passage. They were also asked to note down the frequency of their use of strategies 5 to 10 in deriving meaning. In the second phase, they were given a sample of a reading test along with a checklist of strategies adapted from Rusciolelli's (1995), and they were asked to read the reading and while they were doing that check the strategies they use during their reading in the third phase of our study and in a separate session without previous notification, we asked the participants to take part in a reading comprehension paper and pencil test. It should also be mentioned that when it becomes clear that six of the participants didn’t completed all the required data, they were excluded from the study.

6. Instruments

6.1. Reading Comprehension Test
Data for our study include a multiple-choice reading comprehension test which was taken from supplementary material, introduced to the learners in ILI. The format of the 30 multiple questions test was paper and pencil. The test was composed of three reading passages and the average reliability index of .70. As far as the supplementary book was introduced by the teachers to the learners in that level, the topic of the reading passage test was in line with the topic of their textbook. After the reading was administered the reliability of the test was estimated through Cronbach alpha. The obtained index reliability of .78 revealed that the test was reliable measure of reading ability.

6.2. Questionnaire

In this study we also employed a short assessment sheet adapted from a questionnaire survey used by Rusciolelli (1995), which was based on Barnett’s (1988) questionnaire. This questionnaire with the reliability index of 0.76, obtained through Alpha Cronbach measure of homogeneity, aimed at eliciting perceived strategies from the learners. The assessment sheet with 12 items and based on a Likert scale ranging from 'never' to 'always' was employed to highlight the frequency of strategies used by the EFL learners.

7. Materials

In order to elicit the strategies of which the EFL learners already were familiar with, a text appropriate in length and difficulty level based on its readability index was given to the participants to read it. During reading, they were given a sheet to reflect upon and they were asked to check the employed strategies and their frequencies while reading the passage. In the second phase of our study we spread out a Likert Scale questionnaire, the purpose of this step was that we want to be assured of strategies that they were familiar with and those that they weren’t.

8. Results and Discussions

8.1. The result of the first research question

The first question was:

1. Is there any significant relationship between the number of used reading strategies and reading comprehension success?

The raw data obtained from test of reading comprehension was given to SPSS, to separate the participants' scores to the three level of proficiency that are: advanced, intermediate and low.
Table (8.1.) displays mean, minimum, maximum, and the standard deviation of the participants scores in this test.

Table 8.1 Min, Max, Frequency and Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Percentage score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28.22</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23.16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above table shows in the reading performance 59 percentages of the participants were classified as advanced, while 30 percent of the whole population have been placed in the second category which was intermediate and 11 percent were low. Then, a two–tailed Pearson analysis is calculated to see if there is any significant relationship between the number of utilized reading strategies and reading comprehension success. The results of the analyses in table 8.1. showed that correlation between strategies use and reading comprehension is significant at ( p≤0.01) level, so we can conclude that reading comprehension and strategies use are positively correlated, with a confidence level of 99%.

Table 8.1. two-tailed Pearson Correlation between Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Strategies</th>
<th>Correlation (Two-tailed Pearson)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.444***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (Two-tailed)**

The second question of the present study is:

2. Are EFL learners quite aware of all reading strategies?

Regarding answering this question the review sheet strategies and Ruscioelli questionnaire were compared. The analysis of the strategy review sheets or check lists was done to determine which strategies were used by the students. The results are shown in figure 8.1.

**Figure 8.1. Strategies used by Learners in the First Reading Test and their Frequencies**
As the above figure shows the following strategies are the ones used by the participants accordingly:

1. Read the reading text once,
2. Read the reading text twice
3. Reading the first line of the paragraph
4. Using titles to predict text content,
5. Using illustrations to understand content,
6. Reading pre-reading questions first,
7. Using teacher's introduction to understand content,
8. Guessing meanings based on cognates in English,
9. Guessing meaning based on similarity to other words in TL,
10. Guessing meanings from context,
11. Using dictionaries,
12. Writing main points in one's own words

The comparison between the first strategy review sheet and Ruscioleli strategy questionnaire

Comparing the review sheet strategy that was reported by EFL learners during reading comprehension test and that of Ruscioleli strategy questionnaire we came to the conclusion that many EFL learners weren’t familiar with some strategies at all, or maybe they didn’t know how to use them effectively while reading a text. The following figure illustrates how EFL learners' responses to two questionnaires were dissimilar.
Figure 8.2. The comparison of EFL learners review sheet strategies and Rusciolelli questionnaire

Strategies 1, 5, 7 were those that they knew them but they didn’t know how to use them effectively while reading a text, while strategies 8, 10 and 12 were quite unknown to them.

9. Discussion

The findings of this study added to and confirmed literature concerning the central role of reading strategies in reading comprehension. It also provides new insights into the nature of this process.

The analyses of data taken from the first research question revealed that, reading strategies use and reading comprehension success are correlated. The findings of the first research question were in line with few studies that have support for a strong link between the two dimensions. Hui-Fang Shang, on his study on exploring the relationship between EFL Proficiency Level and Reading Strategy use in 2010 has stated that students usually employ various reading strategies in English reading process. Chamot, 2005; Grenfell & Harris, 1999; Wenden, 1998; Zhang, 2008, also on their studies suggested that for students to reach their learning goals it is important for them to have a higher frequency of employing a variety of strategies in their reading process.

Regarding the second research question no studies have been done on whether EFL learners are aware of all reading strategies or not. The received result is very notable not just to EFL learners but to educators and teachers. The result of the present research question has stated that some students aren’t aware of all strategies that exist. This can be very interesting since it will provide new insights into learning and teaching. The results of the present study can be beneficial to EFL learners so that they can help EFL learners better in improving skills of foreign language. Material developers can also make use of the results of the present study, since they can make new tasks in their books.

References


**Appendix I**

**Before you read**

1. Do you have an umbrella? how often do you use it?
2. What do you do when it rains and you don’t have an umbrella?
3. Some people say that you shouldn’t open an umbrella inside a house. Then say it is bad luck. Do you believe this?
The Umbrella

The umbrella is a very ordinary object. It keeps the rain and the sun off people. Most umbrellas fold up, so it is easy to carry them.

However, the umbrella has not always been an ordinary object. In the past, it was a sign of royalty or importance. Some African tribes still use umbrellas in this way. Someone carries an umbrella, walks behind the king or important person.

Umbrellas are very old. The Chinese had them more than 3,000 years ago. From there, umbrellas traveled to India, Persia, and Egypt. In Greece and Rome, men wouldn't use them. They believed umbrellas were only for women.

When the Spanish explorers went to Mexico, they saw the Aztec kings' umbrellas. English explorers saw Native American princes carrying umbrellas on the east coast of North America. It seems that people in different parts of the world invented umbrellas at times.

England was probably the first country in Europe where ordinary people used umbrellas against the rain. England has a rainy climate, and umbrellas are very useful there.

Everybody uses umbrellas today. The next time you carry one, remember that for centuries only great men and women used them. Perhaps you are really a king or queen, a princess or prince.

Put a circle around the letter of the best answer.

1. Today, people use umbrellas for ……………
   a. the rain       c. a sign of a great person
   b. the sun       d. a, b, and c

2. A queen is a …………… person.
   a. royal c. holiday
   b. embarrassing d. jewelry

3. A great person walks …………… someone with an umbrella.
   a. beside c. in front of
   b. next to d. in back of

4. India and Persia learned about umbrellas from …………
   a. Aztecs       c. China
   b. Egypt       d. Spanish explorers

5. Most nations had some kind of …………… in the past.
   a. coal c. ink
   c. royalty       d. mail delivery

6. Native Americans……………..
   a. learned about umbrellas from English and Spanish explorers
   b. invented umbrellas
   c. got umbrellas from the Chinese
   d. taught the English about umbrellas
7. English people started using umbrellas because they have ……….  
   a. royalty  c. too much sun  
   b. a rainy climate d. many great men and women  
8. Umbrellas. keep …………….  
   a. the rain off  
   b. the sun off  
   c. wind off  
   d. snow off  
9. People in London use umbrellas ………  
   a. as a sign of royalty  
   b. to keep sun away  
   c. to keep rain away  
   d. to more beautiful  
10. Which of the following is true about umbrellas?  
   a. umbrellas has been invented in different parts of the world  
   b. umbrellas aren’t useful every where  
   c. all people use umbrellas against sun  
   d. umbrellas are great for great man  
   
Before you read  
1. Do you like to watch Olympic Games on television? What are your favorite sports in the Olympics?  
2. What sports are not in the Olympic Games? Do you think that they should be?  
3. Do you think we should continue to have the Olympics? Why or why not?  

Olympic Sports  
The first modern Olympic Games took place in Athens, Greece, in the year 1896. Athletes from only 13 countries participated in the Games that year. They compete in 43 different events in just 9 sports (track and field, swimming, cycling, fencing, gymnastics, shooting, tennis, weight lifting, and wrestling). In 2004, the summer Olympic Games took place once again in Athens, Greece. This time athletes from 202 countries competed in 300 events in 28 sports.  
Only five sports have been in every Olympic Games. They are track and field, swimming, fencing, cycling, and gymnastics. Other sports come and go in the Olympic Games. For example, tennis was an Olympic sport from 1896 until 1924. Then it disappeared from the Olympics until 1988. Baseball, badminton, and taekwondo are more recent additions to the Olympic Games.  
It is the job of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to add and remove sports from the Olympic Games. A sport has to be popular in at least 50 countries on three continents it can be
added. However, the IOC doesn't want to add more sports to the Olympic Games without eliminating others. The IOC is afraid that there will be too many sports in the Olympics.

Artistic events were also a part of the Olympic Games from 1912 to 1948. There were contests in architecture, music, literature, and painting. Today some people think that artistic events and games such as chess should be part of the Olympics. However, many people oppose this idea.

The Olympic Games today are very different from the first modern Olympic Games in 1896. These differences reflect the changing and popularity of sports.

**Put a circle around the letter of the best answer.**

1. The first modern Olympic Games took place………….
   a. before 1896   c. recently
   b. in 1896       d. 50 years ago

2. There are .............. sports in the Olympic today than in the past.
   a. the same number of   c. fewer
   b. more d. more difficult

   a. was never       c. was always
   b. is not now      d. is now

4. .......... want to add games such as chess to the Olympics.
   a. IOC members     c. Some people
   b. Most athletes   d. Artists

5. A sport that was eliminated from Olympics and later included again is ......
   a. tennis        c. chess
   b. taekwondo     d. music

6. In the past, the Olympics included contents in .........
   a. painting       c. music
   b. architecture   d. a, b and c

7. It is the job of the International Olympic Committee to ..... sports.
   a. play c. eliminate
   b. plan d. watch

8. More athletes .......... the Olympics now than in the past.
   a. participate c. train for
   b. oppose      d. a and c

9. .............weren't also a part of Olympic Games.
   a. architecture   c. painting
   b. dance         d. music

10. Today's olympic game is .............than previous ones.
    a. more modern
b. more interesting

c. bigger
d. a or b

**Before you read**

1. Are you wearing something with a zipper?
2. What can you do when a zipper on a piece of clothing breaks?
3. Do you have any clothing without zipper? How does it close?

**Wonderful invention**

The zipper is a wonderful invention. How did people ever live without zipper? They are very common, so we forget that they are wonderful. They are very strong, but they open and close very easily. They come in many colors and sizes.

In the late 1890s, people in the US wore high shoes with a long row of buttons. Clothes often had rows of buttons, too. People wished that clothes were easier to put on and take off.

Withcomb L. Judson, an engineer from the United States invented the zipper in 1893. However, this zipper didn’t stay closed very well. This was embarrassing and people didn’t buy many of them.

Then, Dr. Sundback from Sweden solved this problem. His zipper stayed closed.

A zipper has three parts: 1. there are dozens of metal or plastic hooks (called teeth) in two rows. 2. These hooks are fastened to two strips of cloth. The cloth strips are flexible. They bend easily. A fastener slides along and joins the hooks together. When it slides the other way, it takes apart.

Dr. Sunback put the hooks on strips of cloth. The cloth holds all hooks in one place. They don’t come apart very easily. This solved the problem of the first zippers.

Read the following questions and choose the best answer.

1. Zippers open and close by………
   a) Shooting
   b) Sliding
   c) Bending
   d) Choosing

2. The hooks on a zipper are ………….  
   a) Plastic
   b) Metal
   c) Cloth
   d) a or b

3. Mr. Judson was an ………….  
   a) Engineer
   b) Inventor
4. Mr. Judson didn’t sell many zipper because………..
   a) They were hard to open and close
   b) People liked rows of buttons
   c) They came open very easily
   d) They had cloth strips

5. Dr. Sundback was………………
   a) Swede
   b) From Chicago
   c) An American
   d) a professor

6. A zipper has two ………………of cloth.
   a) Rows
   b) Fastener
   c) Strips
   d) Buttons

7. The ……………..on a zipper are flexible.
   a) Hooks
   b) Rows of buttons
   c) Fasteners
   d) Strips of cloth

8. Dr. Sundback………………
   a) Invented the zipper
   b) Made the zipper better
   c) Invented the buttons hook
   d) Sold high shoes

9. We forget zippers because…………
   a) They are wonderful
   b) They are very common
   c) They come in colors
   d) They aren’t useful

10. When the fastener slides along, it ……………
    a) Close and open the hooks
    b) Closes the hooks
    c) opens the hooks
    d) holds hooks apart
Appendix II

1. Read the text once

The zipper is a wonderful invention. How did people ever live without zipper? They are very common, so we forget that they are wonderful. They are very strong, but they open and close very easily. They come in many colors and sizes.

In the late 1890s, people in the US wore high shoes with a long row of buttons. Clothes often had rows of buttons, too. People wished that clothes were easier to put on and take off.

2. Read the text twice

The zipper is a wonderful invention. How did people ever live without zipper? They are very common, so we forget that they are wonderful. They are very strong, but they open and close very easily. They come in many colors and sizes.

In the late 1890s, people in the US wore high shoes with a long row of buttons. Clothes often had rows of buttons, too. People wished that clothes were easier to put on and take off.

The zipper is a wonderful invention. How did people ever live without zipper? They are very common, so we forget that they are wonderful. They are very strong, but they open and close very easily. They come in many colors and sizes.

In the late 1890s, people in the US wore high shoes with a long row of buttons. Clothes often had rows of buttons, too. People wished that clothes were easier to put on and take off.

3. Read the first line of the paragraph

The zipper is a wonderful invention. How did people ever live without zipper?

4. Using the title to predict text content

Wonderful invention

5. Use illustration to understand the content line

6. Read the pre reading questions.

1. Are you wearing something with a zipper?
2. What can you do when a zipper on a piece of clothing breaks?
3. Do you have any clothing without zipper? How does it close?

7. Using teacher introduction to understand the content

Students you all know zipper. At least one of your cloths has it. Look at the picture on the board………

8. Guessing meaning base on the cognates in English

Zipper in English

zip in Persian

9. Guessing meaning base on the similarity in T.L

Zipper in English size in Persian

size in English
10. Guessing meaning from context

Wonderful invention

The zipper is a wonderful invention. How did people ever live without zipper? They are very common, so we forget that they are wonderful. They are very strong, but they open and close very easily. They come in many colors and sizes.

In the late 1890s, people in the US wore high shoes with a long row of buttons. Clothes often had rows of buttons, too. People wished that clothes were easier to put on and take off.

Withcomb L. Judson, an engineer from the United States invented the zipper in 1893. However, this zipper didn’t stay closed very well. This was embarrassing and people didn’t buy many of them. Then, Dr. Sundback from Sweden solved this problem. His zipper stayed closed.

A zipper has three parts: 1. there are dozens of metal or plastic hooks (called teeth) in two rows.

2. These hooks are fastened to two strips of cloth. The cloth strips are flexible. They bend easily. 3. A fastener slides along and joins the hooks together. When it slides the other way, it takes the hooks apart.

Dr. Sunback put the hooks on strips of cloth. The cloth holds all hooks in one place. They don’t come apart very easily. This solved the problem of the first zippers.

11. Using dictionaries

Invention: a useful machine, tool, that has been invented………

12. Writing the main points in one word

Zipper is an invention
It has three pieces
It is wonderful
Title

Reflective Practices of Experienced and Novice Iranian EFL Teachers

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the possible relationship between gender /years of experience and reflective teaching among Iranian EFL teachers. Two groups of novice and experienced teachers (n=30) were administered a questionnaire to investigate their attitudes towards the reflective teaching practices including observation, audio or video recording of a lesson, getting students’ feedback and teaching diary. Kendall’s W test results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the teachers’ preferences of different types of reflective teaching methods. In general, observation and Audio video recording were the most and the least favored reflective preferences respectively. In addition, the Mann Whitney U test revealed that reflective teaching strategies differed significantly based on gender and years of experience. The findings of this study have implications for EFL teachers, teacher trainers and material developers of in-service courses for teacher to enhance teachers’ use of reflective teaching.

Keywords: Reflective Teaching, Years of Experience, Gender, Iranian EFL Teachers
1. Introduction
Reflective thinking is not an innovation in teaching. The concept of reflection has ancient roots dating back to Socrates (469-399 BC). Socrates (469-399 BC) is known for the phrase; “the unexamined life isn’t worth living” (quoted by Plato in Apology, as cited in York-Barr et al., 2006). Aristotle (384-322 BC) also put emphasis on reflection when he argued there is no virtuous activity so timely as the activity of wisdom and philosophic reflection (as cited in Black, 1942).

Theorist John Dewey accentuated the term reflection as he brought it into focus in education. Dewey (1933) described reflection as an “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 9). Dewey’s theory of reflection encourages educators to pose questions on the status quo circumstances while looking at the situation stepping back. He claimed that, through reflection, individuals are able to think critically and scientifically.

Later on, in the 1980's Donald Schon extended Dewey’s foundational aspects on reflection. He coined two new concepts on reflective thinking: reflection-in-action and reflection-on action. Further, Killion and Todnem (1991) expanded on Schon’s (1983; 1987) concepts of reflection. Subsequently, other scholars worked on different levels of reflection, facets of reflection, and reflection in practice, which are to be discussed later.

Within the last two decades, according to Korthagen (2001), teacher education programs started to integrate the concept of reflection into their curricula in order to meet the requirements of the changing needs in the society. Within a short time, it was practiced in a variety of levels and specialties of teacher education, from educating teachers of languages (Farrell, 2004) to teachers of other disciplines (Knowles, Gilbourne, Borrie, &Nevill, 2001). The basic issue, however, is how this concept should be practiced in the real context of teaching and teacher education.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Reflective teaching
Reflective teaching involves looking at what you do in the classroom, pondering over the reasons, and thinking about to see if it works - a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. By gathering information about what goes on in the classroom, and by examining and evaluating this information, we identify and explore our own practices and underlying
ideas. This may then lead to modifications and improvements in our teaching. Teacher educators should apply this theory in classroom practice, in order to observe and reflects on the results so that the classroom becomes a kind of laboratory where the teacher can relate teaching theory to teaching practice.

Van Manen (1991 cited in Galvez-Martin, Bocoman, & Morrison, 1998) explains teacher reflection as “the process by which teachers engage in aspects of critical thinking such as careful deliberation and analysis, making choices, and reaching decisions about a course of action related to teaching.” (p. 9) While Ross (1989 cited in Galvez-Martin, et al. 1998) defines reflection as “a way of thinking about educational matters that involves the ability to make rational choices and to assume responsibility for those choices.” (p.22). In addition, Valli (1997) described reflective teacher as the one who “can look back on events; make judgments about them; and alter their teaching behaviours in light of craft, research, and ethical knowledge” (p. 70).

It is now a fact that teaching takes place in a social setting together with its own unique characteristics, opportunities and limitations. The practice of reflective teaching examines the consequences of all these complex factors with the intention of understanding and improving teaching–learning practice. Schon (1983) suggested that the practice of reflective teaching is a continuous process and involves learner thoughtfully reflecting on one’s own experience in applying knowledge to practice while being taught by experts. It helps the individuals to develop their own personality. According to Biggs (1999) reflective practice implies that individuals develop analysis of feelings, evaluation of experience etc. Jasper (2003) associated reflective teaching practice with lifelong learning leading to the development of autonomous, qualified and self-directed teachers. In addition, engaging in reflective practice is associated with the improvement of the quality of care, stimulating personal and professional growth and closing the gap between theory and practice.

Bartlett (1990) mentions that turning into a reflective instructor involves moving past a primary concern with instructional techniques and “how to” questions and asking “what” and “why” questions that regard instructions and managerial techniques not as ends in themselves, but as part of broader educational purposes. Asking inquiries "what and for what reason" gives certain control over teachers bringing about the rise of autonomy and confidence in the work of educators. Reflecting on these questions help the instructors start to practice control and helps in bringing about modifications to practice. (Lieberman & Miller, 2000) sharp out that the act of reflective instructing, reflective analysis, and reflection-on practice, brings about picking up of the particular and expert learning that is so
vital to being an adequate instructor and in molding youngsters' studying. Day, Galvez-Martin (2000) proposed reflective educating as the demonstration of making a mental space in which to consider an inquiry or thought, for example, "What do I know now about teaching kids?" this of rehashed addressing prompts mental change to a period and a scenario that expedites a deeper viewpoint helping Students.

Of course a lot of educators as consider their educating and converse with their colleagues about it as well. You may think or let someone know that "My lesson went well" or "My students didn't appear to comprehend today". However, without additional time spent on talking over what has happened, we might have a tendency to hop to decisions concerning why things are going on. Reflective educating in this way suggests a more deliberate methodology of gathering, recording and investigating our considerations and perceptions, and in addition those of our people, and after that modifying our practice.

Research has indicated that the reflection expertises of pre-service instructors are diverse (Feldman, 2005; Ornstein, 1995). Regularly at the start of the career their reflective expertise is insignificant and to some degree nonexistent. Zeichner (1999) accepts that reflection is fundamental to bring understanding to the mind boggling nature of classrooms. Munby and Russell (1990) accept that through reflective practice, educators reinterpret their experience from an alternate view. Many scholars emphasize the significance of reflection in serving to comprehend the complexities of education. It is accepted that through reflection, instructors take part deliberately and imaginatively in their own particular development and improvement (Schon, 1987; Zeichner, 1999).

Larrivee (2008) outlines four levels of reflection, which he calls pre-reflection, surface reflection, pedagogical reflection, and basic reflection. At the pre-reflective or non-reflective level, teachers respond to learners and classroom scenarios immediately, without any attention to other possible responses. At the level of surface reflection, teachers work through techniques and strategies to help them react best. At the level of pedagogical reflection they apply their beliefs about what are the best practices. Finally, basic reflection is the place they ponder the ethical and moral suggestions and outcomes of their classroom practices. It includes examination of both individual and expert conviction frameworks.

2.2 Studies on reflective teaching

A lot of research has been conducted on reflective teaching since its genesis. In this section part of these studies are referred to. Kocoglu, Akyel, &Ercetin(2008),for example, have examined the function of preparing portfolio in escalating reflective thinking in EFL teachers. In the study, they confirmed the significant value of portfolio writing by comparing
two ways of portfolio preparing, that is pen/paper and electronic version. Although they ended up with the priority of pen/paper over the electronic method, they reported using this method as a constructive approach to bring reflectivity into EFL classes. In another study, Kojima (2008) points out that integration of autonomy, reflection, and collaboration will lead to teachers’ professional development. In the study, some of obstacles to reach this euphoria in eastern cultures have been counted, but at the same time practicing of reflective teaching has been mentioned as the bare bone essential part of all educational settings to reach to the Promised Land. In the same token, Babai (2009) investigated the relationship between reflective teaching and teachers’ self-efficacy. He arrived to the point that reflective teaching practice will lead to the improvement of the profession, beside that self-efficacy could be considered as an important element in implementing reflective teaching principles.

Akbari et.al (2008) investigated three important teacher-related variables, i.e. teaching styles, teachers’ sense of efficacy, and teacher reflectivity to see how they relate to student achievement gains in ELT. The results showed that the three variables investigated can significantly predict student achievement outcomes. Besides it showed individual correlations between each pair of the variables which reveal interesting relationships.

Halton, Murphy, and Dempsey (2007) looked at reflection through journal writing and interviews. A common theme in their research was that reflection benefited students in their ability to apply theory to practice. They also found that reflection was difficult for students, and the process required high levels of support from faculty. Overall, the research emphasized the importance of reflective thought for student teachers, further promoting the importance for faculty to understand reflection.

Behzadpoor (2008), attempted to develop and validate an instrument for measuring teachers’ reflection in English language pedagogy. Based on the literature of theoretical side of reflective teaching, the questionnaire he developed comprised of five elements which have made it a comprehensive instrument in measuring reflectivity of teachers. The components of the questionnaire are as follows: a) focus on the learner, b) focus on the teacher, c) focus on practical aspects, d) focus on teachers’ cognitive development, and e) focus on critical/contextual aspects.

Minott (2008), also, looked at reflection via its practical aspect. He examined the advantages of pre-service teachers’ use of reflective journaling. He was, on the one hand, to determine (through an analysis of the participants’ reflective journals) the types of reflection in which teachers engaged, and on the other hand, to evaluate Valli’s (1997) typology of reflection as a tool for analyzing reflective journals. He came to the conclusion that teachers
do not take advantages of all kinds of reflections propose by Valli (1997) and at the same time they need to be encouraged to engage in reflective practice. Minott (2007), doing a qualitative study, investigated the reflectivity of four seasoned teachers. At the end he divided the teachers into two groups of less reflective and more reflective teachers accounting the features of both groups. To him more reflective teachers were those who reflected on their schools’ context, they did so in relation to student activities and how best to utilize their classroom and other school facilities. Less reflective teachers, in contrast, might not see any connection between contextual challenges and their beliefs, practical knowledge, and mood. They might view the challenges exclusively as problems needing solutions and would not question self or the impinging factors but would look for solutions in a program or technique.

However, Choy and San Oo (2012) found that most of the teachers did not reflect deeply on their teaching practices. They did not seem to practice the four learning processes: assumption analysis, contextual awareness, imaginative speculation and reflective skepticism which were indicative of reflection. Their study would suggest that critical thinking is practiced minimally among teachers. There are ways to promote reflective practices in the classroom as Hagevik, Aydeniz, and Rowell (2012) suggest that conducting action research first of all engaged teachers in inquiry into their own practice, secondly it was a means to reflect upon and determine ways to change their teaching practices, and finally promoted critical reflection in a collaborative learning environment.

Finally, Tuncer and Ozeren (2012) examined the beliefs of prospective teachers on problem solving and reflective thinking skills to determine whether there is a significant difference with respect to their gender, departments and classes. Looking at the opinions of prospective teachers in the different factors of the scale; in the question dimension, in the evaluation dimension, in the reasoning dimension and in the whole of the scale it has been found that there was a significant difference in the class variable.

2.3 Problems and limitations of reflective teaching
The concept of reflection and reflective teaching still includes dark sides. This is related to the multidimensional nature of the concept. For example, Hatton and Smith (1995) emphasize on four key unresolved issues concerning reflective teaching which they think is due to the lack of clarity in the concept. According to this, confusion is concerns whether reflection is a thought process about an action or if it is the action itself; whether it is short or long term; whether it is limited to problem solving in nature; and the extent to which individuals can be critical in their reflection. In addition, Jarvis (1987) draws our attention to
the complex relationship between experience and reflection. He mentions that responses to experiences do not always result in reflective learning. For example, lower level cognitive practices such as memorization, imitation, and development of rote skills do not equate higher thinking skills and stand in the non-reflective learning paradigm. Therefore it is very important to understand the framework and the context to be able to understand the concept (Tsang, 1998).

In addition, Akbari (2007) elaborates on the problems which arise when reflective paradigm is applied to L2 teacher preparation. To him reflective practice may be flawed both conceptually and practically. A major problem with the concept of reflective teaching, he believes, is its historical origin. In fact, the term traces to some concepts that have lost its real, core meaning and it means whatever academics want it to mean. For example reflection may have both “expert knowledge” and “anti-expert knowledge” in its meaning. “From a historical viewpoint, there are big differences between reflection as it is formulated by Dewey, and the type of reflection promoted by Schon” (p.196). Another conceptual problem is that most of reflections are applied in a retrospective way, the same as Schon’s reflection-on-action. Mentioning Conway (2001), he argues that it means that teacher education presently puts emphasis on memory with the result that little attention is paid to imagination.

Zeichner and Liston (1996) and Hatton and Smith (1995) are among those scholars that keep opposite standing towards reflective teaching. They point out that there is confusion regarding the meaning of reflective teaching. Underlying the apparent similarities among the models proposed by scholars in the field, there are vast differences in perspectives about teaching, learning, and schooling. They believe that the term is vague and ambiguous, and there are many misunderstandings as to what is involved with teaching reflectively.

Counting the practical issues may arise in the practice of reflective teaching, he points to the lack of evidence to support the higher students’ achievement as a result of teacher’s engagement in reflective practice. Another problem, in the same vein, is that there is no evidence, again, to show that reflective models of teacher training will result in teacher creativity and innovation. Ogonor and Badmus’s (2006) study also confirm the problems discussed by meticulous scholars in the field. In their study they work with a group of teachers professional in the practice of reflection but the lack of support hamper the effective process in reaching them their goals. Student teachers, they conclude, were elated with the practice of reflective teaching; reflective teaching tend to promote the professional growth of teachers; student teachers were mainly preoccupied with teaching responsibilities; staff of partnership schools did not provide specific professional support to student teachers and
consequently failed to perform their roles as mentors. So the context of practice can play a critical role in the reflection practice.

Finally, Rashidi and Javadimehr’s (2012) results of the examination showed that the fundamental issue leading to the absence of reflection in Iranian context is the teachers' ignorance of reflective education standards. It could be reasoned that this absence of information, in the meantime, could be clarified indicating the disappointment of Iran's education in cultivating reflective instruction and advancing reflective teaching.

3. Theoretical framework

Throughout the history of reflective teaching, different scholars have proposed different models and frameworks with the same base configuration. According to Zeichner (1994) the idea of incorporating reflection in teaching has been under the influence of many factors. The popularity of cognitive as opposed to behavioral psychologies, the birth of research on teacher thinking, views of educational research that have given greater access to teachers’ voices and perspectives on their work, the growing democratization of the research process in which teachers have become less willing to submit to participation in research which seeks only to portray their behaviors, and the recognition that top-down educational reforms that used teachers as passive implementers of ideas conceived elsewhere were doomed to failure.

In his framework, Kumaravadivelu (2008) discusses the roles played by post-method participants e.g. the learner, the teacher, and the teacher educator. Post-method teacher is an autonomous teacher. Teacher autonomy, in his word, is at the heart of post-method pedagogy. Making a link to reflective teaching, he argues that “post-method pedagogy recognizes the teachers’ prior knowledge as well as their potential to know not only how to teach but also know how to act autonomously” (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p.178). Another connection he makes to reflective teaching is manifested in his “personal knowledge”, which is defined as teachers’ cognition evolving over time by means of continual process of self-development. This personal knowledge, in times, will lead to the construction of teachers’ theories. Teacher research, which is one strategy to reach professional self-development, can be done through “critical classroom discourse analysis (Kumaravadivelu, 1999) and teacher research cycle (Freeman, 1998). In the discussion of the roles need to be played by post-method teacher educator, he again asserts that the main emphasis should be placed upon the teacher not the educator. He focuses on the ongoing dialogues constructed between reflective participants who are willing to use their previous values, beliefs, and experiences.
Akbari (2007) believes that the rise of reflective teaching in ELT can be regarded as one of the consequences of the post-method debate. In the method era, teachers were required to implement the guidelines of language teaching methods without having much impact on the way methods were formulated in academic circles. Salmani-Nodoushan (2006) in his state-of-the-art article claims that post-method era has been realized in two different forms: (a) effective teaching, and (b) reflective teaching. The advocates of effective teaching suggest that applied linguists should theorize, and that teachers should practice those theories. In other words, effective language teaching is the result of the collaboration of theorists and practitioners. The advocates of reflective teaching, however, believe that theorizing or, at least, mediation responsibility should be placed upon the teachers.

This study is going to seek information about Iranian EFL teachers’ attitude towards reflective teaching and to examine if there is any significant difference among EFL teachers’ preferences for reflective teaching as well as finding an answer about novice and experienced teachers’ attitude in terms of their reflective teaching strategies. These issues are examined through the following research questions:

1. DO Iranian EFL Teachers engage in reflective practices while teaching conversation?
2. Is there any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers in terms of reflective teaching strategies?
3. Is there any significant difference between Iranian female and male EFL teachers in terms of reflective teaching strategies?

4. Method

4.1 Participants
The participants of this study included 30 male and female EFL teachers from Tehran Institute of Technology. They were divided into two groups. All teachers were familiar with reflective teaching because according to the institute’s policy they had passed teacher training courses prior to their teaching career.

4.2 Instruments
In this study a researcher-made questionnaire was designed in accordance with the objectives of study. It was used to reveal and investigate Iranian EFL English teachers’ attitude toward reflective teaching. The questionnaire consisted of four categories. The first part included questions related to observation, the second part contained items related to audio or video recording of a lesson, the third part included items associated with getting students’ feedback
and the last category was related to questions about teaching diary (see appendix 1). Participants were expected to tick each item that suited their opinion (little=1, to some extent=2, high=3, very high=4) (see appendix).

The face validity of this questionnaire was confirmed by the thesis advisor and based on the received feedback, some questions were revised and ambiguities were removed. The reliability of the questionnaire was also checked through the pilot study on 15 subjects. Cronbach’s alpha statistic was computed for the 19 questionnaire items and a reliability of .752 was obtained. Next, Cronbach’s alpha statistics were computed for the 19 questionnaire items administered through the main study and a reliability of .721 was obtained.

4.3 Data collection and analysis
A number of thirty EFL teachers were selected based on stratified random sampling. For data collection procedure, the researcher first visited Head of English Language Department in Tehran Institute of Technology and took his permission to conduct the research. Besides, the researcher explained detailed instructions for the participants and assured them that the result would be applied to research work and privacy is guaranteed.

The reflective teaching strategy was regarded as dependent variable and experience and gender were taken into account as independent variables. The Cronbach’s alpha statistics was computed to obtain the reliability index for the questionnaire. For each of the questions in each category, students responded on a 4-point Likert scales, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS (version 20) to obtain descriptive and inferential statistical results. The Means, frequencies, and standard deviations were calculated to measure teachers’ reflection. To make the data more manageable, a Kendall’s W Rank Test was carried out to rank the four categories of teachers’ reflection strategies to examine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the total ranks of the reflective preferences or not. And finally Mann Whitney U test was run to the results of the questionnaire to examine the possible differences between novice and experienced teachers as well as male and female in terms of their reflective teaching strategies.

5. Results and Discussion
5.1 Reflective practices of Iranian EFL teachers
The examination of each questionnaire item for the Iranian EFL teachers’ views towards reflective teaching showed that there seem to be four fairly distinct types of preferences reported. They can be categorized into observation, Audio or video recording of lessons, getting students’ feedback, and Teaching diary. Looking at summary statistics for the individual items of the questionnaire revealed interesting information about the respondents’ preferences. The low mean rank of Audio or video recording of lessons category (mean rank=2.37, items 4 to 9) indicated that being audio or video taped by others was the Iranian EFL novice teachers’ least favored preference for reflective teaching. This type of preference had the lowest level for novice foreign language teachers; on the other hand, the high mean rank of observation category (mean rank=2.72, items 1 to 3) showed that they preferred to be observed by colleagues or others for reflective teaching other than any other ways. Therefore, observation seemed to be the main preferred way of reflective teaching for the novice participants in the study.

Use of observation as a means of reflective teaching had the highest mean rank for the experienced EFL teachers (mean rank= 3.16), followed closely by getting students’ feedback (mean rank=3.01). Use of Audio or video recording of lessons (mean rank= 2.60), and use of Teaching diary (mean rank= 2.82) got considerably lower mean ranks.

In Table 1, the mean ranks for all types of reflective teaching preferences for the experienced teachers were considerably higher than those for the novice teachers.

**Table 1. The comparison between novice and experienced teachers in terms of their reflective teaching preferences.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflective teaching preferences</th>
<th>Novice teachers</th>
<th>Experienced teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio or Video recording of lessons</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting students’ feedback</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching diary</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The descriptive statistics along with the mean ranks of the questionnaire items for the total participants are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics**
As it is depicted, in general, the participants tended to rank observation as a type of reflective preference more highly than the other three types and audio-video recording was the least favoured reflective preference. In other words we can express these preferences as: **Observation >Teaching diary>Getting students’ feedback >Audio video recording**

The four types of reflective teaching preferences were submitted to Kendall’s W test to examine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the total ranks of the reflective preferences or not. The Kendall’s W rank test ranked the scores in each category of the questionnaire independently of every other category. In this study, each participant had already performed this ranking by selecting one of the choices including (little, to some extent, high, and very high). For each type of preference, these ranks were summed and then divided by the number of items in each category of the questionnaire to yield an average rank for each type of teachers’ reflective preference. By applying the Kendall’s W test it was found that there is a significant difference between the five factors. (See Table4)

**Table 3. Ranks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio video recording</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting students’ feedback</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching diary</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4. Test Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kendall’s W²</td>
<td>.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td>12.788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Kendall’s W rank test tested the null hypothesis that the ranks of the four types of reflective preferences do not differ from their expected value. The higher the value of the chi-square statistic, the larger the difference between each category’s rank sum and its expected value will be. The asymptotic significance was the approximate probability of obtaining a chi-square statistic as extreme as 12.788 with three degrees of freedom in repeated samples if the rankings of each type of reflective preference are not truly different. Because a chi-square of 12.788 with three degrees of freedom is unlikely to have arisen by chance, this rejects the null hypothesis that all types of preferences for reflective teaching are of equal importance and interest for the teachers. Clearly, teachers had different preferences in terms of reflective teaching. (Sig=.005<.05).

Figure 1. EFL teachers’ preferences for reflective teaching

5.2 Experience and reflective teaching practice

Table 5 displays the results of a comparison drawn between experienced and novice teachers in terms of their preferred practices.

Table 5. Ranks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total mean</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.4836</td>
<td>39.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.8684</td>
<td>40.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because the test variables were assumed to be ordinal, the Mann-Whitney was based on ranks of the original values (little, to some extent, high, and very high). The rank table was divided into two panels, one panel for each test variable. The first test variable, Novice, measured the novice teachers’ reflective teaching preferences. It ranged from 1 to 4, where 1 = little and 4 = very high. The second test variable, experienced, measured the experienced teachers’ reflective teaching preferences. It also ranged from 1 to 4, where 1 = little and 4 = very high.

First, each case was ranked without regard to group membership. Cases tied on a particular value and received the average rank for that value. After ranking the cases, the ranks were summed within groups. Average ranks adjusted for differences in the number of teachers in both groups. If the groups were only randomly different, the average ranks would be about equal. However, for the experienced teachers, the average ranks were 0.3848 points higher than the novice group (Table 5).

In sum, the nonparametric test, Mann Whitney U test, for the two independent samples (novice and experienced teachers) was run to the results of the questionnaire to determine whether or not the values of the dependent variable namely reflective teaching strategies differ between the two groups. The Mann-Whitney statistics was used to test the null hypothesis that the two independent samples (novice and experienced) come from the same population.

**Table 6. Test Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total mean rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>48.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-2.648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Grouping Variable: experience

The negative Z statistics indicated that the rank sums were lower than their expected values. Each two-tailed significance value estimated the probability of obtaining a Z statistic as or more extreme (in absolute value) as the one displayed.

The significantly higher rank sums of the experienced group indicated that the additional years of experience had significant effect on teachers’ using reflective teaching strategies. Thus the second null hypothesis was also rejected. (Sig=.007<.05).
5.3 Gender and reflective teaching practice

Mann-Whitney *U* test examined the difference between Iranian female and male EFL teachers. Results showed that there was a significant difference between males and females on the dependent variable which was reflective teaching strategies. (See Tables 7 and 8).

**Table 7. Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>female</th>
<th>male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N Valid</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.8070</td>
<td>2.5193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>2.9474</td>
<td>2.6316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.44866</td>
<td>.27698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>.201</td>
<td>.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>42.11</td>
<td>37.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 8. Test Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>reflective teaching strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>55.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-2.372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. The comparison between novice and experienced teachers in terms of their preferences for reflective teaching
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) .018

Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)] .016

a. Grouping Variable: gender

The nonparametric test namely Man-Whitney U was run for the two independent samples (females and males) for determining whether or not the values of reflective teaching strategies differed between the two groups. Average ranks were adjusted for differences in the number of participants in both groups. If the groups were only randomly different, the average ranks would be about equal.

The negative Z statistics was negative (Z = -2.372) indicating that the rank sums were lower than their expected values. The sums of ranks for the female participants was significantly higher than those of the male group suggesting that gender as an independent variable had significant effect on teachers’ use of reflective teaching strategies. Thus the third null hypothesis was also rejected (Sig = .016 < .05). Figure 3 shows the mean rank for each of the groups.

**Figure 3. The comparison between female and male EFL teachers in terms of their reflective teaching strategies**

6. Conclusion

Several conclusions can be drawn from the findings of the present study. In general EFL teachers who attended the present study reported their least attitude towards getting reflective teaching through Audio video recording. The novice teachers were much less positive than the experienced respondents in their views about reflective Audio video recording. The complete description of a lesson can be acquired from a real recording of it by using an audio cassette or video recorder. With a cassette recorder or video camera placed in a strategic
position in a classroom, much of what happened in a lesson can be recorded. The recording
can be replayed and examined many times and can capture many details off a lesson that
cannot easily be observed by other means, such as the actual language used by teachers or
learners during a lesson (Richards & Lockharts, 1996). Audio-visual recordings are powerful
instruments in the development of a teacher's self-reflection. They confront him or her with a
mirror-like “objectives” view of what goes on in class. Moreover, class recordings which are
kept for later use, can give a valuable insight into an individual teacher's growth in
experience over years (Schratz, 1992). But in this study some of the novice teachers reported
their least interest towards audio or video recording of a lesson. One possible reason might be
that some teachers think that it is time consuming and it can’t be carried out on a day to day
basis. Most experienced teachers on the other hand preferred to get useful information for
reflection through Video or audio recordings of their lessons. These teachers could collect
information about the things they were not aware of or the things happening in their class but
the teachers didn’t normally see.

After being observed by colleagues and using diary, obtaining reflective teaching through
getting students’ feedback was the most favored type of reflective teaching preference
reported in the questionnaire. Experienced teachers reported much more positive than the
novice respondents in their views towards obtaining reflective teaching through getting
students’ feedback. Experienced teachers welcomed to investigate their students’ attitudes
towards their teaching. Surveys and questionnaire are useful ways of gathering information
about affective dimensions of teaching and learning, such as beliefs, attitudes, motivation,
and preferences, and enable a teacher to collect a large amount of information relatively
quickly (Richards & Lockharts, 1996). Students’ feedback can be obtained with simple
questionnaires. The results showed that experienced teachers reflected far more frequently
using students’ feedback than the novice teachers.

Obtaining reflective teaching through teaching diary was the second highest category
which received the teachers’ positive attitudes. Experienced teachers favored this type of
reflective teaching more than novice teachers. Many different topics from classroom
experiences can be explored through journal writing. Teaching diary may include teachers’
personal reactions to things that happen in the classroom or in the school, questions or
observations about problems that occur in teaching, descriptions of significant aspects of
lessons or school events and ideas for future analysis or reminders of things to take action on
(Richards & Lockerts, 1996). Experienced teachers favored this type of reflective teaching
more than novice teachers. One possible reason might be that diary writing is time
consuming in nature and can become laborious. Experienced Teachers preferred to gather information about what happened in their class through teacher diary which seems to be the easiest way for them to begin the process of reflection since it was purely personal. After each lesson teachers can write in a notebook about what happened. Teachers may also describe their own feelings and those they observed on the part of the students.

Observation was the highest preferred strategy for reflection among all participants and experienced ones were much interested in it compared to novice group. In many language programs, teachers are often unwilling to take part in observation or related activities since observation is associated with evaluation. Thus in order for observation to be viewed as a positive rather than a negative experience, the observer’s function should be limited to that of gathering information. The observer shouldn’t be involved in evaluating a teacher’s lesson (Richards & Lockerts, 1996).

In this study experienced teachers reported the highest amount of their positive attitudes towards being observed by the peer for getting reflective teaching. Teachers can invite a colleague to come into the class to collect information about their lesson. This may be with a simple observation task or through note taking. This will be related to the areas teachers have selected to think carefully about.

Moreover, when it comes to gender variable, significant difference was found in the teachers’ responses to the questionnaire items. Female teachers were found to have more positive views towards reflective teaching than male teachers.

To sum up, the results of the study showed that there was a relationship between gender/ years of experience and reflective teaching of Iranian EFL teachers and their preferred reflective teaching strategy. Many teachers already think about their teaching and talk to colleagues about it too. For teachers, reflective teaching therefore implies a more systematic process of collecting, recording and analyzing their thoughts and observations, as well as those of their students, and then going on to making changes.

Reflective teaching also presents practical options to address professional development issues. It encourages practitioners to generate and share their perceptions about teaching. If EFL programs are willing to save time and resources in initial training, reflective practice can be an effective professional development option. Reflective teaching is immediately useful to foreign language teachers who have limited time and resources for teaching. Student teachers can be provided with valuable instructions and training on how to improve their awareness of their teaching and reflect on their methodologies in real situations. Thus it should be taken into consideration when designing courses and syllabuses for students EFL teachers. Hence, the
findings may suggest that EFL teachers should think about reflective teaching in their classroom and talk about this issue with their colleagues and students. They can also improve their teaching through reading materials related to reflective teaching. They can ask their students’ and colleagues opinions towards their methodologies.

References


Appendix  
Read carefully all the statements in each section and kindly give your response to each item by putting a tick (✓) in the box that suits your opinion most:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Getting students’ feedback</th>
<th>Little=1</th>
<th>to some extent=2</th>
<th>high= 3</th>
<th>very high=4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To what extent are you interested in obtaining feedback through questionnaires from students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To what extent can your students provide useful feedback about the effectiveness of teaching method?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To what extent do you prefer getting students’ feedback at the end of your course of instruction?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To what extent do you prefer getting students’ feedback during your course of instruction?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To what extent would you like to respond your students’ feedback?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To what extent are you interested in open-ended questions used to get teaching feedback from the students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching diary

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Are you interested in keeping a teaching journal?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To what extent do you reflect on your short summary of the class to evaluate your own class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. To what extent are you interested in teaching portfolio (teaching portfolios capture evidence of ones’ entire teaching career)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To what extent do you prefer predesigned journal with a checklist of your thoughts?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Title

An Investigation of the Relationship between Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners’ Grammatical Knowledge, Predictive Validity, Use of Grammar Learning Strategies and Their Vocabulary Achievement

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between knowledge of grammar, use of grammar learning strategies and vocabulary learning. To this end, Oxford Placement Test was used to select 30 intermediate EFL learners as the main sample. Three instruments were used in the study including grammar test, grammar learning strategy questionnaire, and vocabulary test. Means and standard deviations were computed to analyze the participants’ use of grammar learning strategies reported in the questionnaire. The results of simple linear regression showed that there was a significant relationship between learners’ grammatical knowledge and their success in vocabulary learning. The Bivariate Correlation procedure computed the pair wise associations for grammar learning strategies and vocabulary scores and the results of Spearman's rho showed that the association between vocabulary scores and grammar learning strategy use was statistically significant (P=.000< .05). The Spearman Rho correlation coefficient
showed statistically significant association between categories (Cognitive, Meta-cognitive, Socio-affective) of the questionnaire and the vocabulary score.

**Keywords:** Grammar, learning strategies, Vocabulary achievement

1. **Introduction**
In the field of English Foreign Language learning (EFL), whether or not to teach grammar has been an ongoing debate for many years. Although controversies arise from time to time over its place in language classrooms, grammar is still necessary for accurate language production. It has been shown that exposure to the target language is not enough for learners to ‘pick up’ accurate linguistic form, especially when the exposure is limited to the EFL classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). However, grammar is central to language and is of great significance to language learners. Words are the building blocks of a language since they label objects, actions, ideas without which people cannot convey the intended meaning. The present study seeks to explore the relationship between knowledge of grammar, use of grammar learning strategies and vocabulary learning of EFL learners.

2. **Statement of the Problem**
In the field of language learning, vocabulary is an important element in learning language that often seems to be a source of problem for many language learners. Fu (2009) believed that words are the sole vehicles in expressing something; therefore, difficulty in vocabulary learning and recall lead to major problems in language use. On the other hand, many English learners think learning English grammar is to learn a set of rules which are complex and hard to remember. Meanwhile, there are many students who are never getting engaged to what they already know about word roots, examine the content the word in, then they never actively practice remembering word, and students often feel frustrated that they can understand more than they can produce. There are many types of difficulties by Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and use of grammar learning strategies in relation to their vocabulary achievement. Identifying such difficulties and being consciously aware of them would help teachers find ways of overcoming them and provide effective grammar instruction. There has, however, been little investigation of the difficulties faced by EFL teachers and learners with regard to grammar learning strategies. Therefore, the result of this study on the issue of vocabulary grows with the grammar knowledge in language classes would be great concern to both teacher trainers and language teachers who are trying
everything at their disposal to improve L2 language learner’s vocabulary with grammar knowledge. At many universities in Iran, grammar and accuracy are the dominant foci in the curriculum and in examinations. Some quizzes are particularly based on grammar. Therefore, students are expected to gain a great understanding of grammar structures. However, the overall achievement of the students on exams does not match the expectations of the school directors. One reason for this may be that the learners are not aware of the strategies that would work better for them. In addition, the teachers may not be helping their students employ effective grammar learning strategies.

3. Objective of the Study
In the field of language learning, students are confronted with the great deal of vocabulary in the foreign language. Grammar plays an important role at Iranian English classroom, it has also developed it roles in the Iranian educational contexts. According to Ellis (1991), the main reason for believing that there is a relationship between knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is that knowledge of the words in a text permits learners to understand the meaning of the discourse which in turn allows them to understand the grammatical patterning. Among the factors the learners use in their vocabulary learning, grammatical knowledge is a vital one. A factor which has been less focused in the literature. Accordingly, the resent study is an endeavor to investigate of the relationship of Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and use of grammar learning strategies in relation to their vocabulary achievement and the effect of grammar on solving lexical retrieve problems during learning language in intermediate students at Iranian English institutes. For this purpose, 100 intermediate students who studying English at three language institutes in Tehran will be selected as the participants.

4. Research Questions
There are research questions to be answered in this study:

RQ1. What are the grammatical learning strategies used by Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
RQ2. Is there any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and their success in vocabulary learning?
RQ3. Is there any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies and their success in vocabulary learning?
H1: There is no relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and their success in vocabulary learning.
H2: There is no relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies and their success in vocabulary learning.

5. Background

Learning the grammar of a foreign language is considered to be important in Iran, and grammar is usually taught and assessed with a discrete point approach. In fact, at many institutions in Iran, teachers equate teaching English with teaching grammar; the syllabus they follow is a grammar-based syllabus. Moreover, these teachers are seen as “knowledge imparters” who introduce grammar deductively, and who ask their students to do drill-like exercises after giving the rules and explanations; basically, a shortened version of PPP model in which presentation and practice are provided. However, there are signs that grammar instruction may be changing; some researchers are studying different approaches to grammar instruction.

One study by Pakyıldız (1997) investigated the differences and similarities in grammar instruction in a discrete skills program (DSP) in which grammar is taught separately and an integrated skills program (ISP) in which grammar is taught in an integral manner. The results of his study revealed that grammar instruction has both differences and similarities in curriculum design, instructional materials and textbook activities, and grammar teaching procedures in terms of the presentation, practice, correction and evaluation stages in the DSP and ISP.

According to Nassaji, (2004) the relationship between grammar and vocabulary is one of partners working together to create meaningful communication. Words in a language are known as vocabulary, while grammar gives the methods and rules for combining those words into sentences. Ideas are communicated when both grammar and vocabulary work in tandem. He mentioned that vocabulary lists are often grouped by root words or language of origin, and they are always changing. Loanwords are words taken from one language and added to another, following the second language’s grammar and, sometimes, its pronunciation. He added Affixes are syllables that can be attached to a word. Grammar and vocabulary work together with affixes to transform a word into a different part of speech, add to its meaning, or change a verb’s tense.
All words in vocabulary can be divided into verbs, nouns, pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections, collectively known as the eight parts of speech. He found that Grammar and vocabulary unite to combine words, the vocabulary, into the right arrangement, the grammar, according to these parts of speech. The placement of a word in a sentence can change its function. Students of any language must learn how the vocabulary of a language adapts to fit different grammatical constructions.

He concluded that the ability to perceive the meaning of the text (both written and spoken) is one of the most important skills needed of people in second and foreign language settings. Today we deal lots of written and spoken input in our life. Understanding the reading texts and knowing the utterances require close attention to a number of factors, one fundamental factor of which is the knowledge of grammar.

According to Anderson (1991) Knowing words is the key to understanding as well as being understood, and learning a new language consists of learning new words. Since we are faced with lots of new vocabulary items in our reading and listening, one helpful technique might be to improve knowledge of grammatical points. In many cases the EFL learner cannot decipher the meaning of the target word because of the lack of knowledge regarding the grammatical structure of the sentences.

To make clear how learners deal with unknown words, Read (2000) refers to initial evaluation of the unknown word in terms of its contribution to the general understanding of the texts. Learners normally evaluate the contribution of the unknown words to their general understanding. If an unknown word is not regarded as exerting a major influence on comprehension, it is normally ignored; on the other hand, if it is judged to greatly contribute to determining the meaning, a variety of strategies are used to remove uncertainty of meaning from it. Most often learners tend to infer the meaning of unknown words from context.

As Read (2000) suggested, this is considered desirable on the grounds that “it involves deeper processing that is likely to contribute to better comprehension of the text as a whole and may result in some learning of the lexical item that would not otherwise occur”.

Learning to read in a second language is one of the most valuable skills L2 learners should develop for social and academic purposes. This makes reading an active process and a demanding skill as readers are required to use the background knowledge, the grammatical knowledge, the situational context and the contextual clues to construct an interpretation of the meaning of a text (Brantmerier, 2003b; Pritchard, 1990).

Nassaji and Fotos (2004) pointed out that learners are different individuals with different aptitude, personality characteristics, language proficiency, motivation, attitudes towards
learning, and cultural backgrounds. The effects of instruction may also be mediated by these factors. For example, instruction may be more effective when the learner is highly motivated to learn than when he or she is not. Therefore, grammar can be seen as a device which language users call upon when motivated by a communicative need to make their meanings clear.

Learning a foreign or second language at intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency involves the acquisition of thousands of words. Language learners look for effective ways to increase opportunities for retaining new words in long-term memory, but forgetting is a common problem. Language learners often complain that they forget new words soon after learning them. The importance of vocabulary learning also poses some challenges for teachers.

Schmitt Norbert and Marsden Richard (2006) noted that the number of English lexicon is huge, which is basically from Old English and from the Norman combination of Latin-derived terms.

Farjami (2001) proposed Misconception Analysis for dealing with language learning problems. It involves discovering and understanding misunderstandings and uncovering false assumptions. It is mentioned that one seemingly trivial misunderstanding may have serious learning consequences in the long run; therefore, teachers should use Misconception Analysis at different points in their teaching process. It is added there are different ways of discovering students’ misunderstandings. The teachers’ observations can provide a rich source of information about students’ misunderstandings. Tests can also give some ideas about misunderstandings and illusions. Students’ problems may be of two types: those that arise from lack of knowledge or ability, and those that arise from misunderstanding.

Another study Farvardin and Biria (2012) studied the impact of gloss types of vocabulary on reading comprehension and lexical retention among Iranian University EFL students. They measured students in three types of glosses. They investigated on participants answered vocabulary tests, also identified and compared gloss type vocabulary tests can affect both reading and vocabulary retention. It was concluded that the impact of glossing on improving second language comprehension.

As it was noted there, several studies were carried out in the area of learning grammar. However there is a need for further research. This study is investigating the relationship of Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and use of grammar learning strategies in relation to their vocabulary achievement that seems to be a disregarded area and
needs to be investigated further. The major question is that “Is there any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies and their success in vocabulary learning?” As a result, the outcomes of this study will show the existence and amount of this relation that can lead to flourishing maximum potential of learners in EFL contexts.

6. Methodology
6.1. Participants
To select the main sample, the standardized Oxford Placement test (OPT) was administered to 100 EFL students. The participants, who were studying *Topnotch* Sallow and Asher (2006), took the structure, vocabulary and reading comprehension sections of the test with a maximum possible score of 60 points. Based on OPT test direction 30 intermediate students whose score was 31+ in grammar and vocabulary and 8+ in reading section was selected as the main sample for the present study. The ages of the participants ranged from 17 to 26 with an average of 19. The subjects were learning English in "Fatima" Language Institute in Tehran.

6.2. Materials
In learning grammar and success in vocabulary research, various data collection instruments are used to assess language learners’ use of strategies, such as:

6.2.1. The standardized Oxford Placement Test (OPT)
For the purpose of selecting homogeneous sample. Test can see in Appendix A.

6.2.2. Nations Word Level Test
Measures the vocabulary proficiency by assessing the EFL learners’ basic knowledge of common words. It will consist of 140 multiple choice tests. This test can be seen in Appendix B.

6.2.3. Grammar test
In a multiple choice format (NESLON 200A) with the purpose of evaluating the students’ knowledge of grammar. This grammar test can be seen in Appendix C.

6.2.4. Grammar learning strategies questionnaire
Adopted from Oxford’s (1990) taxonomy of learning strategies and grammarteaching/learning methods. In this study, a questionnaire was used to assess the students’ employment of strategies when they learn and use grammar structures. The list of grammar learning strategies can be seen in Appendix D.
6.3. Procedure

In order to discover any problems before the actual study steps was taken. First, the standardized Oxford Placement Test (OPT) which was piloted and examined for reliability and validity were administered to 15 Iranian EFL learners that essentially consist of young language classes who were preparing themselves for test. Three instruments were prepared and employed to collect data for the pilot study the same content of the main study. In order to collect data for this study several steps was taken. First, to select the main sample, the standardized Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to 100 EFL students. The participants took the structure, vocabulary and reading comprehension sections of the test with a maximum possible score of 60 points. Based on OPT test direction thirty intermediate students whose score is 31+ in grammar and vocabulary and 8+ in reading section was selected as the main sample for the present study. In the next step, in order to fulfill the purposes of the study, three instruments were prepared and employed to collect data from the main group.

The first one was the Nations Word Level Test, which was used to measure the vocabulary proficiency by assessing the EFL learners’ basic knowledge of common words. It was consisted of 140 multiple choice tests.

Another test was conducted which was a grammar test in a multiple choice format with the purpose of evaluating the students’ knowledge of grammar. To have a valid test, a test from Nelson (200 A) was used in which the participants answered forty five items including different grammatical structures as well as tenses, parts of speech, complex sentences, conditional. Since the focus was to see if those students with a better use of grammar learning strategies were successful in vocabulary learning, the next step was include the administration of the grammar learning strategies questionnaire.

A 43-item questionnaire was consisting of three parts of Grammar Learning Strategies such as cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social/affective strategies. A five choice Likert type of questionnaire was developed in order to assess the subject levels of agreement or disagreement in a quantifiable manner such as: Never = 1 Seldom = 2 Sometimes = 3 usually = 4 Always = 5. Students required to respond to 43 statements. The items in the questionnaire were in the statement form, and they were adopted from Oxford’s (1990) taxonomy of learning strategies and grammar teaching/learning methods. The points for the answers were summed up for each column and average for each part and the overall average calculated for the whole questionnaire. The total average was within the range of 1.0 to 5.0. The average for each part of the questionnaire was showed which set of strategies.
were more favored by students. The data obtained from these sources were entered into SPSS in order to be analyzed.

7. Methods of Analyzing Data

In the first phase of the study, the Grammar Learning Strategies Questionnaire, Nations Word Level Test, and Grammar test (NELSON 200A) was piloted on 20 EFL students to estimated their reliability indices. Inthe main study, the collected data wasanalyzed using the SPPS software.

In the process of analysis, first the reliability coefficient of the grammar learning strategies questionnaire, grammar test, and vocabulary test in Cronbach’s Alpha Model, (a model of internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation), was estimated. To answer the first research question, the options selected by the respondents in the grammar learning strategies questionnaire was transformed into tables displaying the frequency and percentage of each, and a few tables was compiled, each focusing on one of the three categories of the questionnaire (cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective categories under study.

Then, the tables were analyzed qualitatively through comparing and contrasting the options. To answer the second research question, simple Linear regression was used to model the value of the dependent scale variable namely vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners based on its linear relationship to the determined predictor including knowledge of grammar. Before running the regression, a scatter plot was developed to determine whether a linear model is reasonable for these variables. Also Skewness analysis was run to examine the normality assumption of the distributions before running the parametric test of simple linear regression.

In fact, Simple linear regression was predicted whether there is a relationship between the determined variables or not. And finally, to answer the third research question, Spearman Rank order correlation was used to examine the possible relationship between grammar learning strategies and Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ vocabulary knowledge.

8. Result and Discussion

8.1. RQ1: What are the grammatical learning strategies used by Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
In order to answer the first research question, the data obtained through the grammar learning strategies questionnaire was analyzed descriptively. Means and standard deviations were computed to analyze the participants’ use of grammar learning strategies reported in the questionnaire. The data is reported for each item of the questionnaire and the three different categories of the questionnaire including cognitive, meta-cognitive, and social-affective strategies. The results of the participants’ preferences of using grammar learning strategies are presented in the following section:

![Figure 8.1. Three categories of the grammar learning strategy questionnaire](image)

8.2. RQ2. Is there any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and their success in vocabulary learning?

Linear regression was used to model the value of the dependent scale variable namely vocabulary success based on its linear relationship to grammar knowledge. This linear regression model assumed that there was a linear or straight line, relationship between the dependent variable (vocabulary learning) and the grammar knowledge. Before running the regression, a scatter plot showing the distribution of vocabulary scores by grammar scores was used to determine whether a linear model was reasonable for these variables or not. The resulting scatter plot appeared to be suitable for linear regression as it is shown in figure 8.2.
As it is shown by figure 8.2, the variability of vocabulary scores appears to increase with increasing grammar. The following table shows the coefficients of the regression line.

**Table 8.11. Coefficients of the regression line for grammar and vocabulary scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zero-order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-36.258</td>
<td>8.885</td>
<td>-4.081</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grammar</td>
<td>2.386</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.890</td>
<td>10.321</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the coefficient of the regression, the expected vocabulary scores is equal to $2.386 \times \text{grammar} - 36.258$. The ANOVA table below tested the acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective.

**Table 8.12. The results of the ANOVA**

<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>1</td>
<td>3880.003</td>
<td>106.524</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36.424</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4899.867</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Regression row displayed information about the variation accounted for by the model used in this study. The Residual row displayed information about the variation that was not accounted for by the model. The regression sums of squares were greater than residual sums, which indicated that lots of the variation in vocabulary score is explained by the model and
the independent variable namely grammar scores. The significance value of the F statistic is less than 0.05, which means that the variation explained by the model is not due to chance. Thus the first null hypothesis is rejected resulting that there is a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and their success in vocabulary learning. While the ANOVA table was a useful test of the model's ability to explain any variation in the dependent variable, it did not directly address the strength of that relationship. The ANOVA table tests the acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective. The Regression row displays information about the variation accounted for by your model. The model summary table reported the strength of the relationship between the model and the dependent variable.

Table 8.13. *Model Summary* \(^b\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.890(^a)</td>
<td>.792</td>
<td>.784</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Predictors: (Constant), grammar  
\(^b\) Dependent Variable: vocabulary

The multiple correlation coefficients (R) showed the linear correlation between the observed and model-predicted values of the dependent variable (vocabulary scores). Its large value indicated a strong relationship (R=.890).

Based on table 8.13, the coefficient of determination (R Square), which is the squared value of the multiple correlation coefficients, showed that about 79.2% of the variation in vocabulary scores is explained by the grammar scores. In this linear regression model, the error of the estimate is considerably low, about 6.03520. The residual was the difference between the observed and model-predicted values of the dependent variable (vocabulary score). The following histogram and P-P plot of the residuals will check the assumption of normality of the error term.
Figure 8.3. *Histogram for the residuals*

The shape of the histogram approximately followed the shape of the normal curve and thus this histogram was acceptably close to the normal curve. The P-P plotted residuals should follow the 45-degree line. Neither the histogram nor the P-P plot indicated that the normality assumption is violated.

Figure 8.4. *P-P Plot of regression for the standardized residuals*

The plot of residuals by the predicted values showed that the variance of the errors increases with increasing predicted for grammar scores.

Figure 8.5. *The relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical scores and vocabulary scores*

8.3. **RQ3:** Is there any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies and their success in vocabulary learning?

Table 8.14. *Correlations between grammar strategy use and vocabulary scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman's <em>ρ</em></th>
<th>Grammar strategy use</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.908**</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).
The Bivariate Correlation procedure computed the pairwise associations for grammar learning strategies and vocabulary scores and the results were displayed in the above matrix. It determined the strength and direction of the association between vocabulary scores (scale variable) and grammar learning strategy use (ordinal variables). Spearman’s rho reported showed that the association between vocabulary scores and grammar learning strategy use is statistically significant (P=.000< .05). Thus the second null hypothesis is rejected suggesting that there is a significant relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies and their success in vocabulary learning.

Figure 8.6. The relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies and their success in vocabulary learning.

Figure 8.7. The relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ use of grammatical learning strategies, grammatical scores and their success in vocabulary learning

Series 1= vocabulary score
Series 2= grammar learning strategies
Series 3= grammar scores

In order to find out the degree of relationship between each categories of the questionnaire including meta-cognitive, cognitive and socio-affective strategies and their vocabulary scores, another Spearman Rank order correlation was run to the three categories of the questionnaire and vocabulary test. The results are presented in the following table:
Table 8.15. *Spearman rank order correlation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy type</th>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meta-cognitive strategy</td>
<td>.488**</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive strategy</td>
<td>.645**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-affective strategy</td>
<td>.540**</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total strategy use</td>
<td>.908**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bivariate Correlations procedure computed Spearman rank order's correlation coefficient, with its significance level for each category of the grammar learning strategy questionnaire. Correlations measured how meta-cognitive, cognitive and socio affective strategies are related to vocabulary score. The Spearman Rho correlation coefficient measured the association between ordinal variables (categories of the questionnaire) and the scale variable (vocabulary score). All the correlations reported in the above table were positive and also statistically significant because the p-values of meta-cognitive (.006), cognitive (.000) and socio affective strategies (.002) were all lower than .05. The highest degree of correlation was found between cognitive and vocabulary scores closely followed by social affective strategies. Moreover, the lowest relationship was shown between meta-cognitive and vocabulary score. This suggested that the three categories of the grammar learning strategies had significant relationship with vocabulary knowledge of the participants.

9. Discussion

The present research aimed at investigating of the relationship of Iranian intermediate EFL learners’ grammatical knowledge and use of grammar learning strategies in relation to their vocabulary achievement. In the current research, results indicate that there is a relationship between them. In other words, subjects seemed to have improved their necessarily of grammar after receiving assessment. This also means that training learners to use grammar enabled them to make use of them and thus improve their foreign language proficiency.
Another result obtained from the study is that among the usually employed strategies, there are more social-affective strategies than cognitive strategies and metacognitive for all three proficiency levels.

The results of main study showed that grammar learning strategies related the students' achievement in their vocabulary. As the mean and standard deviation for each of the items selected by the respondents, The descriptive data analysis reported that considering general grammar learning strategies the participants reflected their highest attitude towards using cognitive strategies (mean= 3.65), closely followed by socio-affective strategies (mean= 3.56). Meta-cognitive strategies (mean=3.25), received the lowest value indicating that meta-cognitive strategies were among the least favored grammar learning strategies disclosed by the responses to the questionnaire.

According to their types, it is revealed from the questionnaire that Iranian EFL students use a variety of strategies when learning and using grammar structures. In their study of Russian and Spanish ESL learners, O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, and Küpper (1985) also found that the participants from all levels used more cognitive strategies than metacognitive strategies.

It is possible to conclude that Socio-affective strategy in the list ("I try to participate in class activities and use the new structures I've learnt.") together with the other frequently used strategies, indicates that accuracy is important for Iranian EFL learners, and that they employ a variety of strategies when they learn and use grammar structures.

10. Conclusion

This study is investigated the relationship of Iranian intermediate EFL learners' grammatical knowledge and use of grammar learning strategies in relation to their vocabulary achievement.

It also sought to find out whether there were differences among different proficiency levels and between females in terms of grammar strategy use. Finally, this study explored whether grammar strategy use is influential in achievement on vocabulary tests. The study was conducted at the preparatory program of Fatima English Language Institute, and the participants were 100 students from three different institutes with proficiency levels (intermediate). The participants were given three tests, and they were asked to respond to each item of grammar learning strategies using two Likert-scales that elicited information about the frequency and perceived usefulness of certain grammar strategies. The data
obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively in order to find answers to the research questions of the study. This chapter will present and discuss the findings of the study in light of the relevant literature. Following the discussion of findings, the pedagogical implications of the study will be presented. Finally, the limitations of the study will be described and suggestions will be made for further research.

10.1. Implications of the Study
This study can probably establish a good relationship between the level of grammar knowledge and its role on vocabulary learning so we see that knowledge of grammar is essential if the learners are supposed to read widely in the life. In addition, Oxford (2001) states that learning strategies “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990, p. 8) when certain conditions about strategies were met. In addition, the strategies that the participants of this study considered to be useful (e.g., encouraging oneself to learn English when being afraid of making grammar mistakes, taking notes of new grammar structures, and trying to practice new structures in speaking or writing) can be emphasized.

In Iran, learning grammar and accurate language production are considered to be important. The students in secondary and higher education need to take several language tests that include large sections on language structure. People employed in governmental offices also take language examinations in order to work abroad or get a pay rise. Especially language learning strategies that help the acquisition of grammar structures could be stressed in such classes of English for specific purposes. The strategies that Iranian EFL learners find useful, such as taking notes of new grammar structures, reviewing them regularly, and determining the problematic grammar structures could be made explicit for the students of these classes.

Therefore, among the factors the learners use in their vocabulary learning, grammatical knowledge would also help Iranian EFL learners improve their correct language use.

10.2. Limitations of the Study
Certain limitations should be mentioned prior to generalizing these findings to the EFL population at large. The first and the foremost is that this study was conducted in three language institutes in a small scale so these results may not be cited as general. So, further studies require investigating the relationship between grammar and vocabulary in different EFL contexts. Second, gender, age and affective factors are left untouched in this study and further research needs to see if they can moderate the investigation of grammar relation to vocabulary achievement. Finally, another limitation concerns the grammar test scores, as the
intermediate students took only three grammar, vocabulary and grammar learning strategies quizzes in terms, which may not have yielded sufficient information about the participants’ success in vocabulary achievement. If more data had been gathered related to their grammar scores, the relationship between strategy use, grammar, and vocabulary achievement might have been explored more thoroughly. Further, had all the participants of this study taken the same grammar tests, the results might have been different.

10.3. Suggestions for Further Research

As it is pointed out in the previous section, several limitations of this study necessitate further research into relation between vocabulary and grammar. For instance, a study may be conducted by using verbal reports to clarify the mental processes carried out when learning and using grammar structures.

In addition, a large-scale study conducted in more than three institutions may yield more reliable results about the use of grammar in order to vocabulary learning. In order to better explore the relationship between grammar achievement and strategy use, a study in which all participants’ grammar ability is directly measured using the same test may be conducted. Further research into relation between grammar, grammar learning strategy and vocabulary instruction would also contribute valuable information to the literature.

References


Laufer, B. (1997). The lexical plight in second language reading: words you don't know, words you think you know, and words you can't guess. In J. Coady, & T. Huckin (Eds.), Second language vocabulary learning (pp. 20-34). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


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Title

The Impact of Practicing L1 Reading Skills on L2 Reading Achievement in Pre-intermediate Learners of English as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of L1 reading skill development on L2 reading achievement. Two groups of pre-university male students were selected for the study. They were assigned in experimental and control groups. They both had the same reading classes two sessions a week. The experimental group, however, had one extra session (a week) learning and practicing reading skills and strategies in Persian. These strategies included skimming, scanning, guessing the meaning of unknown words, summarizing a passage, and doing comprehension checks. The comprehension check included questions on details, vocabulary, references of pronouns, main ideas and inferences. A collection of reading material based on the student’s other courses and Persian journals was prepared and used in the experiment. The groups had a pretest before the experiment which showed they all were approximately of the same level of reading proficiency. After the experiment which lasted 8 weeks, a posttest was administered. The result showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group significantly. T-test analyses were used to compare the means of the two groups. The result indicated that L1 reading skills had a great impact on L2 reading achievement even in a pre-
intermediate level of language proficiency. It shows that reading in a second language is not only dependent on language proficiency but to L1 reading skills too.

**Keywords:** L1 reading, L2 reading, Reading strategies, Reading comprehension

1. **Introduction**

Reading is one of the most important skills required for academic achievement in general and hence the ability to read in L2 is one of the main goals of most language courses throughout the world. Reading can simply be defined as to get an understanding of a written text. This broad definition of reading with its focus on the meaning of written texts regards reading as a product. Reading can also be viewed as process too (Wallace, 2001). In the present study, reading is regarded as both a product since the achievement on a reading test is calculated and used for the comparisons made and a process since the application of strategies is an aspect of treating reading as a process, though the nature and condition of applying these strategies is out of our concern. The term strategy in the realm of reading can be used to refer to all the resources readers employ in the act of reading. This is mainly used in the studies which regard reading as a psychological process as well as a linguistic activity. Strategies within this view can include a range of resources available to the reader which include a host of techniques and activities (Wallace, 2001). In the present study, however, the focus is on the following strategies.

Skimming which involves ‘glancing rapidly through a text to determine its gist’ (Nuttall, 1996: 49). Examples of skimming questions can include: What is the main idea of this paragraph? Or what are the three main types of rocks mentioned in the passage? Scanning involves rapidly searching a text for a specific piece of information for example a number, a date, a book, or a name. An example of a scanning question is ‘what was the name of the newspaper that Hemingway worked for during the war?’ Guessing is a technique that can be used for questions addressing the meaning of a word in the passage. The students have to depend on their world knowledge and also the textual clues (e.g. conjunctions like and, but or other lexical cues) in the sentences precede or follow the specific word to come to a hunch for its meaning. Summarizing here means expressing the main ideas of a passage and excluding the supporting sentences which may include examples, details, explanations, and the like; this can be done using their own words. Finally the comprehension check items used in this study included questions on details, meaning of words, references of pronouns, main
ideas, and inferences. The main concern here is to investigate the question that whether knowing and practicing these strategies in the L1 has impact on L2 reading comprehension.

2. Review of the literature

As Grabe (2002) puts it ‘L2 reading can best be understood as a combination of skills and abilities that individuals bring to bear as they begin to read’ (p. 51). One of these skills is the ability to read in L1. It seems that L2 learners transfer their L1 reading skills. Though the literature shows that this transfer and impact of L1 reading skills and strategies is a complex issue (Grabe, 2002), it seems that some problems in reading can be attributed not to language proficiency but to reading proficiency in general.

Carrell (1991) investigated the first and second language reading comprehension of adult native speakers of Spanish and English who were language learners of the other language at different proficiency levels. Results, reported in terms of second language reading as a function of first language reading ability, and second language proficiency, showed both to be statistically significant factors. She reported that the relative importance of each factor is different for each group of readers. For the subjects with Spanish as their native language and English as their second language, reading ability in the first language was reported to be a more effective factor than second language proficiency. However, for the subjects with English as their native language, proficiency in the foreign language seemed to be more effective. So, while these two factors proved to be significant in L2 reading achievement, their relative importance may be influenced by factors about the learner and the learning context. The distinction she has made between a second language versus a foreign language setting is a clear example of a difference in context. The directionality of the learning has also been mentioned as another factor. The movement from English to Spanish may be different from the opposite direction. Finally the differences in the level of proficiency has been referred to as another possible explanation for this variance; a point that fits with the views of those who favor the threshold hypothesis.

Alderson (1984) examined evidence relating to the question of whether poor reading in a foreign language is due to problems with the foreign language, or to problems with reading as a set of strategies. He came to the conclusion that based on the studies of bilinguals, only moderate to low correlations have so far been established between reading ability in first language and reading ability in the foreign language when the same individuals were studied in both languages. He thinks that L2 reading problem is both a reading problem and a
language problem. Nevertheless, the stage of L2 development plays an important role. In the beginning it is a language problem, but when the learners reach a threshold level, it can become a reading problem. Alderson’s study finds little support for the hypothesis that the foreign language will require its own processing strategies because of structural differences it has compared with the first language. Semantic and discourse processing seem to be more appealing for explaining this problem, though he finds them to be ‘elusive’. Moreover, he has not investigated the question of whether foreign language reading might become a reading problem at more advanced levels. Again he found considerable support for the hypothesis that a level of threshold or language competence ceiling has to be achieved in order to be able to transfer the existing abilities in the first language.

The nature of this transfer and conditions needed for its occurrence have been investigated in the literature on L2 reading. There are both pros and cons for this view. Koda (1988), for example, believes that skills do not transfer from one language to another when there are two different writing systems in the two languages. In addition, Bossers (1991) indicated that L2 knowledge level predicted L2 reading level much better than did L1 reading skill. Most scholars in the field talk of a lexical threshold that needs to be reached before being able to transfer L1 reading skills into L2 reading (Laufer, 1992; Hirsh & Nation, 1992; Hwang & Nation, 1994).

Perkins, Brutten, and Pohlmann (1989) investigated the relationship between reading in the first language and reading in the second language when the same individuals are assessed in both languages. Random parallel reading comprehension tests in Japanese and English were given to a sample of Japanese students enrolled in extensive English instruction at three different levels of English language proficiency. They found evidence for a threshold competence ceiling at which first language abilities transferred to second language reading abilities. Readers who scored high on the first language reading test also scored high on the second language reading test. Their results indicate that the studies on the nature of transfer must be conducted with groups of learners with different levels of proficiency. They also found evidence that difficulty in the second language reading can simply be due to imperfect knowledge of the second language. Schoonen, Hulstijn, and Bossers (1998) explored the relative contributions to native language and foreign language reading comprehension of a language-specific predictor (vocabulary knowledge) and of general metacognitive knowledge. They found evidence for the so-called threshold hypothesis, according to which (metacognitive) knowledge of reading strategies, reading goals and text characteristics cannot compensate for a lack of language-specific knowledge if the latter remains below a
certain threshold level. The limited foreign language knowledge short-circuits the transfer of reading skills to the foreign language. Their study found evidence for some cross-language influence of native language and foreign language vocabulary knowledge on reading comprehension in the other language. This implies that vocabulary tests are not language-specific measures exclusively. They suggest that it is not easy to make a distinction between language-specific knowledge and more general reading skills in practice. Thus, they conclude that it does not seem fruitful to try to find reading components that are either exclusively language-specific or more general.

Richette, Segalowitz, and Connors (2003) confirmed the main claim of most previous studies that both L2 knowledge and L1 reading ability affect L2 reading ability. They found significant correlation between L2 reading ability and L2 knowledge and L1 reading ability. They also found support for the view that a certain level of L2 knowledge is a necessary condition for L1 reading ability to predict L2 reading ability. They also found that failure to maintain active L1 reading skills does not necessarily prevent their transfer to the L2. This is in contrast with Hacquebord’s view that L1 reading skills can be transferred only when practice in L1 reading is maintained (as cited in Schoonen, Hulstijn, & Bossers, 1998). However, they noticed that those subjects who actively maintained L1 reading actually showed a large and significant improvement in L2 reading. In other words, they suggested that though L1 reading practice is not a necessary factor for transfer of reading skills, this practice seems to boost the impact of the transfer. The terms skills and strategies in this study have been used interchangeably.

2.1. Statement of purpose

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the impact of practicing L1 reading skills on the reading achievement in L2 in pre-intermediate level of L2 proficiency. The study, then, focuses on this main question: Do pre-intermediate students who have learnt and practiced reading skills in L1 do better in reading comprehension tests than those who have not had such practice? This question merits investigation for two reasons: if the students who are familiar with reading skills and strategies in L1 have higher scores in L2 reading comprehension tests, it would indicate that these skills should be taught at school programs in a cross-curriculum fashion. It also shows that not all problems in L2 reading can be attributed to language problems, but to general (universal) reading strategies. So these strategies should be incorporated in our programs in a cross-curriculum way.
3. Method

3.1. Subjects

The subjects of the present study were sixty male students who were selected from among the pre-university students in a high school in Sanandaj, Iran in 2013. A standard test (CELT) was given to all students in the school to decide on the student allowed to participate in the study. They were approximately of the same level of proficiency in English. They all had had English in their junior and senior high school programs. The students that achieved scores beyond one standard deviation above or below the mean were left out. The participants were assigned to two groups. Those who were excluded from the study had either attended private language classes or had a poor record in their previous English classes in junior and senior high school. English was a part of the school’s curriculum and the subjects all had to pass this English course as a necessary requirement for graduating the pre-university course. The subjects were not checked for their attitude, motivation, family background, and other factors. Though the geographical location of the school exerts some degree of control on the family background of the subjects (financially and academically) and the fact that all have to participate and pass the English course indicate a shared kind of instrumental orientation for motivation.

3.2. Materials

The two classes had English for two sessions a week. The course book ‘Learning to Read English for Pre-university Students’ (Birjandi, Sarab, & Samimi, 2005) consists of four units for the first semester each has a reading passage as the core of the lesson preceded by pre-reading activities to tap on and activate background knowledge and followed by comprehension check, reading skill introduction, vocabulary review, and a short ‘focus on grammar’ part. The writers have aimed the course book to enhance reading comprehension skills of the students. The topics include: Why exercise is important, How to give a good speech, Global warming, and Earthquakes. The book was taught and used in the two groups by the researcher adopting the same procedure in the both groups. A pretest on reading comprehension was administered to both classes. The test consisted of five short passages each followed by six multiple-choice comprehension items. They were all taken from other standard passages like Nelson and CELT. The same test was also used for the posttest. The experimental group had a collection of twenty Persian passages of different lengths and topics for their extra session classes on learning reading skills in their L1. The topics of the Persian passages were selected from their other courses in the school curriculum that were all
in Persian and also from Persian journals and magazines. The topics similar to the topics in the English course book were not included so as not to provide background knowledge which might exert some sort of influence on the result of the study.

3.3. Procedure

Both the control and experimental groups had their routine classes by working with the course book by the researcher. The experimental group, however, had an extra session a week on introducing reading and reading strategies in Persian. This extra session was exclusively in Persian. The skills of skimming, scanning, guessing the meaning of unknown words, summarizing a passage, and working on comprehension questions were all introduced in their native language and practiced by the students using the package of Persian passages. In order to tap on the validity of the pretest and posttest that both were taken from other well-known tests, a standard test (CELT) was given to both groups. The results showed a high correlation (0.69) to the results of the posttest. The students had silent reading periods and practicing reading strategies using their passages. They also had comprehension check for their L1 passages. The students learnt how to skim a text to get a general overview of the main topic, how to scan a text to locate specific details or facts, how to guess the meaning of unknown words or terms used in the text. They also had comprehension checks which included questions on main idea of the passages, reference of the pronouns, details and inferences. They were asked to summarize the texts too.

After eight weeks a posttest was administered to both groups. The pretest was used to work as a posttest. However, three short excerpts from the English course book were added to the test. The result showed that the experimental group outperformed their peers in control group, though their teacher, course book, and methodology were the same except for the L1 reading strategy training treatment.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this pretest posttest design, means comparisons were first calculated by t-test for the pretest and then for the post-test. The effect of the extra session treatment on learning and practicing reading skills in L1 can be observed from two different dimensions. First, the difference between the pretest and the posttest scores show a significant development for the experimental group while there is not such a development for the control group, though they had the same course book and they were of the same level of proficiency at the beginning of the experiment. Second, it can be noticed that the experimental group outperformed the
control group because of the extra treatment on L1 reading skills. Since the $t_{\text{observed}}$ value is greater than the $t_{\text{critical}}$ value, the null hypothesis is rejected and it shows that the extra treatment was effective enough to make a significant difference between the experimental and control groups. In other words, though the two groups were similar before the experiment, they are now significantly different from one another on the L2 reading comprehension skill. The assumptions underlying the independent t-test were met; the scores are on an interval scale, no subject was member of both experimental and control groups, each subject’s score was independent of any other subject’s score, and the scores were approximately normally distributed.

The results of the pretest of both groups show that the students are approximately of the same level in their L2 reading comprehension ability. For the results of the pretest, first the descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation, and the variance of the two groups were calculated (Table 1). The table shows that the two groups are approximately of the same level of proficiency.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics (pretest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>69.45</td>
<td>9.85</td>
<td>97.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>69.15</td>
<td>10.08</td>
<td>101.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An independent t-test was, then, used to verify the results of the two groups on the pretest (Table 2). The value of the $t_{\text{observed}}$ here is 0.25 which is less than the value of $t_{\text{critical}}$ which is 2. Thus, the two groups did not show great differences.

Table 2. Independent t-test experimental versus control group on pretest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T_{\text{observed}}$</th>
<th>$T_{\text{critical}}$</th>
<th>DF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the posttest were also put under the same statistical procedures. The descriptive statistics for the posttest (Table 3) suggest more progress for the experimental group comparing with the progress seen for the control group.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics (posttest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>73.37</td>
<td>9.76</td>
<td>95.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>80.33</td>
<td>8.56</td>
<td>73.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The t-test analysis for the posttest (Table 4) shows that the $t_{\text{observed}}$ value at the same 64 degree of freedom here is greater than $t_{\text{critical}}$ (2). Therefore, it indicates that the experimental
group outperformed the control group on the posttest. In other words, the null hypothesis that L1 reading skill development has no effect on L2 reading achievement is rejected and the hypothesis that there is such an effect is supported even for the learners at a pre-intermediate level who study English in a foreign language setting.

Table 4. Independent t-test experimental versus control group on posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T observed</th>
<th>T critical</th>
<th>DF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion and conclusion

Clearly, then, there were differences in the performance of the two groups in the posttest reading comprehension test. Since such a difference cannot be seen in the pretest, this provides support for the conclusion that L1 reading skills have positive influence on reading comprehension achievement in L2. Thus, being familiar to and practicing reading strategies in L1 has positive influence on reading skill development and reading achievement in L2 even in a low intermediate level and in an English as a foreign language setting. The study could not be controlled for some extraneous factors that may be accounted for a part of the variations between experimental and control groups. Among these factors reference can be made to attitude, motivation, family background, individual differences, and intelligence. So, in making generalizations based on the results of the study due attention needs to be paid to these limitations. The implications of the study are evident for the teaching English in schools. Since in pre-university courses the main goal of the course is to enhance students’ reading comprehension, it seems necessary to get insights from this study. It seems that some reading strategies are universal and the students need to learn and practice the reading strategies in their L1. The language teacher, thus, can encourage a cross-curriculum treatment of L1 reading strategies in the other subjects in the school curriculum.

References


Title
A Critical-pedagogy based Evaluation of Top-Notch Series from the Perspectives of the Teachers

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Sara Shahab is a Ph.D student of TEFL at Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran. She holds B.A. in English Language and Literature and M.A. in TEFL from Shiraz University. Her Areas of interest are Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Pedagogy, Genre Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and Academic Acculturation.

Abstract
The present study aimed at evaluating the Top-Notch series to see to what extent they address the major principles of critical pedagogy from the teachers’ perspectives. In order to meet this objective, a 33 item Likert-scale questionnaire including major principles of critical pedagogy was prepared and administered to 80 teachers either through face-to-face contact or email. The findings of the study revealed that the material, despite being consistent with some premises of critical pedagogy, such as consciousness raising, critical thinking, promoting dialogism, social development, and cooperative learning, contradicts with some other important newly-emergent ones. To be more precise, from the teachers’ perspectives’, students’ local cultures, languages, heritages, political concerns, and generative themes are excluded from the content just like other commercially popular textbooks. Extensive use of widely distributed Top-Notch series in Iran necessitates evaluating the effectiveness of them. Attempts have been made to evaluate these series from different perspectives; nonetheless, none of these studies have evaluated the series from the perspective of critical pedagogy. The results of the present study should motivate language teachers to evaluate the content of the newly arrived popular textbooks, before using them to see to what extent they conform to the principles of critical pedagogy.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy (CP), material evaluation, Top-Notch series, English Language Teaching (ELT)
1. Introduction

Recently, there has been an increasing interest in the role of critical pedagogy in second language teaching and learning. Critical Pedagogy (CP) is an approach to language teaching and learning which is concerned with the transformation of oppressive socio-political power relations that leads to the marginalization of people. In fact, it tries to empower students to transform their life conditions through emancipatory education, that is through problem posing education and questioning the problematic issues in their’ lives. It aims to help students learn to think critically and develop a critical consciousness about their sociopolitical surrounding which, in turn, help them to improve their life conditions. In consequence, they are encouraged to become agents of transformation not only in classrooms, but also in the larger context of the society. Taken together, it seems that the major aim of CP in education is to shed light on the sociopolitical, cultural, and ideological realities of the classroom setting and the broader society.

The role of critical pedagogy in SLA has been the subject of extensive research in the last decade. In fact, growing interest has been attached to CP in foreign language learning, so that it has become one of the main concerns of language teaching research in the last decade. Nonetheless, most of the studies conducted in this area have been limited to its theoretical and conceptual aspects, and far too little attention has been paid to the application of CP in educational settings. Akbari (2008) asserts that, in spite of its potential implications, the practical implications of CP have not been well appreciated and most of the references to the term have been limited to its conceptual dimensions.

What’s more, most studies in CP have only been carried out in a small number of areas, such as “seeking critical classroom practices”, “educating teachers for change”, “seeking critical research practices”, critical assessment, challenging learners’ identities, “creating and adapting materials for critical pedagogies”, etc (Norton & Toohey, 2004). Therefore, we do not know whether CP is practiced at all, and if practiced how and to what extent.

As mentioned before, in second and foreign language teaching, to date, few studies have examined the role of CP in everyday practices of the educational context. It seems that in general, the role of CP in practice and, in particular, in material development and evaluation has been largely neglected. In this sense, Crookes (2009) asserts that critical L2 pedagogy could be improved practically if more diverse sample materials which operationalize theories of language in critical L2 pedagogy classrooms were in access.
Extensive use of widely distributed Top-Notch series in Iran necessitates evaluating the effectiveness of them. Recently, there has been an increasing interest in the use of these series, so that they are used in almost all of the institutes in Iran. Attempts have been made to evaluate these series from different perspectives (Shafiee Nahrkhalaji, 2011; Soozandehfar, 2011). Nonetheless, none of these studies have evaluated the series from the perspective of critical pedagogy.

1.1 Objective of the study:
In an attempt to address the above-mentioned issue, the present study aims at evaluating the TOP NOTCH series to see to what extent they address the principles of critical pedagogy form the teachers’ perspectives.

1.2 Research questions:
The study, then, seeks for answer to the following research question:
1. To what extent does the EFL textbook (Top Notch series) used in Iranian language institutes conform to the basic principles of critical pedagogy from the teachers’ perspectives?

2. Literature review
2.1 Critical Pedagogy
A considerable amount of literature has been published on critical pedagogy. However, a close scrutiny of the related literature reveals the fact that major studies conducted in this area have tried to put the political and socio-cultural implications of the critical pedagogy that affect every aspect of English language teaching into the forefront, a place it hasn’t visited since the 1960’s and 1970’s. In fact, at the heart of critical pedagogy are the social and political critiques of everyday life (Auerbach, 1991; Giroux, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, and 1997; Judd, 1987; Pierce, 1989; Pennycook, 1994, 1995). The major aim of critical pedagogy is to advocate a set of principles and practices that shifts the focus of not only the classroom, but also the wider society to the socio-cultural, political aspects that affect the nature of language teaching.

Initiated by the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, critical pedagogy is concerned with the relation between language, power and ideology, and tries to shed light on these previously hidden aspects by raising students’ consciousness of the social inequalities and oppressive power relations that exists in the wider society. Freire (1970) advocates a liberatory or emancipatory education that tries to humanize and empower students to become
agents of transformation both in the class and in the wider context of the society. Contrary to the banking model of education in which students are just receivers of knowledge and teachers are the authority, in this problem posing education, Freire (1970) argues in favor of an educational process that can lead to uncovering the reality, the emergence of consciousness, and critical intervention in reality through communication and dialogical relations between the teacher and the students.

Here, Education is the collaborative and collective production of knowledge based upon the reality of students’ lives. In this problem-posing, anti-authoritarian, dialogical model, students adopt a more active role, by acknowledging that they have the right to ask questions. The teacher is not an authority anymore. Rather he listens to the students and by posing a set of stimulating, thought-provoking questions helps them to relate their knowledge to the current problems and socio-political inequalities that exists in the society. Therefore, both teacher and the students become critical co-workers who learn from each other. The major aim of this problem-posing, interactive process seems to be working toward improving their life conditions.

Freire’s (1973) ‘reading the word and reading the world’ approach to education, suggests that education is much more than learning to read, that is the student should also learn to read the world. By this, he means that they should be aware of socio-political issues of life that affects the educational context, which should be at the heart of a critical curriculum.

2.2 Critical Pedagogy and material evaluation

With the arrival and widespread acceptance of critical pedagogy in education, different areas of language teaching including teacher education, assessment and material development and evaluation have undergone great changes. Since materials are at the core of any educational setting and program, they have also been subjected to criticism. Many researchers have criticized the content of mainstream materials used in educational settings.

A close scrutiny of the mainstream ELT materials reveals the fact that the majority of these materials are center-oriented, that is limited to the target language culture. They are criticized with regard to the fact that the topics and themes included in them are not thought-provoking. On the contrary, in order to avoid controversy they choose materials that are exclusively limited to the target culture. Hillyard (2005) believes that examining the topics of such textbooks reveal that the controversial materials are avoided. we find themes such as the family, sport, hobbies, travel, pop culture, festivals from target countries and cultures.

In a similar piece of study, Akbari (2008) believes that various textbooks are sanitized and neutralized to assure that they do not lose their market potential and in this process most of
the topics of interest for a critical pedagogy are removed. He also asserts that most of the topics one encounters in commercially prepared textbooks deal with harmless issues such as travel, shopping, holidays and food recipes, leaving little room for social transformation and political awareness rising. In a similar vein, Banegas (2010) asserts that for reasons generally attributable to the production and marketing, mainstream materials don’t include thought-provoking, problem-posing tasks and topics.

In a more recent piece of study, Byean (2011) Criticizing the topics presented in the mainstream materials, also argues in favor of providing the students with both global and local issues. Finally, Rashidi and Safari (2011), present a model for material development within the framework of critical pedagogy, to help learners to improve their second language skills while developing a sense of critical consciousness of issues of social structures in the world around them.

Taken together, research in this area has resulted in a wealth of information; however, the majority of studies in this area have examined the role of critical pedagogy in abstraction or in theory. Furthermore, as mentioned before, a close scrutiny of the related literature reveals the fact that only a few studies conducted in this area consider the role of critical pedagogy in everyday practices of the educational context. More specifically, the role of critical pedagogy in material development and evaluation has been neglected. It seems that by providing a variety of sample materials, the abstract conceptualization of the principles of critical pedagogy can be operationalized better. Therefore, the practicality of critical pedagogy in educational setting will be improved.

Nonetheless, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, no study to date has been conducted to explore the role of critical pedagogy in material evaluation. What’s more, no study has been conducted on “Top-notch” series to examine to what extent they conform to the basic principles that lie at the heart of critical pedagogy. The present study; therefore, is an attempt to address the above-mentioned issue.

3. Method
3.1 Participants
The initial sample consisted of a total of 100 Iranian English teachers teaching Top-Notch series in Language Institutes in Shiraz of whom only 80 participants returned their questionnaires. 50 females and 50 males participated in this study. All teachers were aged between 23 and 30. Furthermore, all of them held a B.A. degree or a M.A. in Teaching
English, and English Literature, and their teaching experience ranged from one to fifteen years.

3.2 Instruments

Questionnaire
A 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire including the major principles of critical pedagogy, namely the importance of sociopolitical realities of everyday life and their effect on classroom practices, interactive dialogism in the classroom, the roles of the teacher and the students, curriculum and authentic materials based on students’ needs analysis, and the importance of activities that raise learners’ levels of consciousness and critical intervention, was used as the sole instrument of the study (see appendix A). Furthermore, an initial pilot test was conducted with a total of 50 teachers teaching Top-Notch Series in Language Institutes. The aim of this pilot test was to estimate the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach alpha (CA), which turned out to be .81, which is very high.

3.3 Data Collection
Initially, 100 questionnaires were administered to the participants either at the end of their classroom time or through emails, of which only 80 were returned. There was no time limit for completing the questionnaires. Teachers were provided with sufficient information about the purpose of the study, and they were encouraged to ask questions with regard to the content of the questionnaire, to resolve any kind of ambiguity. Moreover, the data was collected over a period of one month in June 2012.

3.4 Data Analysis
To meet the aforementioned purposes, quantitative data analysis was performed with the help of SPSS package(16.0). First, the results of the pilot study were analyzed. The responses to the questionnaire in pilot study were fed into SPSS to calculate its reliability using Cronbach Alpha. Then, the items of the questionnaire were analyzed in terms of percentage and frequency in order to determine to what extent the book conforms to the major principles of the critical pedagogy from the teachers’ perspectives.

4. Results and discussion
As stated earlier, the present study was an attempt to evaluate the TOP-NOTCH series to see to what extent they address the major premises of critical pedagogy form the teachers’ perspectives.
In order to answer this question, first, the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated based on a pilot study, the results of which are presented in Table1.

### Reliability Statistics

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Then, items of the questionnaire were analyzed in terms of their percentage and frequency so as to determine to what extent the TOP-NOTCH series take into account the major premises of critical pedagogy. The results of the questionnaire can be classified and analyzed under six categories. The results of item analysis related to each criteria are presented in tables and then they are discussed further.

**Cp and levels of critical thinking**

For the first part of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics including frequency and percentage are presented in Table 3.

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Note 1. SD: Strongly Disagree S.WHTD: Somewhat Disagree UND: Undecided S.WHTA: Somewhat Agree SA: Strongly Agree

According to the data presented in Table 3, the majority of the participants (81.3 % somewhat agreeing or strongly agreeing with item 1) believed that the book develops students’ communicative abilities, which is in line with the mainstream ELT principles and practices.

However, critical pedagogy aims to develop students’ communicative abilities as well as their ability to think critically. Furthermore, the material should help students not only to read the word, but also to read the world. In other words, the material should raise students’
awareness of their social status as well as the social structures of the society that might affect the educational context of the classroom.

In order to determine to what extent the material is able to promote this ability, the next related items were analyzed (items 2-5). The table further illustrates that the majority of the participants (57.5 somewhat agreeing) stated that the problem solving tasks included in the book encourages the learners to define, personalize, and discuss the problem (item2). Nearly 70% of the participants pointed out that the material aims at developing learners’ critical thinking ability by encouraging them to reflect on the way they exist in the world and to recognize connections, between their individual problems and the broader context of the society (item3). Furthermore, almost 80% of the teachers agreed that the material helps students think critically and consequently develop a more accurate perception of their experiences. Finally, concerning the fifth item in this table, 71% of the participants highlighted that the material raises their social awareness. Therefore, in this regard, the material incorporates an important principle of critical pedagogy, namely developing students’ critical thinking abilities.

In sum, the results of this part of the questionnaire revealed that the majority of the participants agreed that the material aims at developing communicative and critical thinking abilities on the part of the learners while raising their consciousness of the social structures of the society. Therefore, the majority of the participants believed that the material in this sense conforms to both mainstream ELT and critical pedagogy.

Cp and levels of consciousness

Table 4 presents the results of descriptive analysis including frequency and percentage of each item in the second part of the questionnaire (Items 6-8).

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<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
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</table>

Note 1. SD: Strongly Disagree S.WHTD: Somewhat Disagree UND: Undecided S.WHTA: Somewhat Agree SA: Strongly Agree

As the results show, most of the teachers (75% agreeing or strongly agreeing) stated that the material aims to improve learners’ levels of consciousness, which is consistent with one of the important premises of the critical pedagogy. However, as mentioned before, critical pedagogy aims to raise students’ consciousness of the broader context of the society, in
addition to their ability to critically intervene in the context of the society. In other words, the material should improve not only the students’ critical consciousness abilities, but also their ability to critically intervene in reality.

It seems that ultimately, they should be able to challenge the hierarchical social structures. In order to see whether the book conforms to this principle, the other items (7-8) were analyzed. The findings indicate that while almost all of the teachers (92 % agreeing or strongly agreeing) highlighted that the material aims at raising students’ consciousness of the society; 61.2% of them disagreed or strongly disagreed with the next item (item8). In other words, they believe that the material doesn’t have the potentiality to encourage critical intervention on the part of the learners.

Taken together, the results of this part revealed that from the teachers’ perspectives the material attempts to increase learners’ consciousness of the society, but fails to address one of the important tenets of the critical pedagogy, that is critical intervention in reality.

**Cp and Authentic Materials**

Table 5 shows the results of descriptive analysis including frequency and percentage for the third part of the questionnaire.

<table>
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<th>Items</th>
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Note 1. SD: Strongly Disagree S.WHTD: Somewhat Disagree UND: Undecided S.WHTA: Somewhat Agree SA: Strongly Agree

It can be seen from the data in Table 2 that the majority of the teachers (89.2 % agreeing or strongly agreeing) believe that the material invoke considerable discussion and analysis (item 9), and is selected according to the students’ needs and interests (item 11). Moreover, concerning item 13, most of the teachers (73.8 % agreeing or strongly agreeing) stated that the materials were organized as moving from simple to complex.
These are all consistent with the major premises of both mainstream ELT and critical pedagogy, but in the realm of critical pedagogy the focus of attention has been shifted from the content that merely interests students to the content that represents aspects of students’ cultures.

To investigate whether the book conforms to this principle of critical pedagogy, items 10 & 12 were analyzed. Regarding item 10, most of the teachers (48.8%) didn’t agree with this issue. Concerning item 12, again the majority of the participants (65%) disagreed. To be more precise, they believed that the material is not based upon the students’ local cultures, which contradicts with the critical pedagogy tradition.

Furthermore, the results also highlighted that the majority of the teachers (77.4%) disagreed with item 15, which states one of the important principles of the critical pedagogy, namely the use of controversial issues and the non-use of harmless issues such as travel, shopping, holidays and food recipes. Therefore, it seems that in this regard, the book conforms to the principles of mainstream ELT rather than critical pedagogy. The reason for this contradiction can be explained by the marketing and production issues. It seems that the more controversial topics of discussion are neglected in favor of the production and marketing.

On the whole, the results of this part revealed that while the content invokes considerable discussion, and appeals to students’ interests’ and needs’, it doesn’t take into account students’ local cultures. Rather, it only includes the target culture, and in this regard the book is not consistent with the critical pedagogy tradition. What’s more, the material is limited to some harmless issues, and ignores the use of more thought provoking ones in favor of the production and marketing.

**CP and Dialogism**

Table 6 represents the result of descriptive analysis, namely frequency and percentage of each item in the fourth part of the questionnaire.

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<th>Items</th>
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Note 1. SD: Strongly Disagree S.WHTD: Somewhat Disagree UND: Undecided S.WHTA: Somewhat Agree SA: Strongly Agree
As can be seen from the table above, most of the respondents (90%) stated that the material promotes dialogue and peer interaction by engaging students in dialogical problem solving tasks. This is in line with the major tenets of both mainstream ELT and critical pedagogy, but in the realm of critical pedagogy the material should also limit teacher talk. In other words, the material should encourage students’ voice and identity by limiting teacher talk and authority.

Moreover, in order to investigate whether the material conforms to this major principle of critical pedagogy, items 18-19 were analyzed. The results revealed that the teachers felt negatively about this issue. To be more precise, the teachers didn’t believe in the material’s potentiality to develop learners’ voice and identity by fostering an anti-authoritarian environment. In summary, the results of this part depicted that the material promotes dialogue and peer interaction, but it doesn’t encourage learners’ voice and identity in an anti-authoritarian environment.

**CP and Socio-political, cultural concerns**

Table 7 highlights the frequency and percentage of each item in the next part of the questionnaire.

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Note 1. SD: Strongly Disagree S.WHTD: Somewhat Disagree UND: Undecided S.WHTA: Somewhat Agree SA: Strongly Agree

It is apparent from this table that the majority of the teachers agreed that the material has the potential to make students socially aware, and help them to relate their personal problems to the broader context of the society. The material also encourages students to know their social status better and to move forward critically (items 21, 22, 23, 24); nonetheless, the majority of the participants (92.4) disagreed with item 20, namely the material’s potentiality to make students politically aware.
As for the politics, the book is not concerned with political issues; rather it focuses on the social development on the part of the learners. As mentioned before, at the heart of critical pedagogy lies the idea that politics and power should be incorporated in teaching and education. In this way, education can lead to transformation and liberation on the part of the learners.

In addition, most of the participants believed that the book does not take into account students’ local cultures, heritages, practices and languages (items 25, 26, 27), which is contrary to the critical pedagogy tradition. In the realm of critical pedagogy, special attention has been paid to students’ local cultures and languages. Nevertheless, from the teachers’ perspectives’ the material is not culturally appropriate to be used in the educational context of Iran, since it’s mainly center-oriented. Furthermore, the rejection of the first language is in line with the professional literature in ELT which rejects the use of first language.

In brief, the results of this part showed that the material merely focus on social development and awareness on the part of the learners; nonetheless, other important tenets of critical pedagogy have been neglected, namely students’ first languages and cultures.

**CP and the Role of Teacher and Student**

Table 8 represents

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</table>

Note 1. SD: Strongly Disagree S.WHTD: Somewhat Disagree UND: Undecided S.WHTA: Somewhat Agree SA: Strongly Agree

As table 8 illustrates, the majority of the participants believe that the material assumes an equal role for both the teacher and the students, which leads to take necessary actions on the part of the learners. In other words, the material encourages the students to take a more active role in a cooperative learning process. They are no longer passive objects in the learning process, rather they are active participants who contribute to the process of decision making in the class.( items 20-25).The results are consistent with one of the basic principles of the critical pedagogy, namely the improvement of a learner centered cooperative environment.
which leads to active participation on the part of the learners in the sense that that together with the teacher they correct the curricula and that they share their ideas and learn to challenge assumptions (Giroux, 1997).

5. Conclusions and Implications

The present study set out to investigate the extent to which the EFL textbook (Top Notch series) used in Iranian language institutes conforms to the basic principles of critical pedagogy from the teachers’ perspectives. The results of the present study showed that the majority of the respondents agreed that the material aims at improving students’ consciousness, critical thinking, cooperative learning skills, dialogism, and social development which are consistent with the major principles of critical pedagogy. On the other hand, they believed that the material doesn’t take into account political concerns, learners’ voices and identities, local cultures, local languages, and thought provoking, non-commercial issues. In this sense, the material doesn’t conform to the basic principles of critical pedagogy.

Furthermore, though in recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the use of newly arrived Top-Notch series in Iran, a significant finding that emerged from this study is that the series, despite conforming to some principles of critical pedagogy, contradict with some other basic, newly emergent ones. As mentioned before, critical pedagogy rejects the use of commercially produced materials in the market, since such materials detach the learner from responsibility and opportunity to be creative and active in the language process (Crawford, 1978). Thus, a very important pedagogical implication emerged from the study is that though the Top-Notch series, lead to social awareness, raising consciousness, critical thinking and dialogism on the part of the learners, like other international course books are mainly center-oriented. To be more precise, by neglecting students’ local cultures and first languages, they cannot lead to the construction of learners’ voices and identities in the EFL context of Iran. Furthermore, by not taking into account the political concerns, and just focusing on harmless, non-generative themes and topics, the series cannot make students politically responsible. In this sense, they cannot lead to transforming action on the part of the learners.

Another significant implication is that, though critical pedagogy believes in making students both socially aware and responsible, it seems that this series only aim at making students socially aware. In other words, they don’t have the potentiality to help students
challenge the hierarchical social relations, since they don’t take into account the students’
cultures and languages. Drawing upon learners’ own cultures and languages, into materials
content is valuable since focusing on local cultures contributes to learners to reflect on the
positive and negative features of their own culture and consequently explore ways to make
changes in the society if change is required (Akbari, 2008).

The study; nonetheless, suffered from some drawbacks. One limitation of this study is the
limited number of the participants which is only 80. Another limitation of the present study is
that only teachers from Shiraz were selected. If teachers from other cities had been included,
a more comprehensive perspective could have been acquired. Further research can be carried
out to investigate to what extent the other popular EFL textbooks in Iran conform to the
major tents of critical pedagogy. Maybe some other studies should be conducted including
detailed teacher interviews so as to determine how Top Notch series or other textbooks
conform to the basic principles of critical pedagogy.

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Appendix A
The current questionnaire concerns with the analysis of the Top Notch series from a critical pedagogy to see to what extent they address principles of critical pedagogy form the teachers’ perspectives.

After deciding whether a statement is generally true for you, use the 5-point scale to respond to the statement. Please circle the “1” if you strongly disagree that this is like you, the “2” if you somewhat disagree that this is like you, “3” if you neither agree nor disagree that this is like you, the “4” if you somewhat agree that this is like you, and the “5” if you strongly agree that this is like you.

There are no right or wrong answers. Please give the response that best describes you.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = somewhat disagree
3 = neither agree nor disagree
4 = somewhat agree
5 = strongly agree

Cp and levels of critical thinking
1. The material aims at developing learners’ communicative abilities. 1 2 3 4 5
2. The problem solving tasks encourage learners to define the problem, personalize the problem, discuss the problem, and its solution. 1 2 3 4 5
3. The materials develop the learners’ ability to think critically to recognize connections, between their individual problems and the broader social context. 1 2 3 4 5
4. The use of the material leads to a liberatory process which helps students think critically and develop a more accurate perception of their experiences. 1 2 3 4 5
5. The material helps students critically reflect on the way they exist in the world and thus empowers them to challenge oppressive social conditions. 1 2 3 4 5

**CP and levels of consciousness**

6. The material tries to raise learners’ critical consciousness of the world around them in line with their language mastery. 1 2 3 4 5
7. The material develops social and language skill development on the part of the learners. 1 2 3 4 5
8. Problem solving tasks included in the textbook strive for the emergence of critical Consciousness and critical intervention in reality. 1 2 3 4 5

**CP and Authentic Materials**

9. The topics and themes included invoke considerable discussion and analysis. 1 2 3 4 5
10. The materials base their content on source (first language) culture. 1 2 3 4 5
11. The themes of the materials are derived from the learners’ real life situations, needs and interests. 1 2 3 4 5
12. The content is based on authentic materials such as TV, commercials, video movie, etc, which are representative of the culture of the students. 1 2 3 4 5
13. The materials take into account the intellectual advances of the learners in arranging the content, from lesser to greater complexity. 1 2 3 4 5
14. The content is meaningful to students so that they can link their knowledge to existing problems in society and take necessary actions for its improvement. 1 2 3 4 5
15. The themes are not the ordinary themes such as the family, sport, hobbies, travel, pop culture, festivals; rather, they deal with more controversial issues. 1 2 3 4 5

**CP and Dialogism**

16. The textbook material engages students in the cycle of reflection and action by involving dialogical problem solving tasks. 1 2 3 4 5
17. The materials promote dialogue and peer interaction, and the use of "students’ knowledge" as the basis for curriculum. 1 2 3 4 5
18. The material is designed in such a way that the use and practice of dialogue limits teacher talk and encourages learner Voice and identity. 1 2 3 4 5
19. The material promotes an anti-authoritarian, dialogical and interactive approach which aims to examine issues of relational power for students. 1 2 3 4 5

**CP and Socio-political, cultural concerns**

20. The material is concerned with the political problems of everyday life to help students become political critics of the society. 1 2 3 4 5
21. The material teaches more about the social aspects of the language and encourages the students to challenge the hierarchical social relations. 1 2 3 4 5

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22. The material helps the students know their own social status better, and encourages them to contribute to the decision made in the class. 1 2 3 4 5
23. The material focuses on what the students really need to talk about, helping them to move forward critically. 1 2 3 4 5
24. The materials involve a way of thinking about, and transforming the relationship among classroom teaching, and the social relations of the wider community. 1 2 3 4 5
25. Special attention is paid to students’ cultural heritage, practices, knowledge, and languages. 1 2 3 4 5
26. Material regards L1 as an asset facilitating communication in L2. 1 2 3 4 5
27. The content is not only limited to target culture but also takes into account the students’ local cultures. 1 2 3 4 5

**CP and the Role of Teacher and Student**

28. The materials help the learners develop the role of a decision-maker and subject of the act. 1 2 3 4 5
29. It provides students with sufficient knowledge of English to defend the target language culture. 1 2 3 4 5
30. The material helps the teachers to assume the role of problem posers, implying that they should have the knowledge to critique the inequalities of the society. 1 2 3 4 5
31. The material aims at changing the point of view of students through which they are used to look at different social problems. 1 2 3 4 5
32. The material includes external support in the form of language clubs and extracurricular activities to help learners actively build concepts and correct misunderstandings. 1 2 3 4 5
33. The material leads to cooperative working on the part of the learners and the teacher by attributing an equal role to both of them. 1 2 3 4 5
Title

The Relationship between Age and Multiple Intelligences of Iranian EFL Learners

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Biodata

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Abstract

The brand new intelligence theory called "multiple intelligences theory" (MI) by Gardner (1983), has motivated language educators to explore the relationship between MI and second language teaching/learning. In addition, it has given rise to a number of interesting views on how to teach different language learners upon their multiple intelligences. The present study was an attempt to find out whether there is any relationship between age and multiple intelligences. To this end, 228 subjects of this study were chosen from among 280 English learners at Atlas and Marefat Language Institutes based on their age. This relationship was examined through the administration of two instruments: MIDS-Kids and MIDAS-Adults. The results indicated that only spatial, kinesthetic, and intrapersonal intelligences had a significant relationship with age.
1. Introduction

The idea that there is an age factor in language development has long been and continues to be a hotly debated topic. This knowledge is essential for planning age-appropriate instruction and also offering effective techniques for teaching. As Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991, cited in Christopher, 2004) point out, the age issue remains an important one for theory building in SLA research, for educational policy-making, and for language pedagogy. One focus of age-related L2 research has been the idea that children and adults may have fundamentally different processing mechanisms at their disposal. If it can be shown that older L2 learners are different from younger learners, and also children learn in different ways from adults, language teachers will need to identify different approaches and techniques to suit the two kinds of learners.

The theory of multiple intelligences (MI) was first proposed by Gardner in 1983, as a challenge to the notion of general intelligence measured by IQ scores. This new outlook on intelligence differs greatly from the traditional view which usually recognizes only two intelligences, verbal and computational. The eight intelligences identified by MI theory are Linguistic, Logical-mathematical, Spatial, Kinesthetic, Musical, Naturalist, Interpersonal and Intrapersonal. Each intelligence has its own memory system with cerebral structures dedicated to processing its specific contents. Gardner (2003) argues that intelligences change with age and with experience. Based on this statement, it can be hypothesized that dominant intelligence might be identified within each age group. Understanding dominant intelligence in each age range is essential for teachers, students, and policy makers. All students should have the opportunity to not only further develop their dominant intelligences, but should also have the opportunity to develop their weaker intelligences. In addition, this knowledge is essential for planning age-appropriate instruction as well.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Since human development follows reasonably predictable patterns, an understanding of developmental stages helps teachers know what to expect of students at different ages. The idea that there is an age factor in language development has long been and continues to be a hotly debated topic.
2.1. Critical Period in Second Language Acquisition
The Critical Period Hypothesis was first proposed by Montreal neurologist Wilder Penfield and co-author Lamar Roberts in 1959 and was popularized by Eric Lenneberg in 1967 by proposing brain lateralization at puberty as the mechanism that closes down the brain's ability to acquire language. This idea, however, has since been widely disputed. Arguments advanced in favor of the critical period have referred to the neurological changes observable between childhood and adulthood.

2.2. Multiple Intelligences and Age
Regarding the relationship between age and multiple intelligences, an inventory entitled the Teele Inventory for Multiple Intelligences (TIMI) was developed in 1992. This instrument was specifically designed to examine the dominant intelligences of students and has been used as an indicator to demonstrate the intelligences students possess in different grade levels. Teele (2004) argues that the TIMI has been utilized in a broad spectrum of applications since its inception. It has been administered to students at the preschool, elementary, middle school, and high school levels, as well as at community colleges and institutions of higher education. So the TIMI has been employed as one of the means for identifying students' dominant intelligences. Therefore, this inventory does indicate the relationship between multiple intelligences and age. Only some studies, however, have indicated the relationship between age and multiple intelligences in Iran. The study of the relationship between multiple intelligences and learner types by Rahimian (2005) reveals that there is a statistically significant relationship between multiple intelligence scores and age. According to her findings, different age groups had different dominant intelligence. Among the people in the age group (17-24), 36.7% were linguistically intelligent. In the age group (25-29), 61.5% were interpersonally intelligent, and in the age group (30-34) and (35-39), 100% were interpersonally intelligent. On the other hand, another study by Sabbaghan (2004) concerning the relationship between multiple intelligences and learning styles indicates that there is no relationship between MI and age.

Changing views of intelligence can be a driving force in curricular reform and also suggest that school curricula should be expanded to include teaching of fundamental cognitive processing for students who lack them. MI Theory as one of the recent views of intelligence should also be considered in teaching/learning as well. It goes without saying that some of the intelligences—as described in MI Theory—are more dominant in each individual, but a question may be raised whether it is possible to predict this dominant intelligence by classifying people based on their age, gender, and so forth. A precise reply to
this question is brought in the following parts, yet further more research is demanded to identify the dominant intelligence in several age groups.

2.3. Multiple Intelligences Developmental Assessment Scale (MIDAS)

The two most widely used standardized tests of intelligence are the Wechsler scales and the Stanford-Binet. Both instruments are psychometrically sound, but Gardner (1999) believes that these tests measure only linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligences, with a narrow focus within content in those domains. According to Gardner (1983), the current psychometric approach for measuring intelligence is not sufficient and the use of alternative measures for the intelligences is demanded. In his view, assessment must cast a wider net to measure human cognitive abilities more accurately. Many experts, as well as Gardner himself, suggest the MIDAS test as the most widely used scale for measuring MI. The MIDAS scales are designed by Shearer (1996) to measure MI. Shearer (1996) states that whereas IQ tests mark the limits of one's "g," the MIDAS scales describe the intellectual growth and achievement potential for each of the Gardner's domains. In short, the MIDAS test provides an effective method of getting a self-descriptive profile of one's multiple intelligences.

The attempt of this study was to investigate the significance of MI theory as a guide on a better understanding of language learners' needs and interest in each age range. If there is a relationship between the dominant intelligence and learner's age, this knowledge might be beneficial to students, teachers, and material developers. For instance, teachers can offer more effective teaching techniques and also find faster and less time consuming ways to teach based on learners' dominant intelligences. In addition, learners could be directed to the best and most suitable ways of learning. However, Teele (2004) argues that not only should teachers lean on students' strong points, but it is sometimes essential to emphasize areas of weaknesses in order to strengthen learners as well.

Some Iranian researchers, interested in MI theory, have examined the relationship between age and MI (e. g., Sabbaghan, 2004; Rahimian, 2005). However, these studies suffer a shortcoming; in these studies only one questionnaire was used to determine the MI of all subjects, whereas for each age group specific questionnaire should have been administered. Therefore, the researchers used specific questionnaires designed for each age group in order to investigate whether there is any relationship between age and MI of Iranian EFL learners. Hoping that the results of this study might shed light on a very controversial issue in the world of language teaching/learning.
Based upon the afore-mentioned discussion, the following research hypothesis stands out:
There is no statistically significant relationship between age and multiple intelligences of Iranian EFL learners.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants
Out of 280 EFL students learning English at Atlas and Marefat Institutes, only 228 subjects had valid data to participate in this study due to the age restriction and level of language proficiency. The subjects comprised of 147 females and 81 males in which 59.2% belonged to the 10-14 age group and 40.8% belonged to the 20-24 age group. Therefore, the participants made up two groups of male and two groups of female as follows:

Group 1: female children (10-14 year) N = 91
Group 2: male children (10-14 year) N = 44
Group 3: female adults (20-24 year) N= 56
Group 4: male adults (20-24 year) N = 37

It is also worth mentioning that the age groups in this research were selected based on the MIDAS age range. In other words, since MIDAS provides four specific questionnaires for people aged 4-9, 10-14, 15-19, and those over 20, the groups of subjects in this study were chosen based on MIDAS requirements.

Because of administration difficulties in applying randomizing procedure, available classes were used as samples. Therefore, according to Best (1977), the type of sample is convenient or available sample. It might be also helpful to know that socioeconomic background of the subjects was based on intact available groups.

3.2. Instrumentations
The instruments utilized in this study included (a) Multiple Intelligences Development Assessment Scale (MIDAS) for children (aged 10-14) to find the dominant intelligence of learners belonging to 10-14 age group (b) Multiple Intelligences Development Assessment Scale (MIDAS) for adults (20 years of age and over) to find the dominant intelligence of learners belonging to 20-24 age group.

Maintaining Gardner's view of intelligence for this study, the researchers made great effort to find out the most current measurement device of multiple intelligences for the purpose of the research. The MIDAS scales are designed by Shearer (1996) to measure MI. The MIDAS questionnaire takes about 30 minutes or less to complete. The questions are easy
to answer and most people report that they enjoy doing it. As the subjects of this study were elementary students, the MIDAS tests (adult and kids versions) were translated into Persian by the researchers.

Different studies of its reliability and validity (Shearer, 1991) have indicated that the MIDAS scales can provide a reasonable estimate of one's MI strengths and limitations that relate to external rating.

In order to find out the dominant intelligence of each group (10-14 and 20-24 year) MIDAS (adults and kids versions) were administered. Since the subjects in this research were at the elementary level of language proficiency, it was necessary for the researcher to translate MIDAS (adults and kids versions) into Persian so that they could be easily comprehensible to the participants.

Although the adults' version of MIDAS had already been translated by previous researchers, this questionnaire was translated into Persian again to eliminate the problems which existed in previous translated versions. Therefore, in the first step, both versions of MIDAS (kids and adults versions) were translated to Persian. The translations were then shown to some expert translators and one Persian professor to ensure content validity. The results were shown to some experts and the necessary modifications were done. Next, the MIDAS tests were administered, and the eight different scores for the eight intelligences were obtained.

4. Results and Discussion

As it was previously stated, this study was an attempt to find evidence to accept or reject the hypothesis presented earlier. This section investigates the hypothesis empirically and reports the findings.

Descriptive Data

Given the hypothesis above and different tests employed in this study, the first statistical procedure was to conduct a series of descriptive data analyses.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Research Instruments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MI(kids)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>56.00</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>57.51</td>
<td>12.053</td>
<td>145.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI(adult)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>47.00</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td>78.00</td>
<td>56.71</td>
<td>10.853</td>
<td>117.797</td>
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<tr>
<td>KET</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>49.00</td>
<td>99.00</td>
<td>76.06</td>
<td>10.488</td>
<td>109.989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A K-S test was also run to check the normality of the data distributions (see Table 2).
Table 2

K-S Test for Normality of the Data Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>total/100</th>
<th>MI.ADUL</th>
<th>MI.KIDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Parameters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>76.06</td>
<td>56.71</td>
<td>57.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>10.488</td>
<td>10.853</td>
<td>12.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Extreme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
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<td>.041</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
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<td>-.066</td>
<td>-.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</td>
<td>.849</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td>963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.467</td>
<td>.806</td>
<td>.312</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

Since the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) values are more than 0.05, it can be concluded then that the observed distributions correspond to the theoretical distribution. That is, the data of this research is not significantly different from a normal distribution at the P<0.05 level of significance.

4.1. Testing the Hypothesis

In order to investigate the relationship between age and multiple intelligences, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for each group and eight intelligences.

4.1.1. First Phase

For the first phase of the analysis procedure of the hypothesis, the relationship between the age of female children (10-14 year) and their multiple intelligences was investigated. Table 3 shows the correlation between these variables.

Table 3 Correlation between Age and MI of Female Children (10-14 Year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>naturalist</th>
<th>intra</th>
<th>inter</th>
<th>linguistic</th>
<th>spatial</th>
<th>math</th>
<th>kinest</th>
<th>music</th>
<th>age</th>
<th>group</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Pearson</td>
<td>intra</td>
<td>inter</td>
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<td>spatial</td>
<td>math</td>
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<td>perso</td>
<td>perso</td>
<td>lingui</td>
<td>spati</td>
<td>math</td>
<td>kinest</td>
<td>music</td>
<td>age</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.549**</td>
<td>.452**</td>
<td>.551**</td>
<td>.575**</td>
<td>.549**</td>
<td>.501**</td>
<td>.366**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>.000</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>intra</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>linguistic</td>
<td>.000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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It can be concluded spatial intelligence is the only variable which is negatively correlated with the age range 10-14 of female children with an r value of .263 at p<0.05. To learn more about the relationship, the researchers carried out a stepwise multiple regression analysis. Table 4 shows the result of the regression analysis.

Table 4

<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>.263a</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>16.503</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGE

In Table 4, the column labeled "R" shows the correlation of the age of group 1 with spatial intelligence, while the "R square" column shows the amount of variance in the dependent variable (spatial intelligence) that can be explained by the independent variable (age). As Table 4 shows, the age range (10-14) can only account for 7.3% of the variation in the spatial intelligence of female children. Although the prediction is significant at 0.05, age is a very week predictor of the predicted variable, spatial intelligence. In this case, the low value of correlation and prediction, along with the large value of Std. Error of the estimate, remind us to be cautious regarding the interpretation of this result.

4.1.2. Second Phase

In the second phase of the analysis procedure of the hypothesis, the relationship between the age of male children (10-14 year) and their multiple intelligences was investigated. Table 5 shows the correlation between these variables.
As Table 5 illustrates, there is not any significant relationship between the age range 10-14 of male children and their multiple intelligences. Since no significant correlation was found, the researchers did not conduct a stepwise multiple regression.

4.1.3. Third Phase

In the third phase of the analysis procedure of the hypothesis, the relationship between the age of female adults (20-24 year) and their multiple intelligences was investigated. Table 6 shows the correlation between these variables.

Table 6

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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
As Table 6 indicates, there is a significant positive correlation between age and intrapersonal intelligence of female adults with an r value of .270 at the 0.05 level of significance. There is also a negative significant correlation between age and kinesthetic intelligence of group 3 with an r value of .413 at the 0.01 level of significance for a two-tailed prediction.

To further understand the relations, the researcher conducted a stepwise multiple regression analysis. Tables 7 and 8 show the results of the regression analysis.
Stepwise Multiple Regression between Age and Intrapersonal Intelligence of Female Adults (20-24 Year)

<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>
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<td>.073</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>16.50347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGE

Table 8

Stepwise Multiple Regression between Age and Kinesthetic Intelligence of Female Adults (20-24 Year)

<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>
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<td>.171</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>12.48945</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), AGE

As tables 7 and 8 show, the age range (20-24) can account for 17.1% and 7.3% of the variation in the kinesthetic and intrapersonal intelligences of female adults, respectively. Although the predictions are significant at 0.05 level of significance, age is a very weak predictor of intrapersonal intelligence. In this case, the low values of correlation and prediction, along with the large value of Std. Error of the estimate regarding the intrapersonal intelligence, remind us to be cautious about the interpretation of the result.

4.1.4. Fourth Phase

In this phase, the relationship between the age of male adults (20-24 year), and their multiple intelligences was investigated. Table 9 shows the correlation between these variables.

Table 9

Correlation between Age and MI of Male Adults (20-24 Year)

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<th>natura intra</th>
<th>intra perso</th>
<th>inter perso</th>
<th>lingui</th>
<th>spatia l</th>
<th>kine st</th>
<th>music</th>
<th>age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-37) N</td>
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<td>.377* .021</td>
<td>.116 .493</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>.448** .234</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.932</td>
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</table>

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<th>lingui</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-37 N)</td>
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<td>.493 .37</td>
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<td>.005 .37</td>
<td>.164</td>
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<td>.932</td>
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</table>
As Table 9 shows, there is not any significant relationship between the age range 20-24 of male adults and their multiple intelligences. Since no significant correlation was found, the researcher did not conduct a stepwise multiple regression.

To better understand the relationships among the different age groups and their multiple intelligences, the researcher drew Table 10 to show a summary of the correlations conducted above.

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<th>math and logical</th>
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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*
. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 shows where age and multiple intelligences have a relationship. "R" indicates that there is a significant relationship. According to the results of the statistical analysis, spatial, kinesthetic, and intrapersonal intelligences have a significant relationship with the age of female kids and adults. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is logically rejected.
Meanwhile, it would be interesting to observe the distribution of the age groups in different dominant intelligences. Table 11 shows the distributions.

**Table 11**

_Distribution of Different Dominant Intelligences and Age_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>Musical</th>
<th>Kinesthetic</th>
<th>Math and</th>
<th>Spatial</th>
<th>Linguistic</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Naturalistic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within MIDAS</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>21.00%</td>
<td>31.90%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
<td>99.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within MIDAS</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>31.80%</td>
<td>9.10%</td>
<td>6.80%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within MIDAS</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14.30%</td>
<td>14.30%</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>21.40%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within MIDAS</td>
<td>5.50%</td>
<td>10.80%</td>
<td>16.20%</td>
<td>2.70%</td>
<td>8.10%</td>
<td>10.80%</td>
<td>45.90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within MIDAS</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>7.90%</td>
<td>23.00%</td>
<td>15.20%</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
<td>11.50%</td>
<td>28.80%</td>
<td>3.10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 11 indicates, spatial and mathematical intelligences are the dominant ones for female and male children, respectively. Intrapersonal intelligence is dominant for adults, both males and females. In other words, dominant intelligence varies with age. Gender also differentiates the dominant intelligence of children groups.

**4.2. Discussion**

The present study hopefully turns out to be another step toward capturing the complexity of the age issue and multiple intelligences in second language acquisition. Although the statistical analyses performed in this study provided useful evidence in favor of the relationship between age and multiple intelligences of Iranian EFL learners, only three intelligences among the eight intelligences identified by Gardner (1983) had a significant relationship with age range 10-14 and 20-24 of females. Although the "r" values were not very high, the significant correlations cannot be ignored; because Hatch and Lazarton (1991) assert that "a correlation in the 0.30s or lower may appear weak, but in educational research such a correlation might be very important" (p. 442).

The importance of these correlations becomes more evident when looking at the relevant literature and previous research on the relationship between age and intelligences. Gardner
(2003) argues that intelligences change with age and experience. Therefore, the relationships between age and MI which have been found in this research are consistent with Gardner's view. Moreover, an inventory entitled the Teel Inventory for Multiple intelligences (TIMI) in 1992 demonstrates the intelligences students possess at different grade levels. Teel (2004) claims that this instrument, TIMI, has been proven to be reliable and valid. TIMI indicates that the dominant intelligence of third and fourth-grade students is spatial, while in sixth-grade they are more kinesthetically intelligent.

Likewise, the present study highlights the different dominant intelligences in each age range, along with the gender separation, because Furnham, and Buchanan (2005) state that gender itself accounts for a significant proportion of variance with intelligence tests. It was found in this study that female children were spatially intelligent. The interesting point is that the negative correlation between the age of female children (10-14) and spatial intelligence in this research is consistent with TIMI. However, the dominant intelligence of male children (10-14 year) in this research was logical/mathematical. The dominant intelligence for adult participants in this study was intrapersonal for both genders.

Concerning the correlations found in group 3, the negative correlation between age and kinesthetic intelligence of female adults seems reasonable because common sense says that bodily abilities decrease with age. Also, the positive relationship between intrapersonal intelligence and adults female (20-24 year), though very low, is significant enough to be mentioned. In sum, only female participants (groups 1 and 3) in this research had a significant relationship between age and MI.

5. Conclusion
The results obtained indicated that there is a meaningful relationship between age and MI. Among the eight intelligences identified by Gardner (1983) -- musical, kinesthetic, mathematical, spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist -- only three intelligences, spatial, kinesthetic, and intrapersonal intelligence, found to have predictive value of the age of females. Spatial and kinesthetic intelligences appeared as negative predictors for female children and adults, respectively. Intrapersonal intelligence also found as a positive predictor for female adults.

An interesting point in this study is that the dominant intelligence varies according to different age range. Female and male kids were spatially and mathematically intelligent, respectively, while adults of both genders were intrapersonally intelligent.
Meanwhile, it should be borne in mind that although the above mentioned relationships were significant, the low values of the correlation indices remind us to be cautious regarding the interpretation of the relationships.

5.1. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this research showed that there are significant relationships between age and MI. Accepting the finding of this study indicates that older L2 learners are different from younger learners in terms of intelligences, and also children learn in different ways from adults. It is, therefore, important to develop an awareness of the nature and function of intelligence in each age range so that both teachers and learners can perform their roles effectively in the classroom.

The prime suggestion of this study would be directed to language teachers. They can offer more effective teaching techniques and also find faster and less time consuming ways to teach, based on learners' dominant intelligences. In other words, learners could be directed to the best and most suitable ways of learning. For instance, based on the finding of this research, the dominant intelligence of female children (10-14) is spatial intelligence. Therefore, teachers are highly recommended to activate the students' spatial intelligence in the process of teaching. Also, in order to change instructional approaches for female children (10-14 year), teachers are suggested to plan activities to incorporate spatial intelligence by using visual aids for female children (10-14 year). In addition, making language learners aware of their MI strengths and weaknesses may lead them toward a systematic improvement.

However, all students should have the opportunity not only further to develop their dominant intelligences, but also to develop their weaker intelligences. In this regard, Teele (2004) argues that teachers should not only lean on students' strong points but it is sometimes essential to emphasize areas of weaknesses in order to strengthen learners as well. Therefore, teachers can use MI theory as a guide for developing classroom activities that address multiple ways of learning and knowing.

Moreover, the other suggestion of this study would be directed to syllabus designers and material developers for writing courses to consider MI as one of the effective elements in both academic and future career success. The findings of this research clearly showed that children and adults are different in terms of MI. Therefore, incorporating MI in course books for different age ranges results in educated intellectual students with analytical abilities that are clear, precise, and well-reasoned.
5.2. Suggestions for Further Research

Every research project opens new directions for further investigations. Therefore, the following suggestions are recommended for further studies:

In future studies, researchers can continue to explore the existence of any relationship between multiple intelligences and other age groups.

Gardner (1999) has added two more intelligences to the other eight intelligences: Existential and Spiritual intelligences. Other research projects can be done to investigate the relationship between these intelligences and age.

This study can be replicated by a large number of learners at different language proficiency levels (intermediate or advanced) so that the results will be generalized to a larger population.

In spite of the fact that in this study, the most widely used scale for MI, MIDAS, was used, it is possible to obtain results of the subjects' MI using some other complementary measures of intellectual abilities.

Further research can undertake the task of the replication of the present study to see whether in similar situations similar results are obtained.

The present study dealt with learners of general English; other students studying in areas such as EST or ESP can be examined using the same procedures.

Another interesting study would be to investigate whether an appropriate educational treatment based on the learners' dominant intelligence in each age range will lead to a better performance of the learners or not.

References


York: Basic.


Title

On Relationship between Critical Thinking and Self Regulation Learning. Are Critical Thinkers Self Regulated Learners?

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Abstract

The present study aims to identify any significant relationship between critical thinking ability and self regulation learning (SRL). To this aim, along with a critical thinking questionnaire administered in one class-time session, a SRL questionnaire was administered in next session. The questionnaires were administered to specify the correlation, if any, between the pre-intermediate students’ critical thinking ability and their SRL. The correlation was between critical thinking and ‘to do well in school’ variable of SRL indicating the culture-dependency of SRL among Iranian EFL learners. The results revealed that every critical thinker is not self regulated learner.

Keywords: critical thinking ability, self regulation learning, critical thinker, self regulated learner

1. Introduction

The 1960s witnessed a change from behaviourist psychology to cognitive psychology, from language learning to language acquisition (Chen, 2002). By this innovative perspective on language acquisition the learners are supposed to be more autonomous and responsible for
their language learning feat. Engaging students and making them think meaningfully and strategically about learning will be vital to revolutionize and dramatically enhance education. Students must be active learners capable of solving problems in imaginary and innovative ways. Student-centered learning is a way of dealing with this vision and critical thinking is assumed to open a vast horizon in the learners’ mind to enable him more self regulated learner. On the other hand, SRL will lead to more critical thinking either. So, this article aims to investigate the relationship between critical thinking and self regulation learning. To this end, 52 Iranian EFL learners were assigned to answer the questionnaires prepared on critical thinking and SRL.

2. Critical Thinking: Theoretical Overview

If someone is asked to define ‘critical thinking’, he may reply that he has an inexpressible definition of it in his mind. It is because ‘critical thinking is a cognitive activity, associated with using the mind’ (Cottrell, 2005, p. 1). Critical thinking is an important theoretical orientation serving to help students’ motivation and self regulation in teaching and learning processes. Reflective thinking is the basis from which the concept of critical thinking arises (Leung & Kember, 2003; Phan, 2007, 2008a). This view, therefore, may be credited to the work of John Dewey (1933), who extensively defined reflecting thinking as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the conclusion to which it tends” (p. 9). Critical thinking also helps individuals to critically think, analyse, and regulate their own learning processes. There are some diverse and varied definitions on critical thinking and it made the concept a bit complex (Petress, 2004). Scriven and Paul, for example, (cited in Petress, 2004, p. 463) holds that critical thinking is as a process, not as an end in itself. They also state that ‘critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analysing, synthesising, and/or evaluating information gathered from or generated by: observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action’ (p. 261). So, exploring a problem, question, or situation; integrating all the available information about it; arriving at solution; and justify one’s position are the main characteristics of critical thinking.

Cottrell (2005) states that learning to think in critically analytical and evaluative ways occurs by using mental processes such as attention, categorization, selection, and judgment. As to the cognitive skills or activities here is ‘what the experts include as being at the very
core of critical thinking: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation’ (Facione, 2013, p. 5). To the experts, the core of critical thinking skills, as Facione (2013) cites, includes six cognitive skills. The first one is interpretation which means “to comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data…” Analysis, the second skill, is “to identify the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements…” Evaluation is the third skill meaning “to assess the credibility of statements or other representations …”. The other skill is inference which means “to identify and secure elements needed to draw reasonable conclusions [or] to form conjectures and hypotheses…”. The experts define explanation, the next skill, as being able to present in a cogent and coherent way the results of one’s reasoning. The last skill is self-regulation to mean “self-consciously to monitor one’s cognitive activities…”.

Considering the effect of reasoning processes which entails critical thinking, Nugent and Vitale (2008) point out some reasoning processes as follows:

- Problem Solving in terms of identifying a problem, exploring alternative interventions, implementing selected interventions, and arriving at the end product.
- Decision Making as carefully reviewing significant information, using methodical reasoning, and arriving at the end product.
- Diagnostic Reasoning in terms of collecting information, correlating the collected information to standards, identifying the significance of the collected information, and arriving at the end product.
- The Scientific Method which involves identifying a problem to be investigated, collecting data, formulating a hypothesis, testing the hypothesis through experimentation, evaluating the hypothesis, and arriving at the end product, which is acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis (p. 2).

3. Self-regulated Learning (SRL)

With the emergence of cognitive psychology in 1960s the cognitive theories heralded to make some new theories. Although the cognitive theories endowed some similarities, cognitive theories of self-regulated learning differ in many ways but share some common features (Zimmerman, 2001). According to Pintrich’s (2000) and Zimmerman (2002), there are three common features among cognitive theories including (1) an emphasis on learners being proactive and exerting control on their learning processes and environments. (2) Self-regulated learners not only proactively develop their skills and strategies and, like
behavioural learners, they do not passively take in information, but also their learning is a cyclical process in which learners set goals, implement appropriate strategies, monitor their learning progress, and modify their ineffective strategies. (3) An emphasis on motivation, that is, self-regulated learning in an intentional process and students should approach learning with preset goals and the extent to which they self-regulate relies on motivational factors including their beliefs about the probable outcomes of their actions, their commitment to their goals, and their self-efficacy.

Self-regulated learning is increasingly emphasized as a means of raising students' achievement outcomes. According to Zimmerman (2001), self-regulated learning refers to learning that results from learner’s self-generated thoughts and behaviours which are oriented systematically toward the attainment of their goals. Zimmerman (1989) elsewhere states that self-regulated learners are those who are “metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviourally active participants in their own learning process” (p. 4). Chen (2002) points out that self-regulated learning, based on Zimmerman and Risemberg’s (1997) definition, is a self-initiated action involving goal setting and regulating one’s efforts to reach the goal (cognition), self-monitoring (metacognition), time management, and physical and social environment regulation. In the same line, according to Bandura (1986), self-regulation involves three component processes: (a) self-observation or behavioural monitoring; (b) self-evaluation of progress or self-judgment; and (c) self-reaction, including both affective and tangible self-initiated consequences. Based on Chen’s (2002) citation, in students’ learning process, there are several self-regulatory processes such as attending to instruction and cognitively processing information, being aware of one’s capability of learning, understanding and relating new learning to prior learning, and establishing productive work and well interacting with social environments. Generally speaking, Self-regulation essential to the learning process (Jarvela & Jarvenoja, 2011; Zimmerman, 2008) can help students strengthen their study skills and create better learning habits (Wolters, 2011), develop their skills and strategies (Pintrich, 2000), monitor their performance (Harris et al., 2005), and finally evaluate their progress (De Bruin, Thiede & Camp, 2011).

There are various cognitive self-regulated learning theories and three of applied extensively to school learning are information processing, social constructivist, and social cognitive theories. Information processing theory stresses cognitive functions such as attending to, perceiving, storing, and transforming information. This theory bears resemblance to McLaughlin et al.’s (1983) information processing model in which they argue that learning starts from controlled processes, which gradually becomes automatic over
Thus, controlled processing can be said to lay down the *stepping stones* for automatic processing as the learner moves to more and more difficult levels (McLaughlin, 1987). Regarding information processing theory, Winne and Hadwin (1998) postulated that self-regulated learning involves four phases: defining the task, setting goals and planning how to reach them, enacting tactics, and adapting metacognition. Based on Winne and Hadwin’s (1998) model in order to define the task, learners first should process information about the relevant conditions. Sources of information for processing include cognitive conditions that learners retrieve from long-term memory and task conditions interpreted based on the environment such as a teacher's directions. Then, learners set a goal and a plan including the learning strategies they will use for attaining it. In third phase learners apply their strategies, and finally based on self-evaluations of their success, the learners adapt their plans and strategies. Considering the phases of information processing theory, information is processed in terms of searching, monitoring, assembling, rehearsing, and translating characterized by the acronym SMART.

Social constructivist account of self-regulation theory is associated with Vygotsky (1962). Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) believed that people and their cultural environments play the main role in developing an interacting social system. That is, children should be endowed with communicative tools such as language and linguistic symbols needed for developing competence to be able to communicate with people in their environments. Communicative tools within the social system enable learners to develop higher-level cognitive functions such as problem solving and self-regulation. By using these tools learner’s self-regulated learning including the mental processes such as memory, planning, synthesis, and evaluation can be coordinated. Vygotsky (1962) also emphasizes the function of the environment and states that these coordinated processes do not operate independently of the context in which they are formed. Considering the importance of social context, a student's self-regulated learning processes reflect those that are valued and taught in the culture of the student's near surrounding world like home and school. Vygotsky (1962) believed that people learn to self-regulate through control of their own actions. Language and the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the amount of learning possible by a student given the proper instructional conditions, are the primary mechanisms affecting self-regulation.

According to Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, human functioning results from reciprocal interactions among personal factors like cognitions and emotions, environmental conditions, and behaviours. Self-regulated learning fits well with this idea of reciprocal interactions because personal factors, environmental conditions, and behaviours change...
during learning and must be monitored. Such self-monitoring or self-regulation can lead to additional changes in students' cognitions, strategies, behaviours, and affects.

Much educational research shows that children, adolescents, and adults can be taught self-regulated learning skills, as discussed by Schunk and Ertmer (2000), and not only their use of these skills improves learning but skills can also be maintained over time and be generalized to new learning settings. There are formal programmes designed to improve students' self-regulation skills. For example, Weinstein, Husman, and Dierking (2000) described a university course in strategic learning that shows students the learning steps of academic material: set a goal, reflect on the task and one's personal resources, develop a plan, select potential strategies, implement strategies, monitor and evaluate the strategies and one's progress, modify strategies as needed, and evaluate the outcomes to determine if this approach should continue to be used. Of course, the function of developmental factors, motivational variables, and learners’ strategies in self-regulated learning should not be ignored.

To promote SRL in classrooms, teachers are supposed to teach students the self-regulated processes that facilitate learning. These processes can include: goal setting, planning, self-motivation, attention control, flexible use of learning strategies, self-monitoring, appropriate help-seeking, and self-evaluation (Zumbrunn, 2011).

4. Critical Thinker and/or Self-regulated Learner
Two theories in educational psychology - self-regulation and critical thinking - were outlined above. Situating these two theoretical orientations within one framework, Phan (2010) addresses two fundamental issues: (i) that critical thinking, as a cognitive practice, helps in self-regulated learning, and (ii) the sub-processes involved in self-regulation assist in the development of critical thinking skill. In the advancement of this discussion, Phan (2010) contends that both critical thinking and self-regulation, as distinct disciplinary practices, interact intricately to contribute to students’ growth and development (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994; Yanchar et al., 2008; Zimmerman, 2002). Regarding the relationship between critical thinking and self-regulatory strategies, Phan (2010) cites that they are interrelated in three cases:

- First, as previous studies (Ignatavicius, 2001; Leung & Kember, 2003; Phan, 2006) have shown, critical thinking is a cognitive skill that enables learners to use deep processing strategies in their learning to dissect and evaluate classroom materials.
This cognitive reflection (Kish et al., 1997), as defined by its characteristics, suggests that it could form part of the cognitive strategies used by self-regulated learners (Pintrich, 1999; Pintrich & Zusho, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002, 2008; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001).

- Second, based on existing evidence, the disciplinary practice of critical thinking is shaped by deep processing strategies (Phan, 2006), achievement goals (Phan, 2008a, 2009), and personal epistemology (Phan, 2008b). In terms of self-regulation, the key issue is concerned with the strategies that individuals may use to form their skill in critical thinking. The complexity of critical thinking suggests it is a long-term development process that requires practice, nurturing, effort, and reinforcement over time (Ignatavicius, 2001).


Considering the link between autonomy and self regulation, Andrade and Bunker (2011, p. 112) state that autonomy generally consists of two dimensions—pedagogical (taking control of learning) and psychological (metacognition) autonomy. In other words, pedagogical autonomy refers to learners’ capacity in the sense of taking responsibility, active learning, self-awareness, self-direction, and self-reflection. Furthermore, autonomy is associated with the term are metacognition, motivation, strategic competence, behaviour, time management, self-direction, and goal setting. Considering the intertwined variables germane to learning, the students should be encourage to commit themselves to meaningful educational goals, strive to benefit from their educational experiences, monitor their progress toward their goals, make adjustments in their efforts when necessary, and establish new, more demanding goals
as they accomplish earlier ones (Miller and Brickman, 2004). The current study addresses the gap in the literature relative to the correlation between critical thinking ability and self-regulation learning among pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners.

5. Method

This study has endowed with a descriptive co-relational method. The participants’ scores in critical thinking questionnaire and self-regulation questionnaire have been analyzed to reveal how much a critical thinker is self regulated. Simply put, to what degree are critical thinking ability and self regulation learning correlated?

5.1. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between critical thinking and self-regulation. To put it simply, it is to investigate whether the high critical thinkers are good self-regulated learners. Based on the research design and the statistical analysis, the study focused on the following research questions:

1. Is there significant relationship between the variables of self-regulation and critical thinking?

5.2. Participants

Among 78 pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners, 52 male students enrolled in Pardis Language Institute in Hamedan, Iran, were selected. In order to ensure their homogeneity, the Michigan test of language proficiency (1997) was administered at the outset. Based on their scores on the Michigan test of language proficiency, 52 students who varied in age from 18 to 20 years, with the average being 19 were selected.

5.3. Measures

In this study, both the translated version (Naeini, 2005) of critical thinking questionnaire, developed by Honey (2000) and academic self-regulated questionnaire (ASRQ) were applied. The Likert-type questionnaire of critical thinking containing 30 items allows researchers to investigate the participants’ ability in note-taking, summarizing, questioning, paraphrasing, researching, inferencing, discussing, classifying, outlining, comparing and contrasting, distinguishing, synthesizing, and inductive and deductive reasoning. The academic self-regulated questionnaire (ASRQ) developed by Ryan and Connell (1989) includes several variables including doing homework, working on classworks, answering hard question, and doing well in school. Participants respond it on a 4-point Likert scale.
5.4 Procedure
The present study was conducted taking Iranian EFL pre-intermediate learners studying at Madani language institute in Hamadan, Iran. In this study, the participants completed the questionnaires in 2 class-time sessions. We applied the questionnaires to take out raw scores to distinguish whether high critical thinkers are good self-regulated learners as well. Therefore no instruction was administered. Collecting data and enumerating them, they have been analyzed by SPSS. Though data collection is in qualitative fashion, their analysis is based on normal quantitative research procedure. In other words, the qualitative data are evaluated to endorse the correlativeness of critical thinking scores in unitary form and the scores of the variables of self-regulation in detail.

6. Results
As noted earlier, data analysis was conducted in view of the two research questions guiding this study: (1) Is there a significant relationship between critical thinking and self-regulation? (2) Is there a significant relationship between four variables of self-regulation and critical thinking? In order to find an answer to the questions, the data were fed into the computer and then analyzed by SPSS (19th version). Descriptive statistics was employed to show the relationship between critical thinking and self-regulation. The analysis of the descriptive statistics is subject to some presuppositions.

1) The distance or pseudo-distance of data level: it is hypothesized that in applying SPSS to all variables of the study the distance between the variables of the data should be considered.

2) Data normality: to this aim, One Sample Kolomogorov-Smirnov test was used to see whether test distribution is normal (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Descriptive statistics</th>
<th>measured significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulation</td>
<td>0/892</td>
<td>0/403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing homework</td>
<td>0/923</td>
<td>0/362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working on classworks</td>
<td>1/06</td>
<td>0/205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to answer hard questions</td>
<td>0/951</td>
<td>0/327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do well in school/institute</td>
<td>0/684</td>
<td>0/738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>0/545</td>
<td>0/928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: One sample Kolomogorov-Smirnov test showing the test distribution is normal
According to the measured significance in table 1, since the measured significances of the variables of self-regulation and that of critical thinking are higher than the assumed level of significance, i.e., 0.05, so, it shows that test distribution is normal.

3) Linear correlation between variables: to investigate this assumption using SPSS software partitioning through fragmented plot, the standardized regression wastes investigated and shown in Figure 1 has determined that there is no deviation from linearity.

![Figure 1: variables distribution](image)

To test the hypothesis of the study that investigates the relationship between critical thinking and self-regulation variables (H0: p ≠ 0), Pearson correlation test was used. In order to investigate the hypotheses of the study, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used for the data description presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pearson’s correlation</th>
<th>measured significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulation</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing homework</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
<td>0.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working on classworks</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to answer hard questions</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do well in school/institute</td>
<td>-0.30*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: to investigate the relationship between critical thinking and self-regulation variables

According to Table 2, there is no statistically significant correlation (R= -0.23 and P< 0.05) between the self-regulatory variables and critical thinking. Between the variable of ‘doing homework’ and ‘critical thinking’ statistically no significant correlation is endorsed (R = -0.027 and P<0.05) as well. Between ‘working on classworks’ and ‘critical thinking’, there is no statistically significant correlation (R = -0.23- and P< 0.05) either. There is no
statistically significant correlation ($R = -0.25$ and $P < 0.05$) between the ‘attempts to answer to hard questions’ and ‘critical thinking’. Only between ‘to do well in school’ and ‘critical thinking’ there is negative and statistically significant correlation ($R = -0.30^*$ and $P < 0.05$). In other words, growing efforts to do well and be good at school reduces critical thinking.

Based on Table 3 below, generally, correlation matrix between variables endorses the lack of any significant correlation between critical thinking and the variables of self-regulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Doing homework</th>
<th>working on classworks</th>
<th>to answer hard questions</th>
<th>To do well in school/institute</th>
<th>Self-regulation</th>
<th>Critical thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doing homework</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working on classworks</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to answer hard questions</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To do well in school/institute</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-regulation</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>-0.027</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.068</td>
<td>-0.30^*</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: correlation matrix between variables

7. Conclusion and Discussion

The finding of this study, based on quantitative analysis of the critical thinking and the variables of self-regulation, indicated no significant difference among the variables, except between critical thinking and the variable of ‘to do well in school’. Results also indicate that while critical thinking generally encompasses self-regulation variables and on the other hand self-regulation causes the development of critical thinking (Phan, 2010), except in one case there was no significant correlation between two variables. However, if the relationship between critical thinking and self-regulated learning is viewed in a more specific level, it might be more tenable that students with higher critical thinking ability apply more self-regulatory strategies to their learning.

According to Pintrich (1999); Zimmerman (2002, 2008), critical thinking can be used as a cognitive strategy by self-regulated students. The finding of this study indicated no clear
connection between critical thinking and self regulation. One of its reasons might be concerned with the strategies that individuals may use to form their skill in critical thinking (Phan, 2010). In other words, the complexity of the critical thinking process suggests it is a long-term development process that requires practice, nurturing, effort, and reinforcement over time (Ignatavicius, 2001).

By virtue of complexity of critical thinking process, Pintrich (2000) and Zimmerman (1998) point out that contextualizing critical thinking within the framework of self-regulation may be feasible by self-efficacy as a sub-process of self-regulation (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2002, 2008). Phan (2010) believes that it is self-efficacy that facilitates the developmental process of critical thinking skills over time, not self-regulation per se. In other words, Phan (2010) implies that there are many sub-processes influencing the critical thinking and each process may comprises some other sub-processes as well. So, anticipating a direct correlation between critical thinking and self-regulation might be a critical feat.

Considering the variables of self-regulation assumed to be correlative with critical thinking, there is only one variable which is statically significant for this end. It is ‘to do well in school’ variable among other variables found required significance to be correlative with critical thinking. As Atkinson (1997) maintains, this finding implies the culture-centeredness of critical thinking in Iran. Based on findings in Table 2 and 3, It is because of the type of prepared questions which are more related to pedagogical activities than the last variable (to do well in school) of self-regulation which is culture-centered. Regarding the type of pedagogical questions, there are many factors that can influence critical thinking. One of the critical factors is motivation which is underpinned by the questions related to the self-regulation variable of ‘to do well in school’.

Motivation as a key ingredient to pedagogical success can be found in the ‘to do well in school’ variable of self-regulation learning. To answer the question of ‘why do I try to do well in school?’ the participants are directed to choose responses such as ‘because I enjoy doing my school work well,’ or ‘so my teachers will think I’m a good student.’ All the other six questions pertain to this variable, to do well in school, explicitly address either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. According to social psychologists (Bandura, 1997; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008), motivation is a process of initiating and sustaining goal directed behaviour, or simply put, motivated behaviours, such as effort and persistence, are considered to be a function of environmental factors as well as one’s self-perceptions and beliefs (Bandura, 1997). So, it can be concluded that self-regulation and motivation are so interrelated that the questions on self-regulation have fuzzy boundary with motivation. Regarding the straight
trace of motivation implied in the self-regulation variables, this fuzzy boundary indicates a critical perspective about the correlation between critical thinking and self-regulation. So, the learners’ motivation on ‘being good in school’ may affect their critical thinking ability.

According to Facione (1990, p. 2), ‘the ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit’. The result of the study revealed that any critical thinker willing to self-regulate their learning should automatically preprocess the variables of critical thinking with no limitation. However, the cultural factor, as results show, can impact the correlation between critical thinking and SRL. In other words, there are no adequate findings underpinning that a good critical thinker is inadvertently a good self-regulated learner. It is not supported that any self-regulated learner is endowed with high critical thinking ability.

As a concluding remark, it might be concluded that there are more factors affecting critical thinking, including self-regulation, self-efficacy, learners’ culture, motivation, etc. Since the students are more school directed and their development is subject to their motivation, they are rarely autonomous to contemplate on thinking process to analyze the pros and cons of the events. Perhaps students’ critical thinking ability and self-regulation learning are highly valued processes by researchers, school-based psychologists, and teachers. But much work needs to be done to ensure that practitioners are well equipped to evaluate and work with youth exhibiting deficits in these areas. Moreover, much more work needs to determine the boundary between critical thinking components and self-regulation variables. It is highly appreciated that the clarification of such complex issues will greatly impact the learners’ academic success. Consequently, the youth deficits might be related to their age and it needs more investigation.

References


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Type of Critical Thinking and EFL Learners’ Performance on Argumentative and Descriptive Writing Modes

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Abstract

Many studies have been done in the area of critical thinking to show that it has an important function in education. This study aims at investigating the relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ critical thinking levels and their writing performance in descriptive and argumentative modes. The participants of study were selected from among EFL learners studying at the advanced level at Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Rasht, Iran. The instruments used in this study included the Longman Paper and pencil test (2004) for ensuring the homogeneity of the learners, a Critical thinking questionnaire (Honey,2004) with 30 items into the 5-point Likert scale type that used to divide learners into high and low critical thinkers and an analytic scale of weir (1990)for assessing participants’ argumentative and descriptive writings. The study followed an ex-post facto design. The results of inferential statistics revealed a statistically significant difference.
between the writing performance of high and low critical thinkers in both the descriptive and argumentative modes. It was found that the high critical thinkers’ writing was better in both modes of writing compared to the low critical thinkers. The result of this research helps teachers to consider the effect of critical thinking on the learning process. Moreover, the Syllabus designers and course-book writers should think about critical thinking as an influential element in their program.

**Key word:** Descriptive, Augmentative, Critical thinking, Writing

### 1. Introduction

Many studies have been done in the area of critical thinking to show its important function in education. Critical thinking is an important factor which has a direct relationship with language learning and it is a very important component of education in this century. Huitt (1980) states that thinking plays an important role in people's life. He further adds that the movement toward the information age has changed attention to good thinking as a main element of life successes. So, this new trend has paved the way for critical thinking to be the main focus of schooling. In this regard, academically successful students are not defined as persons who memorize facts and learn fixed routines and procedures; instead as individuals who can mix their intellectual knowledge to think critically especially when they face difficulties or when they are learning something (Chaffee, 1992).

Writing is an important skill that needs higher critical thinking and its role in language learning cannot be ignored. In terms of skills, producing a connected, meaningful and extended piece of writing is the most difficult thing for language learners. For second language learners, is more challenging, especially for those who enter to a university to study the language that is not their own (Nunun, 1999). Written products need insightful thinking, writing and revising procedures require specialized skills, skills that not every person earns naturally (Brown, 2001). We must realize that writing a language comprehensibly is much more difficult than speaking it (Rivers, 1981). Moreover, the major problems of students in some skills especially writing may be because of low level of critical thinking not because of their lack of knowledge in subject matter. Therefore, knowing about their learners' thinking and being aware of its importance can entice teachers to search for the ways to measure the levels of learners' thinking and find some ways to improve their thinking levels (Pual, 2004). In spite of existing numerous approaches in teaching writing evolved from different methods of teaching, studying EFL writing is still one of the most challenging areas for teachers and
students. Ahmad (2010) indicates that students' writing in an EFL classroom context should show their awareness of their own communicative goals, of the writing context and of the intended readers. Birjandi, Alavi, and Salmani (2004) noted that there is a distinct absence of mastery of both the macro (content and organization), and micro skills (grammar, vocabulary and mechanics) of writing in Iranian students' writing. Further evidence of this deficiency in both the micro and macro skills have been gleaned via contrastive analysis (Alifatemi, 2008). Although some studies show that Iranian EFL learners have problems in writing, this study has tried to determine that inability of EFL learners in writing can result from another factor that is lack of critical thinking.

Recently, a large number of studies have focused their attention on critical thinking and different skills and aspects of language learning. Kamali and Fahim (2011) investigated the relationship between critical thinking ability and reading comprehension of texts, including some unknown words. Nikoopour (2011) did a study investigating the relationship between critical thinking and the use of direct and indirect language learning strategies by Iranian learners. In another study, the relationship between critical thinking and lexical inference of EFL learners was examined by Mirzaie (2008).

However, among learners that acquire writing skill professionally some can write more analytically and evaluate some texts more precisely. This can be investigated more to find whether it is because of having a higher critical thinking level or not. In this case, this study aimed to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ critical thinking levels (i.e., high and low) and their performance on two writing modes (i.e., descriptive and argumentative).

2. Literature Review

In the first part some theoretical views on critical thinking and writing will be reviewed then in the second part the related studies will be covered.

2.1. Theoretical views on critical thinking

Critical thinking enables people to analyze what they read or hear and make conclusion based on their analysis. As Blackburn (1996) states, critical thinking is the process of breaking a concept down into its components, in order to display its logical structure. Knott (2005) indicate that critical thinking involves reflective processes such as meticulous decision-making, rational reasoning, artistic creation, and solving problems. Simply put, critical thinking involves applying effective reasoning in analyzing problems. On this basis,
critical thinkers judge and question an idea or thought based on reliable evidences by establishing logical relationships among statements or data.

2.2. Critical thinking and writing

Writing a coherent piece of text is a huge challenge, especially in our second language (Nunan, 1999). Mirzaii (2012b) states that "writing as a skill requires language people to know a number of complex, linguistic, rhetorical, and predetermined conventional rules" (p. 140), the fact that become complex by the presence of different modes of writing. Accordingly, Richards and Schmidt (2010) introduce four types of non-creative writing modes including descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative writing, maintaining that a tacit consensus among EFL/ESL writing instructors is that novice writers should begin with the simplest mode, that is, the descriptive essay and gradually move towards learning the most complex one, that is, the argumentative mode.

A good piece of writing should reflect the aspects of critical thinking. For this, a writer should generate some content and arguments that he can then defend and from which he can draw conclusions (Kurland, 2000). Stapleton (2001) proposes the following criteria as the key factors to evaluate a written text in terms of critical thinking elements:

1. Arguments: Arguments are claims accompanied by a reason. A claim includes a statement whose truth is challenging, and is often advanced in answer to controversial issue.
2. Reasons: Reasons are sentences used to support what we say and generally answer why we should be believed it. Reasons must show a direct logical link to the claim in order to be bound into a single proposition called an argument.
3. Evidence: It involves statement serving to strengthen the argument. It can be defined as support for the fact of a proposition, especially those that derive from empirical observation or experience (Kemerling, 2002). Evidence involves personal experience, researches, statistics, citing authorities, comparisons, pointing out consequences, facts, logical and precisely defining words (Bean and Ramage, 1999).
4. Recognition of opposition: opposing viewpoints makes statements that contradict interpretations to those expressed in the claim. Shortcomings in opposing viewpoints can include logical flaws, poor support, erroneous assumptions or wrong values (Bean and Ramage, 1999).
5. Conclusion: A conclusion is a statement in which a writer sets out what she wants the reader to believe. This belief is conveyed via an argument, evidence and other statements that the author uses to express his belief.
6. Fallacies: they are errors in reasoning. Davis and Davis (2000) contend that thinking critically is to find rational fallacies. It happens when the reason does not support the claim in a number of ways (Kemerling, 2002).

2.3. Related studies

There are some studies in relation to critical thinking and language skills. Fahim and Sa’eeepour (2011) conducted a study intending to investigate the impact of teaching critical thinking skills on reading comprehension ability and the influence of using debate on critical thinking of EFL learners. They concluded that including critical thinking skills in language classroom is vital to improve language teaching and learning.

In another study, Fahim and Azarnioushi (2011) tried to find whether there is any relationship between the critical thinking ability of language learners and their performances by using rule driven or discovery learning approaches to teach grammar. The results of their study showed that there was a positive correlation between the critical thinking ability of the learners and their grammar test scores if the inductive teaching method is used. However, for the deductive teaching method, no specific relationship could be discovered between the critical thinking ability of the learners and their grammar test scores.

According to Khorasani and Farimani (2010), the reason we have both critical thinkers and non-critical thinkers in the Iranian setting is that, the whole educational agenda is more of a teacher-dependent character. Everything in the classroom are defined and explained by teachers. A majority of teachers are themselves brought up by this old view of education and view education mainly as filling their students' memory banks with information, so they cannot take their students beyond of what they themselves are (Pishghadam, 2008). Kamali and Fahim(2011) investigated the relationship between resilience, critical thinking ability and reading comprehension of texts including unfamiliar vocabulary items. The conclusion showed that there is a significant relationship between critical thinking ability, resilience, and L2 reading comprehension. Behdani (2009) has done a research investigating the relationship between critical thinking ability, autonomy, and reading comprehension of the Iranian EFL learners. The results displayed that a significant relationship between learners' autonomy and their performance on reading comprehension exists. In another study, the relationship between critical thinking and lexical inference of EFL learners was examined by Mirzaie (2008). Here, the researcher found out a relationship between critical thinking levels and lexical inference of learners.

Hiber (1992) says that in many Arab countries, the education systems put emphasis on writing for test taking. In this respect, some studies in the Arab world and a few Egyptian
studies were conducted offering different approaches and remedial programs to overcome the decontextualisation of writing and to develop students’ EFL essay writing skills.

According to Hassani (2003, as cited in Alifatemi, 2008), the following problems exist in the Iranian language learning environment: a) old methods of teaching, b) unqualified teachers, c) differences in cultures, d) lack of audiovisual facilities, e) non-authentic materials, f) the lack of native speakers, g) lazy pupils, and h) the lack of English channels to watch related English language programs. In addition, some part of the writings of Iranian learners may appear to be a word for word translation of the Persian language grammatical structure into English. In the writing process, learners may make errors rooted in their mother tongue (Yarmohammadi, 2002 as cited in Alifatemi, 2008). As stated earlier, there are some studies conducted in the area of reading comprehension and critical thinking. However, writing as an important skill in learning a foreign language, which has an influential effect in academic communication, has not been attended a lot. Moreover, having a higher critical thinking ability can enable learners to write in a subtle way and transmit their intentions appropriately. In this regard, becoming aware of learners' critical abilities, teachers can find some ways to help learners to improve their critical mind to higher levels. However, to the best of the researcher’s knowledge there is not any specific study carried out on Iranian learners to find the relationship between higher and lower critical thinking and their performance on different writing modes, namely, argumentative and descriptive. For this purpose the following research questions were posed.

1. Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL high and low critical thinkers in their performance on descriptive writing mode?
2. Is there any significant difference between Iranian EFL high and low critical thinkers in their performance on argumentative writing mode?

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

- **H₀₁**: There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL high and low critical thinkers in their performance on descriptive writing mode?
- **H₀₂**: There is no significant difference between Iranian EFL high and low critical thinkers in their performance on argumentative writing mode.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants
The participants of the study were selected out of 94 advanced level EFL male learners at Kish Institute of Science and Technology, Rasht, Iran. The researcher utilized intact groups in assigning the participants to the study. In order to select the homogenized learners, the researcher used a TOEFL test. Based on the obtained scores, those learners with a score falling within one standard deviation above and below the mean \( (M=80.45, SD=9.33) \) were selected. Finally, 64 learners with the scores between 71 and 90 formed the homogenized group. Their age range was from 19 to 40.

3.2. Instruments

A) TOEFL Test
In order to ensure the homogeneity of learners in language proficiency the Longman Paper and pencil test (2004) was administered. This test comprised of three sections: (a) structure and written expression with 40 items, and (b) reading comprehension with 50 items. (C) listening comprehension with 50 questions. The allocated time to take the test was 140 minutes, and the scoring was estimated out of 150.

B) Critical thinking test
The homogenized group were given a Critical thinking questionnaire (Honey, 2004, as cited in Naeini, 2005) with 30 items into the 5-point Likert scale type. They were requested to read items and chose an item ranging from never to always. The reliability of the questionnaire was obtained through Cronbach’s Alpha that indicated a high internal consistency \( (\alpha=.86) \). The participants were divided into two groups of high and low critical thinkers based on their performance on critical thinking test. Those who scored 65 and above were considered as high critical thinkers and those who scored below 65 were considered as low critical thinkers (Farahani, 2011).

C) Writing Scale
The analytic scale of weir (1990, as cited in Ahour and Mukundan, 2009) was used in this study for assessing participants' argumentative and descriptive writings. The scale includes the items such as relevance and adequacy of content, compositional organization, cohesion, spelling, punctuation and adequacy of vocabulary for purpose and grammar. The first three items are related to the fluency and the other categories are relevant to the accuracy in writing.

D) Argumentative and Descriptive Topics
The topics of writing were chosen from NTC TOEFL (2003) and given to the both high and low critical thinkers in the study. The selected topics for descriptive and argumentative modes were, respectively, as follows:
1) Describe your favorite movie.
2) Do you agree or disagree with the statement “boys and girls should attend separate schools”. Use specific reason and examples to support your answer.

The participants wrote at least 250 words on these topics in two different sessions. The devoted time for each writing part was fifty minutes.

3.3. Design of the Study
The study followed an ex-post-facto design, since the relationship between critical thinking ability of EFL learners (high and low critical thinkers) and their performance on two writing modes (argumentative and descriptive) was studied.

3.4. Data analysis
By using descriptive statistics, researcher obtained the mean of each group in two different modes of writing, namely, descriptive and argumentative. Then the means of each mode (descriptive and argumentative) was compared to see whether the differences between higher and lower critical thinkers' performance in these modes were significantly different. For this purpose, an independent-samples t-test was employed. The alpha level for significance testing was set at .05.

The descriptive and argumentative texts written by low and high critical have been analyzed by two experienced university professors as raters. The means and standard deviations for the scores of the two raters on different categories related to the participants’ writings were calculated. In addition, inter-rater reliability obtained through Pearson product-moment correlation for high critical thinkers of descriptive writing mode was (r =.86) and low ones was(r =.89) and for high critical thinkers of argumentative one was (r=.91) and the low ones was(r =.86). This reveals a high level of correlation between ratings of two raters for low and high critical thinkers. Thus, the average of the scores of the two raters was used in the data analysis.

4. Results
4.1. Longman Homogeneity Test
To evaluate the participants' level of proficiency, the researcher used Longman (2004) TOEFL test. The allocated time to take the test was 140 minutes, and the scoring was estimated out of 150. Based on the obtained scores, those learners (n=64) with a score falling within one standard deviation above (90) and below (71) the mean (M=80.45, SD= 9.33) were selected. The descriptive statistics for the TOEFL test are presented in Table 1.
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Test and Reliability Coefficients Related to TOEFL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEST</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>range</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL</td>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>80.45</td>
<td>9.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. Critical Thinking Test

The critical thinking questionnaire including 30 multiple choice items was administered to the participants to test the skills of analysis, inference, evaluation, deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning. The participants were divided into two groups of high and low critical thinkers based on their performance on critical thinking test. Those who scored 65 and above were considered as high critical thinkers and those who scored below 65 were considered as low critical thinkers (Farahani, 2011). Among these participants 38 of them whose scores were above 65 were put in high critical thinkers and the rest (26) whose score was below 65 categorized as low critical thinkers. (See Table 2)

Table 2. Critical Thinking Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical thinking test</th>
<th>N low critical thinkers</th>
<th>N high critical thinkers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>percentage</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Testing the first null hypothesis

In order to find whether there is a significant difference in the writing performance of Iranian EFL high and low critical thinkers and their performance on descriptive writing mode a topic taken from Nelson TOEFL book given to the subjects then the descriptive texts written by high critical thinkers were analyzed by two raters. Table 3 indicates the means and standard deviations for the scores of the two raters on different categories related to the participants’ descriptive writings. It also shows the inter-rater reliability ($r=.86$) obtained through Pearson product-moment correlation. This reveals a high level of correlation between ratings of two raters for high critical thinkers. Thus, the average of the scores of the two raters was used in the data analysis.

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-rater Reliability for the Scores of Two Raters on Descriptive Writing of High Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rater</th>
<th>content</th>
<th>organization</th>
<th>cohesion</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>grammar</th>
<th>punctuation</th>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>Inter-rater reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>16.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The same descriptive topic was given to low critical thinkers and then their written texts were evaluated by the same raters. Table 4 indicates the means and standard deviations for the scores of the two raters on different categories related to the participants’ descriptive writings. It also shows the inter-rater reliability (\(r=.89\)) obtained through Pearson product-moment correlation. This reveals a high level of correlation between ratings of two raters for low critical thinkers. Thus, the average of the scores of the two raters was used in the data analysis.

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-rater Reliability for the Scores of Two Raters on Descriptive Writing of Low Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>rater</th>
<th>content</th>
<th>organization</th>
<th>cohesion</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>grammar</th>
<th>punctuation</th>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>mean</th>
<th>Inter-rater reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M 2.23</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S .41</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M 2.30</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S .42</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it was mentioned there is a high level of inter-rater reliability between ratings of two raters for both low and high level critical thinkers in descriptive writing; however the mean of whole scores of low critical thinkers (\(M= 12.07, SD= 2.01\)) is lower than the high critical thinkers (\(M= 16.23, SD= 1.44\)). It indicates that high critical thinkers outperformed low critical ones (see Table 5).

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics on the Descriptive Writing Scores of the High and Low Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean statistics</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Skewedness statistics</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Critical Thinkers</td>
<td>16.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low critical thinkers</td>
<td>12.07</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>+0.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics of descriptive writing, the skewness ratio values are -0.16 and 0.15. Since the ratio values of descriptive scores in both groups are within the acceptable range of ±1.96, normality is assumed and using the Independent-Samples t-test is confirmed (see Table 6).

Table 6. Results of Independent-Samples t-test on the Descriptive Writing Scores of the High and Low Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</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>Equal Variance assumed</td>
<td>14.96</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Variance not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 6 indicates, the results of the Levene’s test ($F=14.64$, $p=0.000 < 0.05$) made clear that the variances between the two groups are significantly different and thus homogeneity of variances is not assumed. Therefore, in order to find out whether there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups, the second row of the independent-samples t-test was considered. The results show that there is a statistically significant difference, $t (56.26)= 6.46, P= .000$, between the writing performance of the high ($M= 16.23, SD= 1.44$) and low ($M= 12.07, SD= 2.01$) critical thinkers in the descriptive mode with the better performance of the high critical thinkers. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

4.4. Testing the second null hypothesis

In order to see whether there is any significant difference between Iranian EFL high and low critical thinkers and their performance on argumentative writing mode, a topic taken from Nelson TOEFL book given to the subjects then the argumentative texts written by high critical thinkers were evaluated by two raters. Table 7 indicates the means and standard deviations for the scores of the two raters on different categories related to the participants’ argumentative writings. It also shows the inter-rater reliability ($r=.91$) obtained through Pearson product-moment correlation. This reveals a high level of correlation between ratings of two raters for high critical thinkers. Thus, the average of the scores of the two raters was used in the data analysis.
Table 7. Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-rater Reliability for the Scores of Two Raters on Descriptive Writing of Low Critical Thinkers

As it is shown in table below, the same argumentative topic given to low critical thinkers and then the written texts have been analyzed by the same raters. Table 8 indicates the means and standard deviations for the scores of the two raters on different categories related to the participants’ argumentative writings. It also shows the inter-rater reliability ($r=.86$) obtained through Pearson product-moment correlation. This reveals a high level of correlation between ratings of two raters for high critical thinkers. Thus, the average of the scores of the two raters was used in the data analysis.

Table 8. Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-rater Reliability for the Scores of Two Raters on Argumentative Writing of Low Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>raters</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Cohesion</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Punctuation</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Inter-rater reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>13.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>13.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it was mentioned there is a high level of inter-rater reliability between ratings of two raters for both low and high level critical thinkers in argumentative writing; however the mean of whole scores of low critical thinkers is 10.17 and high critical thinkers is 13.85 out of 21 respectively. It indicates that high critical thinkers outperformed low critical ones. It indicates that the differences exist the following descriptive statistics was used.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics of Argumentative Writing of High and Low Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean statistics</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>SD variance statistics</th>
<th>Std. error</th>
<th>Skewedness ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics of argumentative writing of both high and low critical thinkers. Accordingly, the skewness ratio values in both groups (0.52, -0.108) is within the acceptable range of ±1.96. Therefore, both sets of scores were normally distributed and using a t-test is acceptable.

Table 10. T-test on the Argumentative Writing Scores of the High and Low Critical Thinkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</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>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>0.609</td>
<td>57.216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, as the Table 10 indicates, the results of the Levene’s test (F=0.23 .64, p=0.000< 0.05) made clear that the variances between the two groups are not significantly different and thus homogeneity of variances is assumed. In order to find out whether there is a significant difference between the means of the two groups the second raw of the independent-samples t-test was considered. The results show that there is a statistically significant difference, t (56.26)= 6.46, P= .000, between the writing performance of the high (M= 16.23, SD= 1.44) and low (M= 12.07, SD= 2.01) critical thinkers in the descriptive mode with the better performance of the high critical thinkers. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

5. Discussion

The results show that both in the descriptive and argumentative texts the differences between high and low critical thinkers are statistically significant. It means that although in the case of language proficiency all learners are homogeneous there are some differences in the way of their writing that can be related to their critical thinking. This shows that critical thinking ability of Iranian EFL learners affected their writing and those who thought more critically wrote more coherently and used more correct forms of grammatical sentences and content words. In other words, those who had higher level of critical thinking ability obtained higher writing scores. It is implied that those with higher critical thinking can organize their thought
better and this can be correlated with using higher levels of cognitive and metacognitive strategies that they use while writing. This result intensifies the important role of critical thinking in language learning and is in line with the findings of some researchers, in the context of Iran, who investigated the relationship between critical thinking and different variables including the use of direct and indirect strategies (Nikoopour et al., 2011); reading ability when faced with unknown vocabulary (Kamali&Fahim, 2011); and L2 vocabulary knowledge and L2 vocabulary learning strategies (Fahim&Komijani, 2010). These kinds of studies indicate the essential role of critical thinking for being successful in education in general and in learning different skills and sub-skills related to the foreign language in particular.

The study indicates that critical thinking level of the students is very important in their writing ability and their performances on two kinds of writing. The results of this study can be helpful to the language teachers in that they can consider the effect of critical thinking on the learning process and teach the related critical thinking strategies to their learners. Using pre-tasks and post-tasks for the purpose of teaching critical thinking among learners is recommended. Most of the teachers are not aware of the different types of critical thinking strategies and they cannot teach them to their students, accordingly. It is for the educational system, especially in Iran, to set up some workshops and courses for teachers in order to get the necessary training. In this regard, some in-service training courses are helpful for the professional development of the teachers.

The results of this study can also be useful for the syllabus designers and course-book writers. They can think about implementing critical thinking tasks and activities in the process of designing and developing the materials.

References


Title

Evaluation of Grade Seven English Textbook for Iranian Junior High School Students

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Biodata

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Abstract

The present study aimed at evaluating newly-developed English textbook for Iranian students in grade seven. To this end, a five-point questionnaire developed by Ramzjoo (2010) based on contextual needs of Iranian students and stakeholders was deployed for this study. 22 grade seven English teachers with teaching experience ranged from 5 to 15 years from four cities, namely Ahvaz, Hamadan, Sanandaj, and Razan, took part in this study. The findings of the study indicated although the textbook had some merits, it was not suitable for the intended students due to the fact that students’ level of proficiency and background knowledge, systematic gradation and contextualization of materials, inclusion of social problems were neglected in the textbook. What is more, teacher’s manual was not available for teachers.

Keywords: English textbook, Evaluation, Grade seven English textbook, Newly developed English textbook

1. Introduction

In this survey-study, attempts were made to evaluate the newly-developed English textbook for grade seven. Since the old English textbook could not help students to develop a good command of English speaking skill, it is claimed this textbook has been developed based on new methods and approaches to language teaching. It is believed this textbook spotlights the
four language skills especially listening and speaking skills which were neglected in the old one.

1.1. The importance of textbooks in an educational system

Like other EFL contexts, textbooks in Iranian context provide much of the language input learners receive (Abdollahi-Guilani et al., 2011; Ghorbani, 2011; Razmjoo, 2007). Although students study the English language for many years in Iranian junior and senior high schools and pre-university, most of them do not develop a good command of the English spoken language (Ghorbani, 2011)

One of the ways which can lead to the improvement of a curriculum is to improve the textbooks and the materials utilized in a program (Jahangard, 2007). Jahangard (2007) believes textbooks are of paramount importance for teachers for the following reasons:

1. Assessing students to learn every subject including English.
2. They are the foundation of school instruction and the primary source of information for teachers.

As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) put it “the textbook is an almost universal element of ELT teaching” (p.315). Learners consider textbooks as a roadmap and framework that can help them to organize their learning both inside and outside the classroom. Many teachers believe textbooks can help them to saves time, gives direction to lessons, guides discussion, facilitates giving of homework, making teaching and learning easier, better organized and more convenient.

O’Neill (1982) proposed four reasons for using textbooks:

1. Although a textbook might not be developed for a particular group, it could be suitable for a great number of groups’ needs.
2. Textbooks create the opportunity for students to find out what they are going to cover next session and look back at what they have already learned.
3. Textbooks allow teachers to adapt and improvise while they teach.
4. Textbooks provide students with high quality materials.

Richards (2001) believes a textbook can serve different purposes for teachers as a main source or supplementary, as an inspiration for classroom activities or as the curriculum itself, or it can provide structure and a syllabus for a program, save teachers’ time, enable teachers to devote time to teaching rather than materials production, provide effective language models and input, train teachers, and be visually appealing.

O’Neill (1982) believes some textbooks increase teachers’ involvement and decrease students’ involvement. Some activities which are done by teachers can be carried out by
learners more profitably. As Allwright (1981) stated Involvement should not only be related to participation in classroom activities but to participation in decision making and the management of language learning.

Tomilson (2008) believes Materials for learners at all levels must expose them to authentic spoken and written language with the potential to engage the learners cognitively and affectively. Materials require to provide many opportunities for the learners to be engaged in natural and meaningful use of language and many opportunities for them to gain feedback on the effectiveness of their attempts at communication.

1.2. The importance of materials evaluation

Dudley–Evans and St. John (1998) defined evaluation as “fundamentally evaluation is asking questions and acting on the responses” (p.128). They further added “evaluation is a whole process which begins with determining what information to gather and ends with bringing about change in current activities or influencing further ones” (p.128). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated evaluation is a matter of judging the fitness of something for a particular purpose.

Materials evaluation is extremely important for teachers in an educational system. This can help teachers to take teaching and students’ learning needs into account. Textbook analysis and evaluation can provide teachers with useful insight into the nature of the materials (Razmjoo, 2010).

McDonough and Shaw (2003) indicate the ability to evaluate teaching materials effectively is extremely important for EFL teachers. Since ineffective materials may waste fund and time, have demotivative effects on students and teachers. Evaluation process is not static. After preliminary material evaluation which indicated its effectiveness. Teachers should judge its ultimate success or failure after certain amount of its use in the classroom.

Materials evaluation can lead to a more systematic and thorough examination of potential textbooks and enhance outcomes for learners, instructors, and administrators (Garinger, 2002).

Wang (1998) believes materials evaluation is important due to the following reasons:

1. It helps teachers to have adjustment, modification and improvement of their own teaching.
2. It is a multidimensional process and many criteria are involved in the process, and subjectivity could influence materials evaluation to some extent.
3. Textbooks should not be regarded as an absolute authority and depend on it too much but teachers are expected to modify or improve materials which do not contribute to students’ learning.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) classified evaluation into two types: formative and summative. “Formative (ongoing) evaluation which takes place during the life time of an activity (a course), and the findings help to shape the course during its life time” (p.128) while “summative evaluation takes place at (or after) the end of an activity and so does not influence that version of the activity” (p.128).

McDonough and Shaw (2003) consider three stages for evaluation:

External evaluation: the intended audience 2- the context in which materials are to be used 3- the proficiency level 4- how the language has been presented and organized into teachable units 5- the author views on language and methodology and that relationship between the language process and the learner, treatment and presentation of skills, the sequencing and grading of the materials, the type of reading, listing speaking and writing materials contained in the materials, appropriacy of tests and exercises, self-study provision and teacher-learner balance in the use of materials.

Internal evaluation: examining the claims made for the materials by the author publisher with respect to the intended audience, the proficiency level, the context and presentation of language items whether the materials are to be core, supplementary, the availability of teacher’s book, the inclusion of a vocabulary list, the table of contents, the use of visuals and presentation, the cultural specificity of the materials, the provision of audio/video materials and inclusion of tests.

Overall evaluation: genarlistasibilty, usability, adaptability, flexibility of materials are evaluated.

Garinger (2002) mentions three steps for material selection process:

1. Matching the textbook to the program and the course
2. Reviewing the skills presented in the textbooks: does the textbook focus on the skills it claims to focus on? does it actually teach these skills? or does it merely provide practice in the skills students already have?
3. Reviewing the exercises and activities in the textbook: are the exercises balanced in their format, containing both controlled and free practice? are the exercises progressive as students move through the text? are the exercises varied and challenging?
Brown (1995) indicates materials should be considered from five perspectives: background, fit to curriculum, physical characteristics, logistical characteristics, and teachability.

1.3. The present study
In the present study, it was attempted to see whether the English textbook designed for Iranian grade seven students is suitable for them. To this end, grade seven English teachers’ views on the textbook were investigated. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the following research question:

1. Is the English textbook developed for Iranian grade seven students suitable for them?

2. Method
2.1. Participants
In the present study, 22 grade seven English teachers from four cities, namely Ahvaz, Hamadan, Sanandaj, and Razan, took part. The participants were 9 females and 13 males with teaching experience ranged from 5 to 15 years.

2.2. Materials
The newly developed English textbook for Iranian grade seven students was evaluated. To evaluate the textbook a questionnaire comprised of 35 items was used. It should be mentioned the original questionnaire contains 6 more items related to teacher’s manual which were omitted due to a reason which will be mentioned in the Discussion section. The questionnaire was developed by Razmjoo (2010) based on contextual needs of Iranian students and stakeholders. The five point – scale questionnaire (Excellent, Good, Average, Weak, Very Weak) examines 5 parts: 1. language components, 2. Tasks, activities, and exercises 3. language skills 4. general consideration 5. CDA features. To make it more comprehensible, it was translated into Persian and then it was back translated by two experts in the field.

2.3. Procedure
First, the participants were informed about the importance of this research. Second, the questionnaires were distributed among them. Third, they were told there is no time limit for filling out the questionnaires and they were allowed to take the questionnaires with them and fill them out carefully after thorough analysis of the textbook. Forth, they were informed they do not need to write their names.
### 3. Results

#### Table 1  
Participants’ Views on the Textbook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>The checklist</th>
<th>Ex</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>VW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language components</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>1. completeness and appropriateness of presentation</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. completeness and adequacy of practice</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. correspondence between students ‘levels and the new words load</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. systematic gradation of vocabulary from simple to complex items</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. repetition of the new vocabulary in subsequent lessons for reinforcement</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. complete and adequate practice of idioms</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. the balance between students’ levels and sentence length</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. appropriateness of the number of grammatical points as well as their sequence</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The checklist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. gradually increasing of structure complexity to suit the growing reading ability of the students</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. using current everyday language by the writer</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. logical sequence of sentences and paragraphs</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. introducing linguistic items in meaningful situations to facilitate understanding</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tasks, activities &amp; exercises</strong></td>
<td>13. developing comprehension and test knowledge of main ideas, details, and sequence of ideas</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>involving vocabulary and structure which build up the learner's repertoire</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>providing practice in different types of writing</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>providing a pattern of review within lessons and cumulatively testing new materials by the book</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>promoting meaningful communicative by referring to realistic activities and situations</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>adequate and appropriate exercise and tasks for improving reading comprehension</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>devising appropriateness tasks for improving reading techniques</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>enough exercises to include pre-writing, writing, and post-writing</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>presenting suitable patterns to improve writing</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The checklist</td>
<td>Ex</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>AV</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>VW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>adequate and appropriate tasks to improve listening</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>organizing tasks from simple to complex</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Appropriateness of individual and group speaking activities</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>completeness, appropriateness and adequacy of the speaking tasks</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>focus on the latest FLT approaches and methods</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>clear statement of the objectives of the course and of each textbook.</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>attention to L1 and L2 differences and taking cultural values into consideration</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen from Table 1, five areas were evaluated. The first area under investigation was language components which composed of three parts: 1. pronunciation, 2. vocabulary and idioms, 3. structure. Items 1 and 2 examine pronunciation: 1. Completeness and appropriateness of presentation: 9% of the participants chose excellent, 36% chose good, 32% chose average, 14% chose weak, and 9% chose very weak. 2. Completeness and adequacy of practice: 14% of the participants chose excellent, 32% chose good, 22% chose average, 14% chose weak, and 18% chose very weak alternatives.

Items 3, 4, 5, and 6 examine vocabulary and idioms: 3. Correspondence between students’ levels and the new words load: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 22% chose good, 8% chose average, 32% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak. 4. Systematic gradation of vocabulary from simple to complex: 5% of the alternatives chose excellent, 22% chose good, 32% chose average, 36% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak. 5. Repetition of the new vocabulary in subsequent lessons for reinforcement: 9% of the participants chose excellent, 41% chose good, 41% chose average, and 9% chose weak. 6. Complete and adequate practice of idioms: 14% of the participants chose excellent, 26% chose good, 55% chose average, and 5% chose very weak alternatives.

Items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, examine structure: 7. the balance between students’ level and sentence length: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 22% chose good, 18% chose average,
41% chose weak, and 14% chose very weak. 8. Appropriateness of the number of grammatical points as well as their sequence: 18% of the participants chose good, 41% chose average, 36% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak. 9. Gradually increasing of structure complexity to suit the growing reading ability of the students: 14% of the participants chose excellent, 18% chose good, 32% chose average, and 36% chose weak. 10. Using current everyday language by the writer: 18% of the participants chose excellent, 64% chose good, and 18% chose average. 11. Logical sequences of sentences and paragraphs: 23% of the participants chose excellent, 27% chose good, and 5% chose weak. 12. Introducing linguistic items in meaningful situations to facilitate understanding: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 27% chose good, 31% chose average, 32% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak.

As table 1 shows, the second areas under investigation were tasks, activities, and exercises. Items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 are related to this area.

13. Developing comprehension and text knowledge of main ideas, details, and sequence of ideas: 14% of the participants chose excellent, 63% chose good, 9% chose average, 14% chose weak alternatives. 14. Involving vocabulary and structures which build up the learner’s repertoire: 23% of the participants chose excellent, 31% chose good, 23% chose average, and 23% chose weak. 15. Providing practice in different types of written work: 23% of the participants chose excellent, 36% chose good, 18% chose average, 18% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak. 16. Providing a pattern of review within lessons and cumulatively testing new materials by the book: 23% of the participants chose excellent, 40% chose good, 14% chose average, and 23% chose weak. 17. Promoting meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations: 27% of the participants chose excellent, 59% chose good, 9% chose average, and 5% chose weak. Regarding Table 1, the third area examined was language skills. This area composed of four components: 1. reading 2. writing 3. listening 4. speaking. Items 18 and 19 are related to reading: 18. Adequate and appropriate exercises and tasks for improving reading comprehension: 9% of the participants chose excellent, 41% chose good, 27% chose average, 23% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak. 19. Devising appropriate tasks for improving reading techniques: 14% of the participants chose excellent, 31% chose good, 27% chose average, 23% chose weak, and 5% chose very weak alternatives.

Items 20 and 21 are concerned with writing: 20. Enough exercises to include pre-writing, writing, and post-writing: 9% of the participants chose excellent, 41% chose good, 36% chose average, 14% chose weak. 21. Presenting suitable patterns to improve writing: 32% of the participants chose excellent, 9% chose good, 41% chose average, and 18% chose
weak. Items 22 and 23 are concerned with listening: 22. Adequate and appropriate tasks to improve listening: 23% of the participants chose excellent, 41% chose good, 18% chose average, and 18% chose weak. 23. Organizing tasks from simple to complex: 14% of the participants chose excellent, 45% chose good, 23% chose average, and 18% chose very weak.

Items 24 and 25 are concerned with speaking: 24. Appropriateness of individual and group speaking activities: 36% of the participants chose excellent, 45% chose good, 19% chose average. 25. Completeness, appropriateness and adequacy of the speaking tasks: 27% of the participants chose excellent, 37% chose good, 27% chose average, and 9% chose weak.

Given Table 1, Items 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 are concerned with general consideration. 26. Focus on the latest FLT approaches and methodology: 32% of the participants chose excellent, 41% chose good, 22% chose average, and 5% chose weak. 27. Clear statement of the objectives of the course and of each textbook: 19% of the participants chose excellent, 27% chose good, 23% chose average, 22% chose weak, and 9% chose very weak. 28. Attention to L1-L2 differences and taking cultural values into consideration: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 40% chose good, 13% chose average, 37% chose weak, 5% chose very weak. 29. Contextualization of pronunciation/grammar/vocabulary exercises: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 27% chose good, 26% chose average, 37% chose weak, 5% chose very weak.

As can be seen from Table 1, items 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35 are concerned with CDA. 31. The equal use of gender in terms of names and pronouns: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 63% chose good, 32% chose average. 32. Providing a situation so that students think and act critically: 19% of the participants chose excellent, 27% chose good, 23% chose average, 22% chose weak, 9% chose very weak. 33. Relationship between the content of the textbook and real-life situations: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 40% chose good, 13% chose average, 37% chose weak, 5% chose very weak. 34. Addressing social problems esp. the problems of inequality in the society: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 18% chose good, 18% chose average, 50% chose weak, 9% chose very weak. 35. Focusing on the issues that are of immediate concern to learners/practitioners: 5% of the participants chose excellent, 45% chose good, 27% chose average, 23% chose weak alternatives.

4. Discussion and Conclusions
As Dudely -Evan & St. John (1998) indicated there is no perfect text book; therefore, instructors require to evaluate the textbook they intend to use. According to the participants, although grade seven English textbook enjoys some merits, it has some drawbacks.

Regarding the first area, pronunciation part seemed satisfactory; however, it appears vocabulary and idioms and structure parts were not completely favorable. There was not appropriate correspondence between students’ levels and the new words load; moreover, systematic gradation of vocabulary from simple to complex was not appropriate. Regarding structure part, the textbook lacked the following factors: a) no balance between students’ level and sentence length, b) inappropriate number of grammatical points as well as their sequence, c) lack of gradually increasing of structure complexity to suit the growing reading ability of the students.

Students’ level of proficiency was not taken into account, since the structures and vocabulary used in the textbook were evaluated by most of the participants as above students’ level of language proficiency; what is more, gradation of materials from simple to complex which acts as a system was lacking in this textbook.

Tasks, activities, exercises and language skills were appropriate. Regarding general consideration and CDA features of the textbook two problems were identified: 1) contextualization of pronunciation / grammar/ vocabulary exercises which leads to meaningful learning was not taken into account. Contextualization of exercises is of paramount importance in developing materials; therefore, this issue can lead to mechanical learning. 2) little attention to social problems. The textbook did not pay enough attention to some of the social problems with which our students are involved in our society. For example lack of enough communication between old and young generation due to the emergence of so many computer games, smart cellphones, lack of social equality and so on. By means of teaching foreign language, it would be necessary for a textbook to shed light on the existing social problems.

It should be mentioned 6 items related to teacher’s manual were omitted from the questionnaire since all the participants indicated that they did not have access to teacher’s manual to fill out the items related to that part. Although it was claimed the textbook included a teacher’s manual, it was not available for the teachers. A teacher manual could be considered as a roadmap which can guide teachers whenever encounter problems in teaching.

At the end it should be mention comprehensive needs analysis should be carried out and students’ levels of proficiency are taken into account. A nation-wide needs analysis might be required in this regard in order to have a clear picture of the matter.
References


Title
Manipulation of Speech by Mass Media; a Case Study of a Presidential Speech

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Abstract

In recent years the mass media have played an important role in shaping people’s view of the world. The debate on the interaction between the mass media and the governments has been of interest among some researchers. The aim of this study is to present and analyze samples of text obtained from the mass media which represent the effect of interaction between government and mass media on the manipulation of the speech in mass media. In order to meet the goal of this study, a part of the English translation of CNN's Christiane Amanpour's conversation with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and its original Persian version have been selected for detailed analysis on those parts which seems to be manipulated by CNN. Based on the data analysis it can be concluded that interaction between government and mass media may be one reason for manipulation of speech in mass media which is in line with Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation.

Key words: Mass Media, Speech Manipulation, Politics, Presidential Speech, CNN
1. Introduction

We are in communication age. Lemnaru (2013) believes that communication “defines the personality of the individual and, by extension, of the society” (p. 963). “As economics is to wealth, as political science to power, so communications are to enlightenment; communications development should be treated like economic development or political development” (Schramm, 1964, p. 19).

Technological advancement is one of the major factors in the development of communications. Technological advancement, especially electronic-based technologies, has been led to the spread of communication devices. These communication devices include technological organizations like television, radio, newspapers, websites and etc., which provide news and information for large numbers of people in a society. These organizations have been called mass media. “The term mass media refers to any form of communication that simultaneously reaches a large number of people, including but not limited to radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, billboards, films, recordings, books, and the Internet” (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994, p. 2).

There are two kinds of mass media, printed and broadcast. Printed mass media is comprised of newspapers and magazines and Broadcast mass media includes radio and television. It seems, broadcast mass media has more audience than printed mass media (McCombs, 2013). So, it can be inferred that broadcast mass media may have more impact on society comparing with printed mass media.

Today the role of mass media in shaping people’s view of the world cannot be neglected. “People are affected by what the mass media choose to let them hear, see, and read” (Shojaei & Laheghi, p. 2535, 2012). The power of mass media in some cases even leads to the change of governments. Fog (2004) claimed “The media are supplying the political information that voters base their decisions on” (p. 1). Mass media can familiarize people with different political viewpoints. Mutz and Martin (2001) claimed that, “although a lack of diverse perspectives is a common complaint against American news media, we find that individuals are exposed to far more dissimilar political views via news media than through interpersonal political discussants” (p. 97). “In recent years the need to understand the relationship between the media and world politics has become more pressing” (Robinson, 2001, p. 524). Hence having control of mass media is of great significance for governments.
Governments found out that it is necessary to limit the mass media in order to take control of them.

Fog (2004) believes mass media play an important role in democratic process and has a great influence on political climate. He also writes that: …the competitive news media select and frame stories in ways that hamper the ability of the democratic system to solve internal social problems as well as international conflicts in an optimal way. These effects are unintended consequences of the structure of the media market (p. 1).

According to Van Dijk (2006) ‘Manipulation’ is one of the important concepts of Critical Discourse Analysis. The verb MANIPULATE has been defined as follows: “to work with or change information, systems etc. to achieve the result that you want” (Longman Advanced American Dictionary). Manipulation of speech and distortion in mass media are closely related. “Distortion does not involve phenomena like jamming or unintentional distortion of the message, but the way the mass-media affects people’s perception of events” (Lemnaru, 2013, p. 963).

With regard to the limited amount of research which has been done in this field, it seems, conducting studies in order to present and analyze samples of text obtained from the mass media which represent the interaction between governments and mass media and the effect of this interaction on the manipulation of speech in mass media, is of utmost importance. So, the current study aimed at investigating the patterns of manipulation in a conversation between Iranian President and a CNN’s interviewer.

2. Review of Literature

According to McQuail (1977, p. 80) interest in the effects of mass media could be divided into three main stages:
- In the first phase, which lasts from the turn of the century to the late nineteen thirties the media, where they were developed in Europe and North America, were attributed considerable power to shape opinion and belief, change habits of life, actively mould behaviour and impose political systems even against resistance.
- The second stage extends from about 1940 to the early 1960s and it is strongly shaped by growth of mass communications research in the United States and the application of empirical method to specific questions about the effects and effectiveness of mass communication.
- The third phase, which still persists, is one where new thinking and new evidence is accumulating on the influence of mass communication, especially television, and the long neglected newspaper press.

With regard to McQuail’s third phase of interest in the effects of mass media, it worth to mention that today television has a great influence on people’s life. TV channel owners and managers seek to provide financial resources for running their channels affairs. “Most newspapers, radio, and TV stations get most or all of their income from advertisements and sponsoring” (Fog, 2004, p. 3). Due to immense charges which is needed to manage and run mass media, it seems, it is necessary for these media to be depend on state budgets. This dependence of mass media on state budget helps governments to gain more control over what they want to be announced via media. This dependence can even lead to the manipulation of the results of polls (Baudrillard & Maclean, 1985).

Robinson (2001) reviewed current conceptual understanding of media–state relations. Based on his review, he indicated on “the ability of government to influence the output of journalists and the tendency of journalists to both self-censor and perceive events through the cultural and political prisms of their respective political and social elites” (p. 525).

Governments may force the mass media to manipulate the unfavorable news to an acceptable point. “With digitalization the array of possibilities for manipulation might be expected to increase” (Luhmann, 2000, p. 39). The mass media could manipulate the speech through various ways. Some of these ways are as follows:

1. Highlighting those specific features that governments want to put more emphasis on.
2. Indication on trivial and less important features of news in order to evade those features which are not in line with governments’ interests.
3. Censoring those features of news which governments found to be totally against their ideologies.
4. Distorting those undesirable features of news in order to make them be more in line with general political aims of the governments. “Distortion does not involve phenomena like jamming or unintentional distortion of the message, but the way the mass-media affects people’s perception of events” (Lemnaru, 2013, p. 963).

These aforementioned ways through which government could limit mass media can be traced in the coverage of those features of news which is of interest for
governments. The results of a study by Shojaei and Laheghi (2012) about the effects of political ideology and control factors on news translation, in one of the Iranian newspapers shows that, “ideologies and political issues are important stimuli which can control the materials being translated, and then presented to the mass through news texts” (p. 2535).

Van Dijk (2006) believes, “there is no systematic theory of the structures and processes involved in manipulation” (p. 359). He claimed, manipulation, to a great extent, occurs by text and talk. He further introduced triangulated approach to manipulation including social power abuse, cognitive mind control and discursive interaction. Van Dijk elaborate on this classification in the following lines:

Socially, manipulation is defined as illegitimate domination confirming social inequality. Cognitively, manipulation as mind control involves the interference with processes of understanding, the formation of biased mental models and social representations such as knowledge and ideologies. Discursively, manipulation generally involves the usual forms and formats of ideological discourse, such as emphasizing Our good things, and emphasizing Their bad things (p. 359).

One of the manifestation of Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation could be traced in a study which has been done by Rahimi and Riasati (2011). Aimed to describe the constraints imposed on translators of movie dialogues in the context of Iran, they analyzed the Persian translation of ‘Platoon’ movie from a critical discourse analysis view. In order to meet the aim of their study, they selected some deviated part of the Persian translation of the movie dialogues and compare them to their original English equivalents. They analyzed the selected movie text in terms of such features as addition, deletion, censorship, euphemism, derogation, and etc. Based on data analysis they observed “a sort of ideological manipulation and constraint manifested by translators of movie texts” (p. 5787). They concluded:

The movie translations in Iran are scenes of ideological incursions in translation, that is, suppression of dialectal features. They are sites of ideological clashes in which certain realities are constructed and challenged and xenophobic attitudes are propagated. The translators counterfeit realities and inculcate them in the innocent audience (p. 5788).
It seems their conclusion has been built upon Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation, in that they enumerated ideological issues as one of main causes of manipulation in movie translation in Iran.

Entman (1991) provided an illustrative example in order to illustrate the role of government in affecting the distribution of news through media. He compared the coverage of the news in the American media with regard to a Korean and an Iranian airliner which have been shot down by a Soviet fighter plane and a U.S. navy ship respectively. Although both cases were similar in the case of the victims who were civilians, and also in both cases, military officials identified a passenger plane as a possibly hostile target, the media made use of different words and expressions to refer to these two cases:

By de-emphasizing the agency and the victims and by the choice of graphics and adjectives, the news stories about the U.S. downing of an Iranian plane called it a technical problem while the Soviet downing of a Korean jet was portrayed as a moral outrage (p. 6).

Through contemplation of the conclusion of this study, it could be inferred that Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation is running again. That is through, ‘emphasizing Their bad things’ the media tries to manipulate the news.

Based on the literature review it can be inferred that governments may try to impose some limits to mass media on the issues which are of importance for the governments. However, there exist a limited number of research which has been done in this regard. As the contemplation of the patterns of manipulation in mass media may be an intricate burden, it seems conducting qualitative research in which a selected text go through a subtle investigation may be found helpful in clarifying the patterns of manipulation. Taking Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation into consideration, this study concentrated on CNN’s Christiane Amanpour's conversation with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, in order to detect the distorted part of the English translation of this conversation.

3. Methodology

The current study was carried out through a qualitative method. There are great differences between quantitative and qualitative methods of doing research. “Whereas quantitative methods are more deductive, statistical, and confirmatory, qualitative
methods are more inductive, nonstatistical, and exploratory” (Roberts, 1997, p. 2). Since the current research is a case study in nature, the qualitative method seems to best fit as its underlined methodological framework. The rationale for this claim can be found in Roberts’ words:

Qualitative analyses are usually performed not on randomly sampled data but on strategically selected case studies. Whereas the probabilistic inferences of quantitative analyses yield conclusions about the generalizability of one’s findings, the logical inferences of qualitative analyses yield conclusions about the universality of one’s theories (p. 3).

In order to fulfill the aim of this study, a part of the transcription of CNN’s Christiane Amanpour’s conversation with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani which has been translated into English (25th of September, 2013) and the Persian version of this interview, which retrieved from the President’s official website (25th of September, 2013), have been selected for further analysis on those features which seems to be manipulated by CNN. As the audio file of this conversation which has been published by CNN, was duplicated to English, the Persian transcription of the conversation which is available on the internet was changed to English.

According to Bucholtz (2000) there are two main styles of transcription; “naturalized transcription, in which the text conforms to written discourse conventions, and denaturalized transcription, in which the text retains links to oral discourse forms, have equal potential to serve as politicized tools of linguistic representation. In this study naturalized transcription was used in order to transcribe both English and Persian versions of the conversation

3.1. English translation:

AMANPOUR: One of the things your predecessor used to do from this very platform was deny the Holocaust and pretend that it was a myth. I want to know you, your position on the Holocaust.
Do you accept what it was?
And what was it?
ROUHANI: I have said before that I am not a historian personally and that when it comes to speaking of the dimensions of the Holocaust as such, it is the historians that should reflect on it.
But in general, I can tell you that any crime or - that happens in history against humanity, including the crime that the Nazis committed towards the Jews, as well as non-Jewish people, is reprehensible and condemnable, as far as we are concerned. And just as even such crimes are - if they are to happen today against any creed or belief system or human being as such, we shall again condemn it.

So what the Nazis did is condemnable. The dimensions of whatever it is, the historians have to understand what it is. I am not a historian myself, but we - it must be clear here, is that when there is an atrocity, a crime that happens, it should not become a cover to work against the interests or - or justify the crimes against another nation or another group of people.

So if the Nazis, however criminal they were, we condemn them, whatever criminality they committed against the Jews, we condemn, because genocide, the taking of the human life, is condemnable and it makes no difference whether that life is a Jewish life, a Christian or a Muslim or what. For us, it's the same. It's the taking of a human life and an innocent human life is (INAUDIBLE) in Islam. It's actually something that we condemn and our religion also rejects.

But this does not mean that, on the other hand, you can say, well, the Nazis committed crimes against, you know, a certain group, now, therefore, they must usurp the land of another group and occupy it. This, too, is an act that should be condemned, in our view.

So there should be an even-handed discussion of this.

3.2. Original Persian Version (transcribed):

MOJRI: Yeki az masaeli ke, farde ghabl az shoma, dar hamin makan mi neshast va matrah mikard, een bood ke holokast ra rad mi kard va towri rafter mi kard ke gooya yek ostoorreh bood, mi khaham bedanam mowze’e shoma darbareh holokast chist? Va aya ghabool darid ke een holokast vojood dashteh va ab’adash che boodeh?

DOKTOR ROUHANI: Man ghablan ham goftam ke tarikhdan nistam va ab’ade havades’e tarikhi ra tarikhdanan bayad tab’een va bayan konand va towzih dahand, ama be towre koli har gooneh jeneyati ke dar tarikh alaihe bashariat etefagh oftadeh, az jomleh jenayati ke naziha anjam dadand, che nesbat be yahood va ache nesbat be gheire yahood, az nazare ma kamelan mahkoom ast. Haman towr ke emrooz ham agar jenayati alaihe har melati, din va ya har ghowniati anjam begirad, ma an jenayat va nasl koshi ra mahkoom mi konim, banabar een kar naziha mahkoom ast,
ab’adi ke shoma mi gooeed, an ab’ad be ohdeh movarekhin va mohagheghin ast ke ab’adash ra rowshan konnand, man mohaghegh’e tarikhi nistam, ama een nokteh bayad rowshan bashad ke jenayati agar etefagh oftadeh, sarpooshi nashavad, baraie een ke yek melat va ya yek goroohi bekhahand alaihe digaran jenayat ya zolm khodeshan ra towjih konnand. Banabar een agar naziha jenayat kardand, har meghdari ke boodeh ma an ra mahkoom mi konim, chera ke nasl koshi va adam koshi mahkoom ast.

Az nazare ma, fargh nemikonad kasi ke koshteh mi shaved yahoodi, masihi va ya mosalman bashad az nazare ma hich farghi nadarad, chera ke koshtan ensan bi gonah matrood va mahkoom ast, ama een dalil nemi shaved ke shast sal mardomi ra az sarzamineshan avareh konim baraye een ke begooeem nazi ha jenayati ra anjam dadand ke jenayateshan mahkoom ast, eshghal’e sarzamin digaran ham az nazare ma mahkoom ast.

4. Data analysis

The qualitative data analysis techniques can be characterized by “resulting in nominal rather than numerical sorts of data” (Berg 1995, p. 6).

The Analysis of the interview shows that, there exists a deviation in some parts of the English translation. The original Persian words of the president and their deviated English translation have been underlined. It seems, via translation, some words have been added to the original words of the President.

While the President said “I’ve said before that I am not a historian and the historians should elaborate on and explain the dimensions of historical events.” CNN translate this part as follows, “I have said before that I am not a historian personally and that when it comes to speaking of the dimensions of the Holocaust as such, it is the historians that should reflect on it. It seems CNN wrongly inserted the word “Holocaust” in the translation.

“So if the Nazis, however criminal they were, we condemn them, whatever criminality they committed against the Jews, we condemn, because genocide, the taking of the human life, is condemnable”, here again CNN inserted the phrase ‘against the Jews’ in the translation.

5. Conclusion
This analysis sought to find patterns of addition, deletion, and change in the English translation of the conversation. Analyzing the President’s speech and comparing it with the original Persian version shows that there exist some mistakes in the translation. Data analysis showed that some words and phrases have been added to the English translation of the conversation.

Although some may claim that such mistakes commonly happen in translation due to fatigue in the part of translators, it seems there is an intention behind the manipulation of the President’s words. As CNN didn’t gain what it accepted to receive from President’s words, it embarked on manipulating the President’s speech in a way that sound acceptable for those who may financially support this broadcasting network. Via intentional and purposeful insertion of words, CNN tried to soften the speech of the President in order to be more in line with the U.S government’s policies. This intentional manipulation of President’s speech may pose by U.S government. According to Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation, it can be concluded that since CNN has biased on some ideology and issues like Holocaust, so, it manipulated the conversation in order to draw the sympathy of its audience.

One of the limitations of this study laid in the natures of qualitative text analysis, that is, “because the qualitative text analyst's conclusions are based on repeated exploration of the sampled texts, these conclusions are more likely to reflect peculiarities of the sample, rather than characteristics representative of the larger text population” (Roberts, 1997, p. 2). Due to the limited amount of samples, the results of this study could not be generalized to new contexts, however it seems the results are in line with Van Dijk’s (2006) triangulated approach to manipulation. As this study is not exhaustive, conducting different research with a broader scope for confirmation of this approach seems to be fruitful.

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Title

Noun Phrase Accessibility and Acquisition of English Relative Clauses by Persian Learners

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Abstract

According to generative grammarians learner language is systematic due to its adherence to the fundamental principles that guide natural languages. One such principle is Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (NPAH) put forward by Keenan and Comrie (1977, 1979) which posits that the acquisition of relative clauses (RCs) follows the “Subject (SU)>Direct Object (DO)>Indirect Object (IO)>Object of Preposition (OPreP)>Genitive (Gen)>Object of Comparison (OComp)” scale, where “>” means “easier to relativize”, or “easier to acquire”. In order to test whether or not the NPAH applies to Persian learners’ acquisition of English relative clauses and to show whether matrix position of the relativized nouns as well as the animacy effect as proposed by Traxler et al. (2002) have any effect on their acquisition of English relative clauses, a sentence combination task as well as a multiple-choice task were used. The results obtained did not support the full predictive value of the NPAH with regard to Persian learners acquiring English relative clauses. The results of the study revealed that Persian learners acquired relative clauses in object positions sooner than they acquired relative clauses in
subject positions with the only exception being the genitive relative clauses which were easier for Persian learners to learn in their subject position. Also, it was revealed that animacy effect was totally unrelated to learners’ acquisition of relative clauses.

**Key words:** NPAH, Relative Clauses, Matrix Position, Animacy Effect

1. Introduction
The way language is learnt has always been of paramount importance to those interested in commonalities among languages, that is, language universals. Comrie (1984) believes that second and foreign language acquisitions are sites in which the universalist theories can be put to the test. Researchers in typological universals attempt to reveal generalizations among languages. One such typological universal, which had led to too much debate recently, is the Noun Phrase Accessibility hierarchy (NPAH) proposed by Keenan and Comrie (1977, 1979) which posits that the acquisition of relative clauses (RCs) follows a particular order. They state that the acquisition of the relative clauses varies according to the role of antecedent. The examples below adapted from Gass (1979) show the possible grammatical functions of the relativized antecedent in English:

(a) Subject (SUB)
The dog that bit the man …
(b) Direct object (DO)
The man that the dog bit …
(c) Indirect object (IO)
The girl that I wrote a letter to …
(d) Object of a preposition (OBL)
The house that I talked to you about …
(e) Genitive (GEN)
The family whose house I like …
(f) Object of comparative (OCOMP)
The woman that I am taller than …

Having studied data on almost fifty languages, Keenan and Comrie (1977, 1979) proposed the Noun Phrase Accessibility hierarchy (NPAH) as followings:

Subject > Direct Object > Indirect Object > Oblique > Genitive > Object of comparative
In this hierarchy “>” means “is more accessible than”. If elements lower in the accessibility hierarchy can be relativized in a language, the implication is that elements higher up in the hierarchy can be relativized as well, but not vice versa. Two types of constraints have been suggested by Keenan and Comrie (1977) based on the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy which are:

A. *Hierarchy Constraints* meaning that subject relative clause is the least marked type of relative clause and the existing of any type of clause at one point of the hierarchy does not imply the existence of other types of clause at any lower point.

B. *Primary Relativization Constraint* stating that all languages have a primary relative clause-forming strategy. If this primary relative clause-forming strategy falls on the low side of the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy, it logically follows that other clauses –forming strategies higher up in the hierarchy are already in operation in that language.

Quite related to the idea of Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy is the idea of animacy effect put forward by Traxler et al. (2002) according to which the animacy of the noun involved in the relativization strongly influences the processing difficulty of relative clauses (Mak, Vonk and Schriefers 2002; Traxler, Morris & Seely 2002; Ozeki & Shirai 2007).

As such the present study is an attempt to investigate whether or not the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy has got any predictive value with regard to Persian learners in acquiring English relative clauses. In particular, it tries to see if the matrix position of the relativized noun (subject/object) is related to the predictive value of the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy. Last but not the least, the animacy effect of the relativized noun will be explored.

### 2. Review of Related Literature

The Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy has been studied by a plethora of researchers interested in linguistics universals since it was proposed. These studies can be classified into two groups: Studies which support the predictive value of the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy and those that show conflicting results from those obtained by the study carried out by Keenan and Comrie (1977) based on data from fifty world languages.

Many studies have questioned the applicability of NPAH to all languages of the world. Ozeki & Shirai, (2007) investigated the predictive value of NPAH with regard to Chinese, English and Korean learners of L2 Japanese. The results of the study revealed that subject
(SU) relatives were not easier than DO or OBL relatives for second language learners of Japanese. Hsiu-chuan (2000) carried out a study on RCs in sixteen ergative languages. The results from the study cast doubt on the applicability of the NPAH for the relativization in ergative languages. Tarallo and Myhill (1983) are of the opinion that NPAH can’t appropriately predict the acquisition of RCs. They found that other factors such as the distance between head nouns and their trace, and not the function of relative markers influence the acquisition of RCs.

Still many other studies in either L1 (Gibson, 1998; Gibson & Schutze, 1999) or L2 (Doughty, 1991; Gass, 1979; Izumi, 2003; O’Grady, 1999) lend support to the predictive value of NPAH. Choi, Incheol and Kim, Jeong-In (2008) tested whether NPAH has got any predictive value for Korean learners of English relative clauses using a sentence combination test, a computerized reading comprehension test, and a sentence combining test checking animacy effects. The results they obtained supported the predictions made by the NPAH. In addition, contrary to the argument made by Traxler et al. (2002), they found that the NPAH effects cannot be substituted with animacy effects, but are more likely correlated with the processing difficulties encountered among relative clause types.

Not many studies have been carried out to test the predictions made by NPAH about learning English relative clauses in Iranian context. Tavakolian, (1981) and Abdolamanfi (2010) studied the applicability of NPAH Persian learners of English. However, the scope or coverage of the relative clause type was limited to four types of relative clauses. Besides, they didn’t deal with the matrix projection, that is, the position of the antecedent which gets relativized. Moreover, in these studies, the issue of animacy effect, the possibility that the animacy of the noun involved in the relativization may influence the processing difficulty of relative clauses, was not taken into consideration.

To the authors’ best knowledge, up to this time, not a single thorough study has been conducted on testing the predictability as well as applicability of NPAH to Persian learners’ acquisition of English relative clauses. As such the present study is an attempt to investigate whether or not the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy has got any predictive value with regard to Persian learners in acquiring English relative clauses. In particular, it tries to see if the matrix projection of the relativized noun (subject/object) is related to the predictive value of the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy. Last but not the least, the animacy effect of the relativized noun will be explored.
2. Method

This study sought answers to the following questions: 1) Does Iranian EFL learners’ acquisition of English RCs follow the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH? 2) Does matrix position (subject/object) of the relativized noun influence the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH? 3. Does animacy effect of the relativized noun influence the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH?

2.1. Participants

Sixty students aged between 18 and 22 from two institutes studying English at advanced-level classes (levels 10-12 out of 12 levels) at private English institutes at the city of Sirjan located at Southwest of Iran were recruited for the sake of the present study. Advanced learners Hafez Language Institute were chosen because relative clauses are complex structures and are not expected to be learned at the beginning levels of proficiency and that it could be assumed that they have already been exposed to instruction on English relative clauses.

2.2. Materials

Two types of elicitation tasks, sentence combination and multiple-choice tests were utilized in order to illicit data from the participants for the present study with regard to their knowledge of English relative clauses. The tests were made by the researchers themselves and were reviewed by several other researchers in order to make sure that they were testing what the researchers expected to measure.

The sentence combination test contained 40 items in which 5 items tapped into subject relative clause, 5 items tapped into direct object relative clause, 5 items tapped into indirect object relative clause, 5 items tapped into object of preposition relative clause, 5 items tapped into genitive relative clause and finally 5 items tapped into object of comparison relative clause. Also, 15 items were on matrix subject position and 15 other were related to matrix object position. Besides, 10 more items were testing the animacy effect. Items 31-40 were testing the animacy effect. The subjects were told to combine sentence (A) into sentence (B) and supply appropriate relative pronoun, such as who, which, whose, and that, or Ø. The distribution of the items was random.

The multiple-choice test consisted of 60 items in which 10 items tapped into subject relative clause, 10 items tapped into direct object relative clause, 10 items tapped into indirect object relative clause, 10 items tapped into object of preposition relative clause, 10 items tapped into genitive relative clause and finally 10 items tapped into object of
comparison relative clause. Also, 30 items were on matrix subject position and 30 other were related to matrix object position. The items of the test were randomly distributed.

2.3. Procedure
The two tests, namely, the sentence combination and the multiple-choice developed for the sake of the present study were piloted by students aged between 18 and 22 from two institutes studying English at advanced-level classes (levels 10-12 out of 12 levels) at private English institutes at the city of Sirjan located at Southwest of Iran. The time allotted for the students to answer the tests was 90 minutes so that all of the students have time to finish answering to the questions on time.

3. Results and Discussion
The first research question posed in the present study is: 1) Does Iranian EFL learners’ acquisition of English RCs follows the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH? It was revealed that the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy does not have full predictive value with regard to Persian learners in acquiring English relative clauses. As figure 1 shows, Iranian learners’ acquisition of the English relative clauses does not follows the predictions made by the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy proposed by Keenan and Comrie (1977, 1979) which posits that the acquisition of relative clauses (RCs) follows the “Subject (SU)>Direct Object (DO)>Indirect Object (IO)>Object of Preposition (OPreP)>Genitive (Gen)>Object of Comparison (OComp)” scale, where “>” means “easier to relativize”, or “easier to acquire”. According to the results from the combination test and the completion test the order in which Persian learners in which acquire English relative clauses is as follows: Subject (SU)>Direct Object (DO)> Genitive (Gen) >Object of Preposition (OPreP)> Indirect Object (IO)>Object of Comparison (OComp)” where the order for acquisition of genitive relative clauses has been reversed with that for the acquisition of indirect object relative clauses. In other words, the acquisition of genitive relative clauses was by no means more difficult than that of indirect object relative clauses. The results of the study are in line with those obtained by Ozeki & Shirai, (2007). They investigated the predictive value of NPAH with regard to Chinese, English and Korean learners of L2 Japanese. The results of the study revealed that subject (SU) relatives were not easier than DO or OBL relatives for second language learners of Japanese. The results, also, support Tarallo and Myhill (1983) in which they found out that NPAH couldn’t appropriately predict the acquisition of RCs.
The second research question investigates whether matrix position (subject/object) of the relativized noun influences the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH. Is it easier or more difficult for Persian learners to acquire relative clauses in subject matrix positions in the sentences or in object matrix positions? The study aims to find out if the matrix position of the relative clauses, namely, subject and object, influences the order in which Persian learners acquire relative clauses. As figure 2 and 3 below show, it was revealed that, on the whole, Persian learners acquired relative clauses in object positions sooner than they acquired relative clauses in subject positions with the only exception being the genitive relative clauses which were easier for Persian learners to learn in their subject position.

**Figure 2: Acquisition of Relative Clauses Based on Subject Position**

![Figure 2](image)

**Figure 3: Acquisition of Relative Clauses Based on Object Position**

![Figure 3](image)

The third research question posed in the present study investigates whether or not animacy effect of the relativized noun influence the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH. As Table 3.1 shows, it was revealed that there is no meaningful difference between learners acquisition of animate and inanimate relativized nouns. In other words, animacy effect of the
relativized noun by no means could influence the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH ($\chi^2=0/22$, P > 0.05). This tends to support the findings from the study done by Traxler et al. (2002) in which they found that the NPAH effects could not be substituted with animacy effects, but were more likely correlated with the processing difficulties encountered among relative clause types.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>group</th>
<th>Observed frequency</th>
<th>Expected frequency</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animate</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>184.5</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>184.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-1: Animacy Effect for the Relativised Noun

4. Conclusion
The NPAH has been employed in recent second language acquisition research. Most of the research findings show that the NPAH has a predictive value in the analysis of the acquisition of relative clauses in L2 acquisition. NPs which are in higher position on the hierarchy are easier to relativise for L2 learners than those in lower positions. Some studies have found that the teaching of the relativised NPs in lower positions allows learners to master relativised NPs in higher positions. However, exceptional cases have also been found in the studies where the route of the development of relative clauses in SLA is not as predicted by the NPAH.

The present was mainly conducted to investigate if Persian EFL learners’ acquisition of English RCs follows the order of acquisition predicted by NPAH. It was revealed that the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy does not have full predictive value with regard to Persian learners in acquiring English relative clauses. It was also revealed that Persian learners acquired relative clauses in object positions sooner than they acquired relative clauses in subject positions with the only exception being the genitive relative clauses which were easier for Persian learners to learn in their subject position. Besides, it was revealed that there was no meaningful difference between learners acquisition of animate and inanimate relativized nouns. As a concluding note, it can be stated that although it was revealed that the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy does not have full predictive value with regard to Persian learners in acquiring English relative clauses, any generalization based on the results of the present study should be made cautiously.

References
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Title

The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learner’s Multiple Intelligences and their Creativity in writing

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Abstract

Howard Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) (1983) challenged the traditional view of (g) factor as a unitary capacity which measured the subjects’ intelligences by traditional IQ test. Gardner suggested 8 different forms of intelligences: linguistics, logical, musical, spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic intelligences. This article aimed at investigating: a. whether there is any relationship between the subjects’ total amount of MI and their creativity in writing and b. which of the intelligences could be used for predicting subjects’ success in their creativity in writing. The results of the writing part of a TOEFL (2010) was used to select a homogeneous sample of 120 junior and senior English translation students at Islamic Azad University (Hamadan Branch). Next the Multiple Intelligences Development Assessment Scale (MIDAS) and also Adapted Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) that was used for measuring their creativity in English writing. TTCT test is thought to be the best test to evaluate the creativity dimensions of students in writing (Rabbah, et al, 2013). The results obtained from an independent sample t-test and multiple regression on the findings showed that: a. there is a significant relationship between total amount
of MI and subjects’ creativity in writing, and b. among the 8 intelligences identified by Gardner four of them, kinesthetic, linguistics, logical and spatial were found as the best predictors of subjects’ success in creativity in writing.

**Keywords:** Multiple Intelligences. Creativity in writing. MIDAS. Torrance test of creative thinking

1. **Introduction**

   Teaching and learning issues have always been of great concern for so many educators all around the world. Different learning theories and teaching methodologies have been devised and proposed to improve learning and to eliminate the obstacles in this area.

   The teacher centered instruction in the 20th century changed to learner-centered one (Mirhassani, 2004). Educators, professional teachers and syllabus designers in the ESL/EFL field became interested in investigating the impact of many factors, like cognition, affective and cultural variables in the process of language learning and their roles in the student’s ways of learning and in the testing environment. One factor that is related to student’s cognitive ability is the role of intelligence in the process of language learning. The discussion about intelligence and intelligence testing is based on the idea of whether it is possible to evaluate people according to a single major factor of cognitive competence or not.

   There exist different approaches about intelligence. The most traditional one is the psychometric view of which the basic tenet is that there is a single intelligence (Sternberg, 1986). But there was some criticism against this idea and some researchers developed a number of theories, all of which suggest that intelligence is the result of a number of independent abilities and that each of them individually contribute to human performance. These theories suggest that rather than being fixed, unitary, and predetermined, intelligence is modifiable, multi-faceted, and capable of development (Gardner, 1983; Sternberg, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978; Yekovich, 1994; cited in Campbell, 2000, p.8).

   Gardner’s (1983) theory of Multiple Intelligences is a combination of his observations along with research findings in genetics, psychology, neurobiology, history and philosophy, international development and anthropology in the early 1980’s (Kejadadoost, 2005).

   Gardner (1993), believed that individuals use different intelligences for different kinds of information processing and may make use of different intelligences for different kinds of information and may utilize several intelligences to solve a particular problem.
According to Gardner (1983), the traditional IQ tests measured only linguistics and logical-mathematical intelligences and other intelligences were ignored. So, in his definition of Intelligence he identified eight intelligences: Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Spatial/Visual, Bodily/Kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalist intelligences. In the present research, we are going to measure these intelligences via the Multiple intelligences Development Assessment Scale MIDAS, (Shearer, 1996) test.

Another variable in this study is creativity in writing. As one of four major skills, writing has an important place in most language classes. Many SL students need to write in English for occupational and academic purposes. Writing remains the commonest way of examining the students' performance in the target language that success in which requires an ability to write (Rivers, 1981).

For learners, writing is a “means of recording and reformulating knowledge and developing ideas. It may also be a means of personal discovery, of creativity, and of self-expression” (Hadley, 2003).

There are many popular definitions of creativity, but in general, creativity is the cognitive ability to generate new ideas. It has been defined as "To bring into being or form out of nothing." "The creative process… refers to the sequence of thoughts and actions that leads to novel, adaptive productions" (Martin, 2000). "Creativity is the generation of new ideas -- either new ways of looking at existing problems, or of seeing new opportunities…” (Hull, 1943).

Creativity is inherently tied to general intelligence, but the two aspects of mental capability are not completely correlated. Most in the field of creativity research divide creativity from intelligence and recognize that intelligence does not fully correlate with creativity.

Creativity in writing is one of the factors that has important role in students success in EFL context. The definition of creative writing is writing that expresses ideas and thoughts in an imaginative way. The writer gets to express feelings and emotions instead of just presenting the facts (Ibnian, 2010).

The main goal of this project is finding about whether there is any relationship between Iranian EFL learner’s amount of having each of the types of Multiple Intelligences, and their creativity in writing. Also this study is going to consider whether there is any relationship between total level of Multiple Intelligences, and each of the intelligence types and the creativity of Iranian EFL learners in writing.
2. Review of Literature

Regarding the case of Multiple Intelligences, several researchers have done some work in this area like the one by Hosseini (2003), titled The relationship between Iranian EFL learners Multiple Intelligences and their use of language learning strategies which was an attempt to investigate the relationship between Iranians EFL learners multiple intelligences and 1- their use of language learning strategies, and 2- their language proficiency. The results showed that there is a meaningful relationship between subjects Multiple Intelligences and their use of language learning strategies and four of them linguistics, interpersonal, naturalistic, and, kinesthetic were found as the predictors of language learning strategy use. The titles of others are as follows Zarrati (2004), The relationship between Iranian language learner’s Multiple Intelligences and their reading Strategies in which The relationship between subject’s reading strategies and the reading comprehension was also investigated. These relationships were examined through the administration of 3 instruments: MIDAS, Survey of reading strategies(SORS), and IELTS and TOEFL reading comprehension tests and the results showed that there is meaningful relationship between the subject’s Multiple Intelligences and their reading strategies; Saeidi (2004), Grammar Instruction: MI based focus on form approach in an EFL context, examines the impact of Multiple Intelligences-Based focus on Form(MI-Fon F) on enabling EFL learners to develop both the grammatical knowledge of the target structure and the ability to use it in context.; Rahimian(2005), The relationship between Multiple Intelligences and learner’s types, in which the participants sat through the Multiple Intelligences Development Assessment Scale(MIDAS) and Reid’s learning style inventory and a homogeneity test (TOEFL) and the results showed that (a) all of the scores in MIDAS correlated with the scores obtained from the learner type test, (b) Subjects from opposite sexes performed differently in all tests; Mahdavi (2005), The role of Multiple Intelligences in listening proficiency in which an actual TOEFL and IELTS listening comprehension test and a MIDAS questionnaire was administered and the results showed that there is little positive correlation between each of the 8 intelligences and performance on both TOEFL and IELTS listening; Iranmanesh (2005), The relationship between Multiple Intelligences and ESP reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners in which at first, the standardized CELT test was administered. Then, a Multiple Intelligences questionnaire (MIDAS) and The results showed very strong associations between learner’s Multiple Intelligences and their ESP reading comprehension ; Haghighi (2006), The relationship between Iranian language learner’s Multiple Intelligences and their learning
styles in which the results showed that there are some significant patterns between these two and also among different dimensions of Multiple Intelligences. And finally out of Iran is the thesis by Kejadadoost (2005) titled, An experimental study on the reading strategies from the perspective of Multiple Intelligences in which the relationship between the socio-genetically oriented variables of age, sex, L1, educational level, father’s job and mother’s job in relations to Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences in EFL readers and comparing and contrasting them against reading strategies was determined.

Regarding creativity in writing, Ibnian (2010) conducted a study which aimed at investigating the effect of using the story-mapping technique on developing tenth grade students’ short story writing skills in EFL. The results indicated that the story mapping technique had a positive effect on developing Jordanian tenth grade students’ short story writing skills in terms of content and organization, mechanics of writing, language use as well as in skills emerged from creative abilities (fluency, flexibility, novelty and elaboration). Another study carried out, in Jordan, by Ayasrah and Hamadneh (2010). The purpose of the study was to investigate degree of creative thinking among secondary school students in Irbid, Jordan in light of type of school, gender, and educational track using TTCT. The results revealed significant differences in study subjects’ means scores on the creative thinking measure. In light of the findings, the study suggests conducting future research focusing on creative thinking in the different school levels and with using other variables.

A study by Long and Hiebert (1985) compared an imagery-training group and a writing practice group on two indicators of creativity: originality and fluency. Results indicated that the imagery group significantly outscored the writing practice group on both originality and fluency measures. A follow-up study (Jampole et al., 1991) replicated and extended the above findings using mental imagery to enhance gifted elementary pupils’ creative writing. These results indicated that instruction and practice in using imagery can enhance aspects of gifted pupils’ creative writing. Another study by Jampole et al. (1994) conducted an in-depth examination of imagery use in creative writing. The results show that guided imagery appears to be a viable strategy to enhance originality in creative writing.

In another study, Tse and Wong (1995) studied 18 primary pupils using mind map, sensory writing, and imagery as the methods for creative teaching. After four sessions, the pupils were found to have significant improvement in their writing. A qualitative study on the composing process was conducted among 159 Primary 6 pupils to investigate the starting of the composition and found that pupils’ work adopted more approaches and demonstrated more fluent ideas in the starting of creative writing than those of situational composition (Sit,
1998). Although many studies have been conducted students’ creativity, most of them were on students’ motivation (Moneta and Siu, 2002), students’ creativity level (Siswono, 2009; Ayasrah and Hamadneh, 2010). Only few studies focused on students’ creativity in EFL writing (Ibnian, 2010; Ming, 2005).

To the best of my knowledge regarding the relationship between Multiple Intelligences and creativity in writing no work has been done yet in Iran and other countries.

3. Research Questions
1. Do those Iranian EFL learners who have a higher total level of Multiple Intelligences outperform those who have lower total level of Multiple Intelligences in creativity in writing?
2. Could any type of intelligences be used to predict Iranian EFL learner’s creativity in writing?

4. Research Hypotheses
On the basis of above questions, the following hypothesis are posed.
HO1: Those Iranian EFL learners who have a higher total level of Multiple Intelligences do not outperform those who have lower total level of Multiple Intelligences in creativity in writing.
HO2: None of the intelligences could be used to predict Iranian EFL learner’s creativity in writing

5. Methodology
5.1. Participants
The participants selected for this study were a group of 120 junior and senior Iranian EFL students aged between 19-22, both male and female, who were studying English Translation at Islamic Azad University (Hamedan Branch). They were homogenized from among 130 students by means of the writing section of TOEFL (2010).

5.2. Instrumentation
5.2.1. MIDAS
A Multiple Intelligence Development Assessment, MIDAS (Shearer, 1996) which gives reasonable estimate of the person’s intellectual disposition in each of the eight intelligences was used to measure the participants intelligences. Since the MI theory was introduced by
Howard Gardner (1983/1993), psychologists and educators around the world have complained that there is no psychometrically valid test for the various intelligences. Educators were more interested in an assessment that will describe student’s unique intelligence profiles for classroom use, while psychological and educational theorists were against the theory’s validity, because it lacks large amount of empirical validity (Shearer, 1995). The reliability and validity of MIDAS test has been proved it’s reliability and validity has been proved (Hosseini, 2003).

5.2.2. Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT)
In order to assess students’ creativity in EFL writing, Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) was adapted, modified for the present study. TTCT was developed by Guilford (1967) and Torrance (1965) to assess students’ creativity in writing (Ming, 2005). TTCT can be used from preschool up to graduate students (Ming, 2005). It is also easy and amusing for students. Additionally, TTCT is a useful screening instrument in order to identify high as well as low creative potential (Bermejo et al., 2005). Furthermore, TTCT is not only the most widely used test to measure creativity, but its use is supported by more evidence of validity than any other creativity test (Khatena, 1989). Moreover, TTCT has been translated into 35 languages (Millar, 2001). However, the participants were asked to write their response to the TTCT which enables the researcher to measure the following creativity dimensions; fluency, flexibility, and originality and it’s reliability and validity has been proved (Rabbah, et al, 2013).

5.3. Procedures
To achieve the purpose of study, the following procedures were followed:
The actual TOEFL (2010) writing test was the first to be administered. This was done for the sake of homogenizing students. After administering the test and getting the results those students who were outliers and extremes were omitted from the sample and the rest of them were considered as a final sample. It should be mentioned that the first sample consisted of 130 students and after this pre-test, the outliers and extremes were excluded from the sample and so the sample decreased to 120.

In the second step, for measuring the amount of Multiple Intelligences of the participants, the Persian translation of MIDAS (translated by Hosseini, 2003), which consists of one hundred and nineteen questions about eight intelligences mentioned in Gardner’s MI theory was administered to the participants. The number of questions for each intelligence is as follows: Musical, 14, Kinesthetic, 13, Mathematic, 17, Spatial, 15, Linguistic, 20, Interpersonal, 18, Intrapersonal, 9 and Naturalists, 13.
The participants were given an MI questionnaire, they were told that the questions were intended to measure their different abilities and were advised to give honest answers to the questions. As it was suggested by Shearer, “they were told to be fair to themselves, not to over rate or under rate themselves and to describe themselves just as they are” (1996, p.45). In order to encourage the students to answer with more care, they were promised to be given their MI scores in a secure manner and the results would be used solely for the research purposes and that it would be kept confidential and would not be shown to their teachers. They were also told that the questionnaire which was filled out honestly would help them know more about their abilities, help them find appropriate job; and would let them know how they could learn best. The reason that the translated version was used was the fact that since students have their high schooleducation in Farsi, they were thought to be more comfortable with it than English.

In the next step, In order to assess students’ creativity in EFL writing, Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) was adapted, modified for the present study. TTCT was developed by Guildford (1967) and Torrance (1965) to assess students’ creativity in writing (Ming, 2005). It should be mentioned that both questionnaires were administered by the researcher herself, so that had if any question came up, she should be able to answer them and clarify the points.

6. Results
SPSS was used for the analysis of data. For the first research question, an independent sample t-test was carried out for recognizing that whether those EFL learners who have a higher total level of Multiple Intelligences will outperform others who have a lower total level of Multiple Intelligences or not, and for the second research question the multiple regression was used in order to understand whether any of the intelligences could predict student’s creativity in writing or not. The data obtained from the administration of MIDAS and the TTCT were analyzed using the SPSS (version 18) software program.

6.1. Results of investigating the First Research Question
The first research question was “Do those Iranian EFL learners who have a higher total level of Multiple Intelligences outperform those who have a lower total level of Multiple Intelligences in creativity in writing?” which includes 2 variables, (1) Multiple Intelligences and (2) creativity in writing. In this study, the different sections of MI are considered as the independent variables while creativity in writing is taken as the dependent variable.
After calculating students’ scores in creativity in writing and MI, they were divided between two groups of higher MI and lower MI, according to the scores that they got. Then an independent sample t-test was run which is used for measuring the possible differences between the means of the creativity in writing scores of the two groups of higher and lower total level of MI.

By observing the means in group statistics table, Higher MI (9.70) and Lower MI (6.39), it is obvious that those in higher group act better in creativity in writing test. Std. deviation shows that the group of higher MI have a wider spread of scores than lower MI.

In order to become sure whether this difference is significant the second table which is independent sample t-test should be examined. One of the criteria for using a parametric t-test is the assumption that both samples have equal variance. At first we should examine the Levene’s test for equality of variance. If the test statistic F is not significant, Levene’s test has found that the two variances do not differ significantly which means that the $P$ should be more than 0.05 and then we can report the top line, otherwise the bottom line should be reported. In this case by regarding $F = .477, p > 0.05$, we can accept the equal variances assumption and the first line should be reported.

$t (118) = 9.547; P < 0.05$

As our probability of is smaller than 0.05, it is significant, and the first hypothesis is rejected.

The results of group statistics and independent sample t-test is shown in the following tables.

**Table 1**

*Independent Sample T-Test for Higher and Lower MI group*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity High MI in writing</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9.70</td>
<td>1.944</td>
<td>.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low MI</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>1.857</td>
<td>.242</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s test for equality of variances</th>
<th>T test for equality of means</th>
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<tr>
<td>$\text{F}$</td>
<td>$\text{Sig}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\text{Lower}$</td>
<td>$\text{Upper}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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6.2. Results of investigating the Second Research Question

To answer the question concerning the relationship between the learners amount of Multiple Intelligences and their creativity in writing, or more specifically which of the intelligences could be used for predicting learner’s creativity in writing, the statistical test of multiple regression was used. Standard multiple regression analysis (Enter mode (standard regression), which enters all independent variables in a single step) was done to investigate whether the different parts of the independent variable (MI) can predict the dependent variable (creativity in writing).

The next table is Model Summary. The R square value which is .647 shows the amount of variance in the dependent variable of creativity in writing that can be explained by the independent variable. In this table the independent variables together account for 67.4% of the variance in creativity in writing scores. The R value (.805) indicates the multiple correlation coefficient between all the entered independent variables and the dependent variable. The Std. Error of the Estimate which is 1.550 is a measure of the variability of the multiple correlation.

<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>.805a</td>
<td>.647</td>
<td>.622</td>
<td>1.550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Naturalist, Interpersonal, Musical, Intrapersonal, Spatial, Logical, Bodily, Linguistics

b. Dependent Variable: Creativity in writing

The next output that using SPSS gave us was the coefficients table that shows which variables are individually significant predictors of our dependent variable. In order to compare the contribution of each independent variable, beta values are used. Bodily- kinesthetic and linguistics made statistically significant contribution to this prediction. The significance column of the table shows that .001 and .034 are less than .05
and thus make a significant contribution. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence makes the strongest contribution to the dependent variable of writing score, followed by linguistic intelligence.

Table 3  Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Collinearity Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>-2.839</td>
<td>.844</td>
<td>3.362</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.595</td>
<td>.553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.288</td>
<td>3.535</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>1.964</td>
<td>.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>1.897</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>2.145</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalist</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we saw in the significance column, the four variables of bodily, logical, linguistic and spatial that are significantly correlated with creativity in writing.

7. Discussions

As the above results revealed the two hypothesis of the research were rejected. Regarding the first hypothesis which stated that ‘Those Iranian EFL learners who have a higher total level of Multiple Intelligences do not outperform those who have a lower total level of Multiple Intelligences in creativity in writing’, comparing the means of learners in high (9.70) and low groups (6.39) and the correlation that can be said to be significant enough (.491) significant at P<0.01) made us certain that the more intelligent learners, the better their results will be in creativity in writing, and so, the first hypothesis is rejected. This result completely makes sense because of the fact that Multiple Intelligences is comprised of several intelligences, several of which will be discussed below in regards to the second hypothesis, which have a strong impact on the creativity in writing. Regarding the second hypothesis which mentioned that ‘None of the intelligences could be used to predict Iranian EFL learners creativity in writing’, it can be said that by observing the results and by applying two methods of multiple regression, it was found that from among 8 intelligences identified by Gardner (1983), four
of them, bodily, logical, linguistics and spatial were found to have a strong correlation with creativity in writing and so, our second hypothesis is also rejected.

In some of theories of educational psychology related to disorders of written expression it is mentioned that the reason of dysgraphia of some children is most of the time because of not having an exact balance between the motions of different parts of the body. Some children can’t write well because they don’t have the preliminary proficiency of writing with hands which involves the understanding of the position of the body related to the objects surrounding it like taking the pen correctly in one’s hand and putting the paper in the right position in accordance with eyes and movements of hands for writing (Ahadi, Kakavand, 2003). This theory justifies the relationship between bodily- kinesthetic intelligence and writing proficiency generally and creativity in writing specifically.

Another reason for proving that the bodily- kinesthetic intelligence and creativity in writing have a relationship with each other is Currie’s (2003), observation that those persons strong in this intelligence are reflexive, who responds quickly and intuitively to physical stimulus and show dexterity, agility, flexibility and balance.

For explaining the positive relationship between math - logical intelligence and creativity in writing in this study, it should be mentioned that this relationship make sense because according to Mckenzie (1999), people who are strong in this intelligence are able to detect patterns, reason inductively and deductively and think logically. Such people seek order and consistency between patterns that can be generalized to the act of writing, can identify cause and effect within a system, and can analyze abstract ideas.

The third intelligence that was also a good predictor of creativity in writing in this study is Linguistics- Verbal intelligence. Actually, the explanation of this intelligence is easier than the rest of the predictors, because it is a proficiency which is related to language and written forms of communication. According to Nolen, (2003), “verbal intelligence involves the mastery of language” (p.114). Nolen (2003), also states that people with Linguistics- Verbal intelligence have the ability to analyze and manipulate language and to pay special attention to grammar and vocabulary that is very essential in writing. According to (Mckenzie, 1999), it is this intelligence that helps a person to analyze the sentences and draw inferences. It is pointed out the creative aspect of language use for all ages, contained in the fact that learners’ knowledge of language is not the actual sentences, but rather the system of rules for making sentences. Learners can innovate, according to rules, which are implicitly held in common with other speakers. The children cannot observe the rules directly. They are learning the rules indirectly from experience and are continuously constructing the rules by
themselves actively. The process is quite similar to the “look and fill” questions in some of the Intelligence tests or creativity tests. Currie (2003), emphasizes on the fact that persons strong in Linguistics- Verbal intelligence, have the ability to “analyze one’s own use of language, apply rules of language to new and different contexts and more important than that to explain and express one’s self in writing” (p.6).

The last intelligence that has significance or positive relationship with creativity in writing in this study is Spatial- Visual intelligence. The justification for saying this is that, Spatial intelligence gives a person the ability to manipulate and create mental images in one’s mind (Nolen, 2003) that may have a strong correlation with one’s ability in writing. For writing competently a writer should at first clarify the point for him/herself, and as (Mckenzie, 1999), mentions “The Spatial intelligence is more needed when a person should comprehend every detail first and then have an idea about something” (p.5)

8. Conclusions

The theory of MI caused a major transformation in the way of teaching and testing of some teachers. It suggests that the teachers should be trained to present their lessons in a wide variety of ways (Armstrong, 1994).

The present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL learners Multiple Intelligences and their creativity in writing. The results obtained indicated that there is a positive relationship between the eight intelligences identified by Gardner (1983) and Iranian EFL learners’ creativity in writing, and among the intelligences, bodily/kinesthetic, linguistics, logical/mathematical and spatial intelligences were found to be good predictors of learner’s creativity in writing. So, it can be said that by regarding the results obtained, the eight different intelligences and more especially those mentioned above had a significant role in learners’ success in creativity in writing. The findings of this study hopefully will enable teachers to help their learners by identifying their individual intelligence profiles and utilizing them in the process of teaching and learning, and in this case regarding the student’s creativity in writing. The findings will also help Iranian EFL instructors to become aware that their audiences are different and deserve different treatment to be more creative in writing.

References


Title

An Investigation of the Existence of a Threshold Level for the Vocabulary Learning of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

Teaching formal aspects of a language has been a serious challenge for teachers in foreign language classrooms. This study investigated the effect of focus on form instruction of visual input enhancement type on the vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. Eighty-eight EFL learners from intermediate and advanced proficiency levels were assigned to four groups with two groups at each proficiency (experimental & control). Based on the objectives of the study a quasi-experimental design involving the use of pretests, treatment reading texts, and posttests, was employed. The results of the data analysis by the use of T-test revealed positive effects for visual enhancement of vocabulary items for the advanced level based on both the within group and between groups’ comparisons. However, the beneficial effects for visual input enhancement based on between groups’ comparison was not found for intermediate level. It was concluded that visual input enhancement is much more effective for the advanced EFL learners and there may be a threshold level for their vocabulary learning since only the advanced learners were able to focus on the vocabulary items in the reading texts. This study may provide EFL teachers and syllabus designers with guiding principles about visual input enhancement and its effects on vocabulary learning in EFL classrooms.
Keywords: Focus on form, Focus on forms, Focus on meaning, Threshold level, Visual input enhancement, Vocabulary learning

1. Introduction

The question of whether and how to include 'grammar' of a language in L2 teaching is considered to be one of the main issues raised by the researchers in second language acquisition (SLA). The debate on the degree of teacher or learner attention which is needed to be directed to the linguistic features and aspects has a long history (Doughty & Williams, 1998a). Traditionally, parts of language were taught in a step by step way and there was a process of gradual gathering of the parts of language until the complete structure was built up, and at any one time the learners were provided with a limited sample of language (Wilkins, 1976). But teachers and learners in the field of language teaching recognized that something was wrong with this view of language teaching, and there was a general belief that these traditional synthetic teaching procedures did not work well (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Gradually, there was the recognition in the field of SLA that people from different age groups learn languages best, in natural or classroom settings, not by studying the language as an object, but as a medium for the purpose of communication (Long & Robinson, 1998). Wilkins (1976) termed this approach analytic and argued that analytic approach is organized in terms of the purposes which are important for the people in learning language and the kinds of language related acts that are necessary for their intended purposes. Synthetic approach includes only a focus on the formal elements and aspects of a language, while analytic approach excludes the focus on the formal aspects. On the basis of their focuses, synthetic and analytic approaches respectively deal with the focus on forms and focus on meaning instructions.

But results of some studies (Harley & Swain, 1984) show that when the teaching of a foreign or second language is completely meaning focused, some linguistic aspects of the language do not develop to target-like levels and are fossilized. On the basis of such studies and the deficiencies of both the focus on forms and focus on meaning instructions, there is the belief that some kind of incidental focus on the linguistic elements of the language is necessary to improve the interlanguages of second language learners and push them toward target-like second language ability (Doughty & Williams, 1998a). Because of its advantage of including communication-oriented attention to form and its efficiency in pushing the language learning process of second language learners to native-like levels, this approach...
which is called *focus on form* instruction, is regarded to be a more promising pedagogical choice than the previous approaches which had only a one-dimensional focus on either form or meaning. Long (1991) made a distinction between focus on forms and focus on form, and argued that the main point is that, focus on form involves a prerequisite focus on the meaning of language and communication before attention to linguistic elements can be expected to be effective and beneficial.

Many experimental studies have investigated the effects of focus on form instruction on the language acquisition of classroom learners (e.g. Alcon, 2007; Cho & Lee, 2007; Farrokhi, Ansarin, & Mohammadnia, 2008; Mohammadnia & Gholami, 2008), but there has not been enough research on the effectiveness of focus on form instruction across different proficiency levels in foreign language classrooms. This study by comparing the results of focus on form instruction in elementary, intermediate, and advanced level classrooms tries to find out the level in which focus on form instruction is more effective, and by doing so highlights the most suitable level for providing focus on form instruction in Iranian EFL classrooms.

2. Review of the Related Literature
2.1. Communicative Language Teaching
Richards and Rogers (2001), argue that, a major shift of paradigm in the field of second/foreign language teaching started with the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). They further noted that, CLT which is considered to be an approach rather than a method has changed the goal of language teaching from linguistic competence to communicative competence and involves different teaching procedures for the teaching of the four traditional language skills in a way that integrates the formal aspects of language and its communication-based functions. Finally they concluded that, the 'Communicative Approach' in language teaching involves a theory of communication regarding its theory of language. Howatt, (1984) made a distinction between a strong and a weak form of CLT. According to him, the strong form involves using the language in communication in order to learn it, and the weak form involves learning to use the language in communication. Among the approaches that follow the strong form of CLT, the 'Natural Approach' (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) along with one of its important hypotheses which is ‘Comprehensible Input Hypothesis' (Krashen, 1985, 1994) has attracted a lot of attention in the field of foreign/second language teaching.
2.2. Comprehensible Input Hypothesis

The foundation of ‘Comprehensible Input Hypothesis’ (Krashen, 1985, 1994) is based on the Krashens’s (1981) 'Monitor theory'. Krashen (1981) argued that, learners have an 'acquired system' and a 'learned system' which are completely separate from each other. The acquired system is developed through 'acquisition' which is considered to be a subconscious process and is enacted by using the language for the purpose of communication. The learned system is developed through 'learning' which is a process of focusing conscious attention to the language in order to understand and learn it. The ‘Comprehensible Input Hypothesis' involves only the acquired system along with its relevant process which is acquisition, and states that second language learners progress according to the 'natural order' of language learning by comprehending input that involves the structures which are a little bit beyond their current interlanguage system (i+1).

There have been a number of criticisms about the claims of 'Comprehensible Input Hypothesis'. According to Ellis (2008), the major problem about this hypothesis is that Krashen paid little attention to what comprehension means, and what type of processes in the act of comprehending are essential for acquisition. Færch and Kasper (1986) argued that, the existence of gaps between the provided input and the learners’ interlanguage system and, the learners' perception of these gaps as actual gaps in their language knowledge, will lead to acquisition. Thus as Gass (1988) pointed out, instead of comprehensible input comprehended input is important for the learners' second language acquisition.

2.3. Noticing Hypothesis

Considering the theoretical criticisms of ‘Comprehensible Input Hypothesis' (e.g., White, 1987), and the practical deficiencies in its application in second/foreign language classrooms, Schmidt (1990) argued that conscious attention to the formal aspects of language, or what he termed 'noticing,' is essential for language acquisition to take place. He further claimed that, awareness of the form of language at the level of 'noticing' which can be called 'consciousness' is essential for the acquisition of the second/foreign language. This claim is in contradiction with Krashen’s (1981) 'Dual System Hypothesis' according to which second language acquisition is based on an unconscious/ subconscious acquired system, and the role of the conscious learned system is very limited and peripheral in this process (Robinson, 1995).

2.4. Focus on Forms Instruction

According to Long and Robinson (1998), in focus on forms instruction, the language is broken down into its constituents, which may involve vocabulary items, collocations,
morphemes, phonemes and so forth, based on the language analyst’s preferences about linguistic aspects of language. They further argued that, the items which are the result of these analyses are then ordered based on some criteria like frequency, difficulty, or valence, as prescriptive modelsto language learners in a linear, cumulative fashion. This is what Wilkins (1976) called synthetic syllabus. She argued that in a synthetic syllabus the language is taught in a step by step way and there is a process of gradual gathering of the parts of language until the complete structure is built up, and at any one time the learners are provided with a limited sample of language. According to Long and Robinson (1998), the learner’s role in synthetic syllabi is to synthesize the individual pieces of language to form a unified whole to be used for the purpose of communication. They conclude that, synthetic syllabi, along with their related materials, methodological procedures, and classroom pedagogical considerations, involve language teaching with a focus on forms.

2.5. Focus on Meaning Instruction

Over the years a gradual recognition of the deficiency of the synthetic syllabi and their related methodological procedures, along with the consideration of the findings of the studies about language instruction stimulated many language teachers and syllabus designers, and SLA theorists, to advocate a meaning-based instruction instead of focus on the formal aspects of the L2 in language classrooms (Long & Robinson, 1998). There has been the claim that, learning an L2 implicitly (i.e., without consciousness) or incidentally (i.e., without any intention for learning) through the comprehensible language input is sufficient for second or foreign language acquisition for adult language learners, just as it is for the first language acquisition by children (ibid).

According to Long and Robinson (1998), the main aims of focus on meaning instruction are to use language for actual life situations, to bring meaning to the learners' attention instead of form, and to emphasize fluency in communication rather than accuracy in production. They further argued that, focus on meaning is a communication-based approach to second/ foreign language teaching/learning which gives little attention to the learning of individual discrete points of language.

2.6. Focus on Form Instruction

The advocates of focus on forms and focus on meaning instructions are inclined to treat the problems and deficiencies of their rival position as supporting evidence for the superiority of their own position, but none of these approaches provides the satisfactory results which are expected by the practitioners in language teaching. Fortunately a third choice, which tries to maintain the strengths of the analytic approach while dealing with its deficiencies, is focus on
form (Long, 1991). Long and Robinson (1998, p.23) stated that, "during a meaning-focused classroom lesson, focus on form often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features by the teacher and/or one or more of the students, triggered by a perceived problem with comprehension or production". In focus on form instruction the learners’ main focus of attention is on the meaning, and the attention to form arises as a result of meaning-based language performance in a communicative task (Ellis, Basturkmen, &Loewen, 2002). According to Long (1991) focus on form instruction is a kind of instruction in which the importance of the principles of CLT like authentic communication is maintained, and also the incidental and explicit study of the L2 grammatical forms is valued.

2.7. Visual Input Enhancement

Doughty and Williams (1998b) argued that, the target forms that the students are provided with in using visual input enhancement have different textual properties which aim to make these forms more salient for language learners and help them in noticing these forms and making connections between the forms of language and their meanings. They further argued that, visual input enhancement is considered to be an implicit technique which aims to attract learners’ attention to the forms included in the learners' written input through the use of different methods of textual manipulation.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study the following research questions were proposed:

Question 1: Does visual input enhancement have any significant effect on the vocabulary learning of intermediate EFL learners?

Question 2: Does visual input enhancement have any significant effect on the vocabulary learning of advanced EFL learners?

3.2. Participants

Eighty-eight EFL learners at intermediate and advanced proficiency levels from Urmia branch of Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research (ACECR) took part in this study. They were all male, ranging in age from 16 to 38. All the participants had one year to four years of English studies at ACECR. They were all from Iran and spoke Turkish as their first language. At the time of the study (summer 2013) the learners were selected for the study and divided on the basis of the results of a placement test to intermediate and advanced proficiency levels with forty-four learners in each proficiency level.
3.3. Context of the Study
Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research (ACECR) is a public non-governmental institution in Iran, which was founded in 1980. This institution aims to promote technology and science, education, culture, and entrepreneurship in various parts of the country. The head-quarter of this institution is located in Tehran with teaching centers in 26 provinces, 40 cities and 70 institutes across the country. This institution provides both long-term and short-term learning courses in different fields of science. Foreign language courses are among the short-term courses which are provided by this institution. This institution offers language courses to hundreds of learners across the country in Russian, English, French, German, Spanish, and Arabic. There are 7000 learners in Urmia branch of this institution with 80 instructors who are selected on the basis of both written and oral exams accompanied with a teaching ability demonstration.

3.4 Instruments
The following instruments were used in this study:

3.4.1. Homogeneity Test
In order to ensure that the study is valid, it is necessary to guarantee the participants’ homogeneity before conducting the research. Because this study included three different proficiency levels it was essential to make sure that participants were placed in appropriate levels on the basis of their language proficiency. For this reason Objective Placement Test, from *New Interchange Passages Placement and Evaluation Package* (Lesley, Hansen, &Zukowski/Faust, 2003) was employed. This homogeneity test was comprised of four parts. The first part (Listening) consisted of twenty recorded items. The second part (Grammar) had a total of thirty items. The third part (Vocabulary) included a total number of thirty items, and the final part (Reading) consisted of twenty items.

3.4.2. Pretests
Two 50-multiple choice item pretests (one for each proficiency level) comprising of the vocabulary questions made by the researcher based on the enhanced vocabulary items in the treatment texts were chosen to investigate the learners’ knowledge of the vocabulary items enhanced in the treatment texts for each proficiency level before the treatment. The pretests were administered one week after the homogeneity test and one week before the administration of the treatment texts. The learners in each proficiency level were supposed to answer the pretest questions in 50 minutes during their regular class time.

3.4.3 Reading Texts
The researcher of this study used ten reading texts for each proficiency level. All of the texts were selected from *Steps to Understanding* (Hill, 1980) which is a book that provides reading comprehension texts for different proficiency levels. All the texts were nearly 150 words in length and were modified by enhancing (boldfacing & underlining) five specific vocabulary items in each text for the two experimental groups, one group at each proficiency level. But no special treatment (visual input enhancement) was provided for the two control groups at intermediate and advanced levels.

### 3.4.4. Posttests

In order to investigate the effect of visual enhancement of the vocabulary items in reading texts at intermediate and advanced levels, two posttests, one for each proficiency level, were administered one week after the end of the administration of the treatment reading texts. Each of the posttests included 50 multiple choice vocabulary questions based on the enhanced vocabulary items in treatment texts. Different sets of questions from the pretests were developed for the posttests based on the intended enhanced vocabulary items to eliminate any risk of practice effect. The administration of each posttest took fifty minutes in each level.

### 3.5. Design

Typically, the studies of focus on form instruction include a pretest, exposure to the forms of the second language which are intended to be learned, and a posttest, which aims to see whether learners noticed the L2 forms or not (Leow, 1997). In this study, too, the researcher in order to increase the validity of the study and to fulfill its objectives, tried to employ randomization along with pretests, treatment reading texts and posttests. Therefore the design of the present study was quasi-experimental. The present study also consisted of one independent variable that is, visual input enhancement, and two dependent variables, vocabulary learning in intermediate level, and vocabulary learning in advanced level.

### 3.6. Procedure

In this study effort was made to select the samples of the study randomly. Because this study included two proficiency levels a placement test was administered to place the learners in appropriate levels and also to guarantee the homogeneity of the learners in each proficiency level. Based on the results of the placement test 88 learners were assigned to intermediate and advanced levels with 44 learners in intermediate and 44 learners in the advanced level. Then care was taken to randomly assign 44 learners in each proficiency levels to two groups, one experimental group with 22 learners and one control group with 22 learners. So the study totally included four groups, two groups in each proficiency level with one of the groups
being experimental and the other one being the control group. And the number of the learners being equally 22 in all the experimental and control groups across both of the levels.

Before the administration of the pretests, the treatment texts, and the posttests for the different levels, all of them were piloted with twenty-two EFL learners at each proficiency level to detect any problems. The reliability and validity of all the pretests and posttests were determined and found to be acceptable and some misspellings and wrong punctuations in the texts were found and corrected before the main administration. Then the pretests were administered to provide the researcher with the necessary information about the participants’ vocabulary knowledge before the administration of the enhanced vocabulary items in the reading texts at each proficiency level. One week after the administration of the pretests, treatment reading texts were administered to all the groups in different levels during five weeks, two sessions each week, each session one text, with the experimental groups in both of the levels receiving the treatment texts with the visually enhanced vocabulary items but the control groups receiving the treatment texts without any kind of visually enhanced forms.

4. Data Analysis

Based on the research questions and the design of the study, two types of T-tests (Independent Samples T-test & Paired T-test) were used to analyze the data and also to answer the following research questions:

Question 1: Does visual input enhancement have any significant effect on the vocabulary learning of intermediate EFL learners?

Considering the performance of the intermediate experimental group in the pretest (M= 31.27) and posttest (M= 34.05), Table 4.1 displays a bigger mean score in the posttest than the pretest for this group.

Table 4.1 Performance of the Intermediate Experimental Group in Pretest and Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intermediate Experimental Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>31.27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.865</td>
<td>.611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>34.05</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.968</td>
<td>.633</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To see if this difference reaches a statistical significance, a Matched T-test was used. Because the probability figure marked as ‘Sig.’ for this group was less than 0.05, (it was .000), the difference is regarded to be significant. This significant difference between the performance of the intermediate experimental group in the pretest and posttest is diagrammatically presented Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Performance of the Intermediate Experimental Group in Pretest and Posttest

In order to investigate the effectiveness of the visual enhancement of vocabulary items further, a comparison was also made between the intermediate experimental and control groups regarding their performance in the posttest. Table 4.2 shows that the mean score for intermediate experimental group was (34.05) and for the intermediate control group was (33.00). This means that the learners in the experimental group performed better in their posttest than the learners in the control group.

Table 4.2 Comparison between the Vocabulary Performance of the Intermediate Experimental and Control Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Proficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34.05</td>
<td>2.968</td>
<td>.633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33.00</td>
<td>3.071</td>
<td>.655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To test whether the difference between the intermediate experimental and control groups is significant or not an Independent Samples T-test was employed. Because the probability figure marked as 'Sig.' was larger than 0.05 (it was 0.257) this difference is not considered to be statistically significant. The lack of significant difference between the performances of the intermediate experimental and control groups is provided diagrammatically in Figure 4.2.
Therefore based on these results it can be argued that, visual enhancement of vocabulary items led to better vocabulary learning among the intermediate experimental groups’ participants, but this positive effect was not found when a comparison was made between the intermediate experimental and control groups' vocabulary performances.

Question 2: Does visual input enhancement have any significant effect on the vocabulary learning of advanced EFL learners?

Table 4.3 shows that the mean score of vocabulary questions answered correctly by the advanced experimental group in the pretest (M= 33.27) was smaller than the mean score of this group in the posttest (M= 36.73). This means that the advanced experimental group performed better in the posttest than the pretest.

Table 4.3 Performance of the Advanced Experimental Group in Pretest and Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>33.27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.640</td>
<td>.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>36.73</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.120</td>
<td>.665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To investigate if this difference reaches a statistical significance, a Paired T-test was employed. Because the probability figure marked as 'Sig.' was less than 0.05, (it was .000), the difference between the performance of the advanced experimental group in the pretest and posttest can be regarded as significant. This significant difference between the performance of the advanced experimental group in the pretest and posttest is depicted diagrammatically in Figure 4.3.
But in order to further investigate and make sure that the visual input enhancement was effective, the performance of the advanced experimental group was compared with the performance of the advanced control group regarding their posttest scores. Table 4.4 shows that the mean score for the advance experimental group was (36.73) and the mean score for the control group was (34.14). This means that the learners in the advanced experimental group performed better in their posttest than the learners in the advanced control group.

Table 4.4 Comparison between the Vocabulary Performance of the Advanced Experimental and Control Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced Proficiency</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36.73</td>
<td>3.120</td>
<td>.665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34.14</td>
<td>3.655</td>
<td>.779</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To further test whether the difference between the advanced experimental and control groups is significant or not an Independent Samples T-test was used. Because the probability figure marked as 'Sig.' was smaller than 0.05 (it was 0.015), the difference between the performance of the advanced experimental and control groups can be considered as significant. This significant difference between the vocabulary performance of the advanced experimental and control groups is diagrammatically presented in Figure 4.4.
Therefore based on these results, it can be argued that, visual enhancement of the vocabulary items led to better vocabulary learning among the advanced experimental group’s participants and also was found to be effective when a comparison was made between the advanced experimental and control groups’ vocabulary performances.

5. Discussion

Regarding both of the research questions, the findings of the present study revealed that, visual enhancement of vocabulary items was effective for vocabulary learning for both of the experimental groups in intermediate and advanced proficiency levels based on the within groups’ comparisons. The results show that, the learners’ attention in both of the experimental groups was directed to the visually enhanced vocabulary items in reading texts. In other words, visual input enhancement increased the likelihood of noticing the target vocabulary items in the input by the participants in both of the experimental groups, which according to Schmidt (1990) is an essential prerequisite for input to become intake and determines further language learning. The results regarding the second research question also revealed that visual enhancement of vocabulary items was effective for the vocabulary learning of the advanced experimental group on the basis of between the groups’ comparison. That is, comparing the vocabulary performance of the advanced experimental and control groups, visual enhancement of the vocabulary items was found to be more effective for the advanced experimental group.

Even though the findings revealed that all participants in the two experimental groups improved in their ability to use the vocabulary items correctly, some factors that may have caused the reduction of between groups’ differences in the intermediate level in this study are discussed:
Cummins (1976, 1979) proposed the ‘Threshold Hypothesis' according to which in second language learning, before the use of the language as an academic tool becomes beneficial for the learner, his/her proficiency in that language must reach a certain minimum ‘threshold’ level. And Van Patten (1996) regarding 'Information Processing Theory', suggested a limited-capacity view of working memory according to which beginner learners, have difficulty in simultaneously attending to meaning and form and as a result give priority to one over the other. He further argued that attending to form becomes possible when understanding the input is easy and when processing meaning is the main aim of the learners.

On the basis of these hypotheses, as Williams (1999) argued, it appears that the learners, which are at the lower proficiency levels do not focus on the formal elements of language frequently because they are not able do it. The reason is that, these lower–level learners are challenged even in maintaining the processing of meaning and as a result are unable to focus on the formal aspects of language to the same degree like the learners in higher levels of proficiency. She further argued that, as the learners become more proficient, they benefit more from the attention to formal aspects of language because this attention only becomes possible through higher proficiency in language. This could be the reason behind the reduction of differences between the two groups (experimental & control) in the intermediate proficiency level. Because of the lower proficiency of the learners in the experimental group in the intermediate level, they were not able to attend to the enhanced vocabulary items and as a result the differences between this group and the control group in this level, was reduced. Therefore based on these results it can be argued that there may be a threshold level for the vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners since only the learners in the advanced experimental group were able to focus on the enhanced vocabulary items in the treatment reading texts and performed better that their counterparts in the control group.

White (1998) argued that, despite the general agreement about the role of attention in facilitating the process through which input becomes intake, the role played by conscious awareness and the degree of attention which is needed for second language acquisition are still controversial issues in SLA. Schmidt (1990) argued that 'noticing' which may be defined as conscious attention to the formal aspects of language, is an essential prerequisite for learning the language. Schmidt (2001) argued that, attention is vital in understanding all the aspects of SLA. He further argued that directing the learners’ attention to the formal aspects of the language which has the effect of an increased awareness of these forms leads to noticing which is sufficient for successful acquisition of the second language.
However, contrary to the claims made by Schmidt (1990), Tomlin and Villa (1994) argued that, instead of awareness, the central component of attention is detection, and despite the role of awareness in the facilitation of detection, it is not necessary for its occurrence. In this study vocabulary items were made visually more salient in order to increase the likelihood for the learners to notice them which according to Schmidt (1990) has a beneficial role in increasing the chance for their acquisition. Although visual input enhancement of forms might have increased the learners’ ability in noticing the forms, it may not have been sufficient for their detection and subsequent acquisition to take place for intermediate learners. Therefore another reason for the reduction of differences between the groups in the intermediate level (experimental & control) might be that they were not able to detect and learn vocabulary items in the reading texts.

Doughty and Williams (1998b) argue that one of the efficient implicit techniques in attracting the learners’ attention to formal aspects of the written input is visual enhancement of the input, and Doughty and Valera (1998) argue that this technique is considered to be the least intrusive method and the most implicit technique of focus on form instruction. In this study too, for ensuring the implicitness of visual enhancement of the input, the researchers tried to avoid any explicit way of focusing the learners’ attention to the target forms, such as discussing the purpose of visual input enhancement with the students or explicitly directing their attention to these forms. The findings of the study, along with the quantitative analysis, show that as Fotos (1993) argued, perhaps a more explicit technique like explicit rule explanation may be more beneficial at the lower levels of proficiency rather than the implicit visual input enhancement.

White (1998) argued that individual differences among the learners can be regarded as factors which affect the learners’ responses to focus on form instruction. This fact may also account for the reduced differences among the two groups (experimental & control) in the intermediate levels. Some learners in the experimental intermediate group may have been more successful with more explicit techniques of instruction and their inability in understanding the purpose of visual input enhancement might have been the reason of their poor performances.

It is argued that visual input enhancement, alone or along with extensive activities of listening or reading may be similar to unenhanced input for the learners (Doughty & Williams, 1998b; White, 1998). In this study because the researchers tried to avoid directing the learners’ attention to the target forms by the use of more explicit techniques, there is the possibility that visual enhancement of the vocabulary items was vague for the experimental
groups in the intermediate and advanced levels. Therefore, they did not understand the purpose of enhancement and as a result did not detect the vocabulary items, which according to Tomlin and Villa (1994) is essential for subsequent second language acquisition.

Finally, it is essential to consider the test effects along with the instruments which were employed in the study. It can be argued that the administration of pretests and posttests in the intermediate level attracted the attention of the learners in the control group to the gaps in their language knowledge and as a result led to the increased salience of enhanced forms in the treatment reading tests and by doing so stimulated these learners to choose the correct item in the posttest just because they were familiar with the same item in the pretest. Therefore practice effect might have enabled the control group in the intermediate level to obtain nearly similar results to the experimental group in this level.

Therefore, it appears that a number of factors, including the low proficiency level of the learners, the lack of detection of the enhanced vocabulary items, the low degree of the explicitness of the focus on form technique, individual differences between the learners, and instruments and test effects might have caused the reduction in the differences between the two groups (experimental & control) in the intermediate level. Based on these results the researchers believe that there may be a certain minimum level of proficiency which is needed for EFL learners to learn second language vocabulary items. The present study had three main limitations. First, it included only male EFL learners. Second, it did not investigate the effects of visual input enhancement on the grammar learning of EFL learners, and third, it did not take the age of the learners into account.

6. Conclusion
On the basis of the results of the present study as Long and Robinson (1998) pointed out, it can be concluded that, in order to reach a complete mastery and a native-like competence in all the aspects of the second language neither a focus on forms instruction nor a complete meaning-based instruction alone is sufficient, and, focus on form instruction which makes teachers and learners attend to the formal aspects of the language when necessary by maintaining a balance between the meaning and form, within a communication-based environment appears to be a more promising pedagogical approach. Based on the results, it is suggested that second language learners in the intermediate level may benefit from visual input enhancement and teachers may feel the necessity to provide these types of supplementary materials of their own to balance the lack of beneficial focus on language
forms. But because visual input enhancement was more effective in the advanced level compared to the intermediate level, classroom teachers are strongly recommended to provide the advanced EFL learners with enhanced materials in order to push them toward a more target-like proficiency in the second language. For syllabus designers, it is advisable to develop materials including enhanced lexical forms as a way to increase learners’ opportunity of learning these forms, leading to a higher level of proficiency among EFL learners.

References


The current study looked at paragraph writing from a micro point of view. In other words, the purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which Iranian students were capable of using lower-level competencies in writing English paragraphs. The participants were initially given a standardized test for the purpose of homogeneity as far as their English backgrounds were concerned. Then they were given an activity to determine whether the participants could tell the micro elements of paragraphs at the level of recognition. In the next task, the respondents were required to write English paragraphs to determine their ability at the level of performance. The collected data were scored to find patterns of micro-elemental competence. Inter- and intra-rater reliability tests were conducted in order to ensure the consistency of the scores given to paragraphs. The overall results exhibited students’ weakness in some areas such as specific features of minor sentences, i.e., “relevance”, “technique of support”, “specificity”, “adequacy”, “clarity”, “structure”, and “diction” as well as components of the feature “overall view”, that is “unity” and “accuracy and appropriateness of transition system”. The findings revealed that the participants’ grammatical performances were significantly superior to that of the micro-features.
Keywords: Accuracy and appropriateness of transition system, adequacy, Clarity, Diction, Specificity, Relevance, Overall view, Structure, Technique of support, and Unity

1. Introduction

Bachman and Palmer (1996) state that grammatical knowledge is involved in producing or comprehending formally accurate utterances or sentences. According to Bachman (1990), grammatical competence includes those competencies involved in language usage as described by Widdowson (1978). These consist of a number of quite independent competencies such as the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology/graphology. They also govern the choice of words to express specific significations, forms, arrangements in utterances to express propositions, and physical realisations as sounds or written symbols.

Moreover, Zahedi (2005) includes the components of grammatical competence as well as the micro-features of performance (i.e., relevance, specificity, etc.) in his rating scale to develop a rating scale for paragraph writing (see the Appendix).

Accordingly, the aim of this study is to find out how EFL learners perform on the micro elements and features of paragraph writing.

2. Review of the related literature

The grammatical features that are examined in past related studies include nouns, nominalisations, prepositions, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and adverbials, articles, and verbs. The analysis of numerous texts by Biber (1988) led to the characterisation of texts in terms of “dimensions.” For example, an academic prose, which is highly informational, non narrative, explicit, and abstract is related to higher frequencies of nouns, prepositions, conjuncts, and passives. Studies on timed writings of second language students revealed similar distributions of the above mentioned features. For example, Connor (1990) notes that higher rated persuasive essays contained more nominalisations, prepositions, passives, and conjuncts than the lower rated essays.

A research by Grant and Ginther (2000) revealed that higher rated texts use more types of subordination in terms of clause features than lower rated texts. Al Fadda (2011) states that for many adult ESL learners, learning to write in academic English is a difficult and challenging task as they need to gain proficiency in grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and
other surface-level aspects of English composition. The outcomes of the study revealed that the subjects had difficulties in knowing words and phrases that they should avoid, in using pronouns and maintaining pronoun-antecedent agreement, subject-verb agreement, sentence fragments, and in combining sentences in their writing.

In a study by Horyanto (2007), grammatical errors on recount text made by twelfth year students of SAMAN 1 Slawi were investigated. In Horyanto’s study, the grammatical errors were classified into verbs, subject-verb agreement, articles, prepositions, pluralisation, pronoun and conjunctions. The data was collected from two classes of 19 students each. The writings of all 38 students were collected and the errors were classified. Surprisingly, the students who participated in the study showed inability in the use of grammar.

Darus (2009) showed that the six most common errors committed by the participants were singular/plural form, verb tense, word choice, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order.

Liu and Braine (2005) in a study on the analysis of cohesive features in argumentative writing produced by Chinese undergraduates showed that the Chinese students have the ability to use cohesive features in their English writing except for the article “the”.

Much research on ESL writing have focused on micro components where various measures of linguistic features that include lexical and syntactic elements were computed and evaluated according to holistic ratings and proficiency levels of the writers.

Dehghanpisheh (1973) attempts to make a contrastive analysis between English and Persian paragraphs but focuses entirely on descriptive techniques. Her study reveals that despite being rich in its transitional devices; a study involving prose in Persian shows that this wealth of available transitional material is put to little use. A chain of ands with occasional buts links most of the sentences in the paragraphs written by Iranian students. It was also noted that there might be excessive use of coordinate conjunctions and run-on sentences that limited the number of sentence breaks in the paragraph.

Though it is acceptable in Persian paragraphs to join a number of sentences with “and” and “but”, it is not acceptable to do so in English. As Kaplan (1966) has pointed out, “It is important to note that in English, maturity of style is often gauged by degree of subordination rather than by coordination.” While sentences in Persian paragraphs are joined by simply running them on in many cases, run-on sentences in English are considered a grammatical fault (Deghghanpisheh, 1973).

Although there are a number of studies on the grammatical aspect of writing, there is no study in the literature on the micro-features which characterize the writing performance of
EFL/ESL learners. Therefore, this seems to be a fresh area of research with the aim of finding out the characteristics of paragraph writing performance of these English learners.

3. The present study

The purpose of the present study was to determine the extent to which Iranian EFL learners were competent in terms of producing the micro components and features of writing in their paragraphs. Put differently, the study attempted to describe the micro-pattern of competency of the EFL learners on English paragraph.

Fifty participants who were homogenized based on a standardized test were given a paragraph writing task to determine how they perform on the micro components and features of the paragraph. The Zahedi’s rating scale was used to analyse the paragraphs (see the Appendix).

The inter- and intra-rater reliability procedures were used to measure the reliability of the scoring procedure.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Topic Sentences

Table 1 shows the frequency and the percentage of the different micro components of the topic sentence. More than 88% of the respondents performed completely on the average. They performed best on relevance, structure, and diction. They performed worst on the adequacy feature.

Table 1: Summary of Frequency and Percentage of Topic Sentences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component of Topic Sentence</th>
<th>None (0)</th>
<th>Limited (0.5)</th>
<th>Moderate (1)</th>
<th>Extensive (1.5)</th>
<th>Complete (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>92</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrowness</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4.2. Major Sentences

Table 2 presents a summary of the frequency and the percentage of the results for the different components of the major sentences. The respondents average on “complete” was 62%. The test takers’ performance was best on structure and diction while they performed low on adequacy and clarity.

**Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Major Sentences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Sentences</th>
<th>None (0)</th>
<th>Limited (1)</th>
<th>Moderate (2)</th>
<th>Extensive (3)</th>
<th>Complete (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technique</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specificity</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diction</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3. Minor Sentences
Table 3 shows the summary of the frequency and the percentage of the different components of the minor sentences. The ability of the respondents in using minor sentences completely was close to 50%. The results indicate that the subjects show the most ability in structure and diction, whereas, most inability was in the adequacy and clarity features.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Minor Sentences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor Sentences</th>
<th>None (0)</th>
<th>Limited (1)</th>
<th>Moderate (2)</th>
<th>Extensive (3)</th>
<th>Complete (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technique of support</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specificity</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>8.95</td>
<td>16.86</td>
<td>16.58</td>
<td>49.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4. Concluding Sentences

Table 4 shows the summary of the frequency and the percentage of the different components of the concluding sentences. The test takers performance was superior on structure and diction. Their performance was lowest on adequacy and clarity. The average performance on the complete category is 56%.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage of Concluding Sentences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concluding Sentences</th>
<th>None (0)</th>
<th>Limited (0.5)</th>
<th>Moderate (1)</th>
<th>Extensive (0.5)</th>
<th>Complete (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technique of support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
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<td>32</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Summary</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5. Accuracy and appropriateness of transition system

Table 5: Accuracy and appropriateness of transition system
Accuracy and appropriateness of transition system refers to correct and appropriate use of transitional markers where needed to allow smooth, fluent expression in the paragraph. Applying this component avoids writing a choppy paragraph.

Table 5 indicates that none of the respondents’ paragraphs falls within the category of “complete” stating that all the respondents show inability in using transitions in their paragraphs. The table indicates that 50% fall within the category of “limited” and 24% fall in the category of “none.”

Interestingly the results of a study done by Liu and Braine (2005) reveal that the Chinese students who participated in their study were able to use a variety of cohesive devices in order to make their writing coherent. Lexical devices formed the largest percentage of the total number of cohesive devices used in their writings, followed by references and conjunctions. The results of the study however, were completely different from the result of the present study in which the Iranian students did not show much ability in using cohesive devices.

4.6. Accuracy and appropriateness of mechanics

Table 6: Accuracy and appropriateness of mechanics

The data presented in table 6 indicates that 90% of the respondents’ paragraphs fall within the category of “complete.” None of the respondents’ paragraphs fall in the category of
“moderate” or “limited”. Therefore, it seems that almost none of the respondents show inability in using this component. It is necessary to add that the term “mechanics” refers to correct spelling, correct use of punctuation and capitalization, and legible handwriting.

5. Conclusion

The findings, by analyzing the respondents’ writing, sentence by sentence, revealed that they show inability to some extent in using different components of the organisation of an English paragraph, namely, the topic sentence, major ideas, minor ideas, and concluding sentence. The findings indicate that the respondents had difficulties in the areas of adequacy and clarity while they performed well on structure and diction. The respondents’ inability reveals itself in their paragraph writing. Moreover, while the respondents show outstanding difficulty in using transitions in their paragraph writing, they performance was good on mechanics.

References


Horyanto, T. (2007). Grammatical analysis in students’ recount texts. English Department Faculty of Languages and Arts Semarany State University Retrieved


**Appendix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components and Descriptors</th>
<th>Levels of Ability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic sentence (Main idea) (2 points)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine the following characteristics for topic sentence in case there is one, no matter where it is located in the paragraph. For inductive paragraphs, rate the conclusion. For implicit topic sentences, ignore rating this component. The topic sentence is either a statement of opinion or a statement of intent with controlling ideas) (vs., a statement of fact with no controlling ideas)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance (related to title) (vs., deviant or extraneous) (<em>Prerequisite</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrowness (narrowed enough to be sufficiently developed within the limited space of a paragraph) (vs., too broad requiring the space of an essay or more)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specificity (focused on a single idea) (vs., more)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adequacy (brief and self-contained, i.e., giving a sense of completeness) (vs., too short or too long)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity (vs., vague or ambiguous)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accuracy and appropriateness of structure (accurate structure) (appropriate choice of structure to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Appropriateness of diction (appropriate choice of words to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level)</th>
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### II Body (Supporting sentences)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major sentences (4 points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Determine the following characteristics for major sentence(s) in case there is/are one/some.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Relevance (related to title) (logically related to controlling ideas in topic sentence directly) <em>(Prerequisite)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Appropriateness of techniques of major support <em>(authentication, description, exemplification, narration, and definition)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Specificity (building upon controlling ideas in the topic sentence) (specific-general relationship with topic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adequacy (brief and self-contained, i.e., giving a sense of completeness) (vs., too short or too long)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Clarity (vs., vague or ambiguous)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Accuracy and appropriateness of structure (accurate structure) (appropriate choice of structure to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Appropriateness of diction (appropriate choice of words to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level)</td>
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### II Body (Supporting sentences)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minor sentences (4 points)</th>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Determine the following characteristics for minor sentence(s) in case there is/are one/some.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Relevance (related to title) (logically related to major sentence directly and to controlling ideas in the topic sentence indirectly) <em>(Prerequisite)</em></td>
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### Appropriateness of techniques of minor support

- **Authentication**, **description**, **exemplification**, **narration**, and **definition**

### Specificity

- Building upon major ideas (specific-general relationship with major ideas)

### Adequacy

- Brief and self-contained, i.e., giving a sense of completeness (vs., too short or too long)

### Clarity

- (vs., vague or ambiguous)

### Accuracy and appropriateness of structure

- Appropriate choice of structure to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level, etc.

### Appropriateness of diction

- Appropriate choice of words to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level

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<tr>
<td>Determine the following characteristics for concluding sentence in case there is one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Relevance (related to title) (logically related to body and topic sentence) (vs., raising an afterthought) (Prerequisite)</td>
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<td>2 Appropriateness of technique of concluding (restatement, summarization, solution, recommendation, prediction)</td>
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<td>3 Adequacy (brief and self-contained, i.e., giving a sense of completeness) (vs., too short or too long)</td>
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<td>4 Clarity (vs., vague or ambiguous)</td>
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<td>5 Accuracy and appropriateness of structure (accurate structure) (appropriate choice of structure to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level, etc.)</td>
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<td>6 Appropriateness of diction (appropriate choice of words to the topic, audience, tone of paper in terms of difficulty level)</td>
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<td><strong>I</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall view (content &amp; form) (8 points) Determine macro- and micro-structural characteristics as well as quality of content and effectiveness of expression.</td>
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<td>1 Unity (maintaining the same idea) (systematic relationships among components: title, topic, major, minor, conclusion) (vs., different types of irrelevancy:</td>
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<td>sidetracking, contradiction, afterthought, extra information</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Logical sequencing (e.g., order of time, space, importance) (vs., mixed)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Accuracy and appropriateness of transition system (correct and appropriate use of transitional markers where needed to allow smooth, fluent expression) (vs., a choppy paragraph)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Quality of content (Being well-informed of the content)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Effectiveness of style of expression (Effective way of putting forward the content or ideas) (Effective, eloquent wording of the topic, major, minor, and concluding sentences to make the intended impression.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Accuracy and appropriateness of mechanics (correct spelling, correct use of punctuation and capitalization, legible handwriting)</td>
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</table>
Gender Differences in Persian Discourse: A Study of Males' and Females' Conversational Behavior in Iran

Authors

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Biodata

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Abstract

Differences in the ways that men and women use language have long been of interest in the study of discourse. Eighty were randomly selected and inquired in Yazd, Iran, forming two twenty males the address of a popular shopping mall in Persian. Likewise, a male asked twenty females and twenty males the same question. The dyads were recorded, transcribed and coded for analysis in terms of different conversational variables (number of words, interruptions and back channels). The findings showed that men, in contrast with women, had longer participation in and influence on the task in cross sex.; the female and male speakers used interruptions and back channels mm hmm at high frequency but in certain social contexts; males interrupted women much more often than women interrupted women or men.

Keywords: Conversational Behavior, Gender, Back Channels, Interruption, Turn Taking, Discourse
1. Introduction

In recent years there has been a growing research interest in sex differences in speech. As various sex differences were observed, some researchers began to look at possible reasons for their existence and at their implications. Notably, researchers felt that these differences were tied not solely to sex, but to some other social factors. In looking, for example, at differences in the amount of time spent talking and at interruption patterns, the implication was that observed sex differences in language mirror the overall difference in power between men and women, and that the way in which people communicate reflects and reinforces the hierarchical relationships that exist around them.

The stereotype of female talkativeness is often considered a scientific fact. Tannen (1990) claims that there are gender differences in ways of speaking, and we need to identify and understand them in order to avoid needlessly blaming "others or ourselves -- or the relationship -- for the otherwise mystifying and damaging effects of our contrasting conversational styles". She takes a sociolinguistic approach to these gender differences since she feels that "because boys and girls grow up in what are essentially different cultures...talk between women and men is cross-cultural communication". For her study Tannen traced patterns of speech in past studies and on videotapes of cross-gender communication (pairs of speakers asked to talk on tape). She states that the most important point to consider in studying and learning about gender specific speech styles is that gender distinctions are built into language. Each person's life is a series of conversations, and simply by understanding and using the words of our language, we all absorb and pass on different, asymmetrical assumptions about men and women.

Yet few studies have systematically recorded the natural conversations of male and female group of people. Consequently, there have not been the necessary data for reliably estimating differences in daily word usage among women and men (James & Drakich, 1993). In the first printing of her book, neuropsychiatrist Brizendine (2006) reported, “A woman uses about 20,000 words per day while a man uses about 7,000”. These numbers have since circulated throughout television, radio, and print media (e.g., CBS, CNN, National Public Radio, Newsweek, the New York Times, and the Washington Post).

Extrapolating from a reanalysis of tape-recorded daily conversations from 153 participants from the British National Corpus (Rayson, Leech & Hodges, 1997), Liberman (2006) estimated that women speak 8805 words and men 6073 words per day. However, he
acknowledged that these estimates may be problematic because no information was available regarding when participants decided to turn off their manual tape recorders.

Much of the research has been focused on discovering empirically verifiable differences in language use between men and women. It is a common belief that men and women behave somehow differently in their basic form of everyday social interaction which is conversation. The existence of widely held sex-stereotyped representations of communicative behavior of males and females is well documented in the sociological and psychological literature.

From surveys carried out among American participants (Kramer, 1974a, 1974b, 1975, 1977; Siegler & Siegler, 1976), among British participants (Giles, Scholes, & Young, 1983), and French participants (Aebischer, 1985; Pillon & Lafontaine, 1988), it is claimed that conversations are managed and controlled by men. 'Men are supposed to take the floor more often, keep it longer than women, show authoritarian or even aggressive behaviors, and to be essentially interested in the pursuit of dominative and competitive goals rather than in cooperative ones. Women, on the other hand, are said to be particularly attentive conversationalists and to be primarily concerned with collaboration and mutual understanding. Furthermore, men are perceived to be more interested in informative exchanges, while women are perceived to prefer engaging in personal and emotional conversations'. Clearly, this picture of the "roles" women and men are supposed to play in conversations is highly dependent on the roles they are more generally supposed and expected to play in social life (Block, 1973).

It seems a fact that male- and female-typical behavioral variables are attached to the values that are commonly and stereotypically attached to men and women themselves. Female-typical behavioral variables are said to convey submission and male-typical ones are considered as the means to convey their power dominance. Yet, one may wonder to what extent the number and length of speech, the number of back channels or interruptions do really signal a speakers' dominance over their addressees.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the conversational behavior of males and females through a range of conversational variables; we looked at issues such as who talked how much and how the people in the conversation interacted with the female and male inquirers in terms of interruptions and indications of back channels. The findings showed a number of interesting differences when the conversation occurred through the same and cross sex dyads: men, in contrast with women, had longer participation in and influence on the task in cross sex dyad; the female and male speakers used interruptions and back channels mm
at high frequency in certain social contexts; Research on interruptions showed that men interrupted women much more often than women interrupted women or men.

2. Review of the Related Literature
Gender differences in communication have become an increasingly provocative field of study. It is believed that it is women who are most likely to possess the gift of gab. Yet, it is shown that this widely held belief is unsupported in some literature. Of the studies reviewed that examined mixed-sex interaction, the majority found either that men talked more than women, either overall or in some circumstances, or that there was no difference between men & women in amount of talk (James and Drakich, 1993; Hilpert et al., 1975; Kramer, 1974; Swacker, 1975). In each of these contexts, the findings are explored in light of the status characteristics theory. It is concluded that rather than viewing the overwhelming tendency of males to talk more than females as further evidence of domination & exploitation of power over women, the different goals for interaction, to which both men & women are socialized, should be considered in the context of social structure.

The first studies about gender differentiation in conversational style relied on the sociological distinction between task-oriented and socioemotional functions, which was first introduced in the sociological study of small groups (Bales, 1950) and family relationships (Parsons & Bales, 1955). In fact it is based on the division of labor by sex, the father being the instrumental leader (he is involved in outside work) and the mother the socio-emotional leader (her role as the emotional support of her husband). For example, Strodtbeck and Mann (1956) and Strodtbeck, James (1957) examined the interaction of jurors involved in mock jury deliberations and found that men, in contrast with women, had higher participation in and influence on the jury task. These authors concluded that the sex-role differentiation observed was similar to the one Bales and others suggested for adults in the family. Males played an instrumental and females an expressive (social-emotional) role; that is, men produce acts directed at the solution of the task problem while women tended more to react to the contributions of others, by agreeing, complying, understanding, and passively accepting them. Soskin and John (1963), studying the spontaneous talking behavior of a couple in its natural setting, found that the wife produced more expressive, affect discharging messages while the husband produced more directive and informational statements.

Aries (1982) wanted to determine whether these traditional "sex differences in behavioral interaction patterns would obtain even in a sample of very bright, career-oriented men and
women raised under the influence of the women's movement and laws prohibiting sex discrimination. Despite the similarities between the sexes with respect to personality attributes and personal aspirations, she still found evidence for task and socio-emotional specialization in the interaction styles of men and women, respectively. Males still devoted a greater proportion of their interaction to proactive behavior (giving opinions, suggestions, and information) and females to reactive behavior (agreeing and disagreeing). Nevertheless, Edelsky (1981) showed that male and female conversational behavior differs according to the type of current interaction. This author analyzed interactional skills of male and female university colleagues involved in a meeting held by members of the same university department. She found that men produced more directive utterances (arguing, making suggestions, asking others' opinions) when the interaction consisted of sequences of turns independent one from the other. However, when the interaction was more informal and when the participants were equally concerned with the subject, women produced more directive statements than men.

Other research into gender differentiation in cross-sex conversations used the descriptive concepts developed by the microsociology of conversation (e.g. Duncan 1972 & 1976). This approach examined dialogue maintenance among partners over several conversational turns by analyzing conversational rules for starting off the conversation, choosing and developing a subject, alternating the turns, interruption, back channels, initiating, maintaining, and shifting topics, etc. Studies on gender differences in conversation focused in this case on the analysis of power relationships established among conversationalists through their differentiated use of conversational rules, particularly turn-taking rules. The general assumption was that conversation is an activity that allows a speaker to show his dominance or his submission to his or her partners. Investigators mainly used, as measures of "power" or "dominance," the amount of speech and the frequency of interruptions produced by each participant. An asymmetrical distribution of the talking time among the speakers was viewed as a denial of the equal right to speak, as was interrupting the current speaker. With regard to the amount of speech, most findings showed that men took the floor more frequently and for far longer periods than women, whether the examined interaction took place in a natural setting without the explicit presence of an observer or in an experimental one, in which the subjects were asked to discuss a given topic.

However, in similar experimental settings, Hirschman (1973, 1974) did not find any significant sex differences in talking time (as measured by the mean length of utterance and
the number of words produced) and Aries (1982) found that women initiated more interaction than did men.

Likewise, research on interruptions has generally shown that men interrupt women much more often than women interrupt men (Kramer; 1974; Zimmerman and West, 1975). Zimmerman and West indicated that the differences among cross-sex dyads were reflections of the power and dominance enjoyed by men in society; they also found the same sort of marked asymmetry in rates of interruptions among adult-child dyads, thereby giving further credence to the idea that the differences were tied to status.

Fishman (1978:399) expands on the idea of "interactional work: In a sense, every remark or turn at speaking should be seen as an attempt to interact. Some attempts succeed; others fail. For an attempt to succeed, the other party must be willing to do further interactional work. That other person has the power to turn an attempt into a conversation or to stop it dead. In the literature on behaviors which help to keep the conversation going and which may serve to support the speaker, three types of speech element are central. These are the use of (1) questions, (2) tag questions, and (3) minimal responses. In her study of interactional work, Fishman (1978) found that women asked two and a half times as many questions as men. Questions, like greetings, evoke further conversation in that they require a response. The asking of questions supports the conversation by insuring minimal interaction. Fishman also found differences in the use of minimal responses, sometimes called back channels.

By a minimal response is meant such simple one- or two-word responses as "yeah," "uh huh," or "umm." Schegloff (1972) points out that one speaker will often intersperse minimal responses within another speaker's turn, not as a way of interrupting or invading the other's turn, but rather as a way of displaying interest and support for what the other person is saying. Minimal responses, however, can be used in various ways. Fishman argues that males use them as lazy ways of filling a turn and as a way of showing a lack of interest (the woman may make a long statement touching on a variety of issues to which the man simply replies "uh-huh"). Minimal responses were skillfully interspersed within the male's turn as a form of passive support. The insertion of these minimal responses in the other person's turn was usually done with great skill, making use of the slight gaps or pauses for breath that occurred, so as not to affect the flow of the other person's speech or interrupt the other in any way. Such timing demonstrates that the woman is paying very close attention to her partner's speech.

Lakoff (1975) also asserts that women ask more questions than men, and she additionally believes that they use tag questions much more often than men. A tag question is a hybrid
between a question and an outright statement (e.g., "It's cold in here, isn't it?") and can be a way of avoiding making strong statements. It does not force agreement with one's beliefs; it asks, rather, for confirmation of those beliefs. The use of tag questions implies the person somehow has less right to voice his or her opinions and less right to make a simple assertion in order to define the situation. They can also be used, much in the same manner as questions, as a way of encouraging conversation. In empirical investigations, researchers found that women used tag questions more often than men. Other researchers, however, have found that tag questions were used more by men than by women.

The present study aimed to examine the conversational behavior of males and females through a range of conversational variables; we looked at issues such as who talked how much and how the people in the conversation interacted with the female and male inquirers in terms of interruptions and indications of back channels.

3. Method
3.1 Participants
Eighty people were randomly selected and inquired on a street in Yazd, Iran, forming two dyad conditions: (a) same-sex, and (b) mixed-sex. A female asked twenty females and twenty males the address of a popular shopping mall in Persian (پیخشید شما میدونین پاساز سیداشهدا کجاست؟). Likewise, a male asked twenty females and twenty males the same question. Participants were not aware of being inquired. Yet, they were informed by the inquirers when the task was over. The tape-recorded conversations were entirely transcribed in Persian. The conversational behaviors as well as the communicative intentions encoded in the participant's messages were analyzed.

3.2 Coding System
The conversations were coded using audio-tape playback and transcripts. The following speech behaviors were coded: number of words, interruptions and back channels. Minimal responses such as oui, huhum, c'est fa, etc., are classified in a distinct category, called back-channel utterances (Duncan & Fiske, 1977): They don't amount to a turn; rather they are a way of indicating the listener's positive attention to the speaker, and thus a way of supporting the current speaker (cf. Schegloff, 1968).

3.3 Procedure
All captured words spoken by the eighty participants were transcribed. The number of spoken words can then be estimated by extrapolating from a simple word count. All participants were chosen accidentally by inquirers on a crowded street in Yazd, Iran in order to have no effects on the estimates of the word usage. They were students, shop keepers, and in general from different classes of society. The data suggested that women spoke on average 601 words and men 545 words. However, none of the samples provided support for the idea that women have substantially larger lexical budgets than men.

3.4 Data Analytic Strategy

Having coded 306 utterances (in this study, utterance was used as the unit of speech, since there were quite a number of cases in Persian context where a sentence did not end in a full manner) in four different dyads (i.e., M-M, F-M, F-F, & M-F), the total number of words that female and male study participants used in each dyad was counted. Then the frequency of interruptions and back channels was carefully examined. In other words, based on the literature and the previous discussion, data were gathered from each conversation on the following items for each person:

1. Total number of words spoken.
2. Number of interruptions (whether or not they were successful). In a successful interruption, the first speaker stops talking, allowing the second speaker to communicate a complete message. An unsuccessful interruption on the other hand, occurs when the first speaker refuses to cede control of the floor and continues to talk in order to complete his or her message despite the attempt of the second speaker to interrupt.
3. Number of back channels. Superficially, back channels resemble minimal responses used as a turn. Both are the "uh-huh's" which punctuate conversation. But unlike the latter, which denote laziness on the speaker's part, the use of back channels serves as a sign of the listener's encouragement and support. The capacity to intersperse interested feedback into the uninterrupted flow of the other's speech reflects both conversational skill and a willingness to engage in "interactive work."

The validity of the commonly held view that women are excessively talkative was examined; the investigation of the speech of 80 Persian-speaking adolescents was reported on, which revealed some interesting results: Social power appeared to be a highly influential variable affecting verbosity, and males talked far more than females in cross sex conversations!
4. Results

Since the behavior of an individual is not independent of his or her partner's behavior, the interaction of two partners must be treated as the unit of analysis. 

The following table is the result conducted:

| Table 1 |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Measures of the Involvement in Conversations: Number of Words, Frequency of Interruptions, and Mean No. of Back Channels, According to the Sex of the speaker |
| |
| Conversation of female inquirer with females | 392 | 21 | 12.1 |
| Conversation of female inquirer with males | 417 | 25 | 12.2 |
| Conversation of male inquirer with females | 209 | 9 | 9.6 |
| Conversation of male inquirer with males | 128 | 19 | 7.9 |
| Total | 1146 | 67 | 41.8 |

From the above table, it can be inferred that,

**Conversation of female inquirer with females**: (see Table 1)

- Female to female interaction seems quite intimate. They try to make the interviewee sure of the correct address inquired (392 words). For example:
  - **Extract 1**
    - ببخشید شما میدونین پاساز سیداشهدا کجاست؟ Inquirer:
    - 12 Student: بله.خواهش می کنم. یه دویست متر که تشریف ببرین جلوتر می رسین. 
  - Although the frequency of interruptions is 21, the analysis of utterances showed that for women, the purpose of interruption does not mean competing for speaking right. They just wanted to help or cooperate with each other by interruption. For example, they may say, “خوب” (I agree with you ….). Therefore, they would give equal right of speaking to each other. When compare with men, women would be more likely to
interrupt in the same-sex interaction. Women try to support each other or collaborate with each other by inserting interruption. They would support each other’s turn by interrupting some supportive sentences, but not trying to dominate the speaker’s floor. For example, women would use “درسته” (that’s right), or “بله” (Yes…). Women would respect each other’s turn and they would try to wait until the end of one’s sentence. So, women would talk in a relatively lower frequency of interruption than that of men.

- They use somehow the same number of back channel frequencies (M=12.1) with that of female interviewer with males (12.2)

**Conversation of male inquirer with males:** (see Table 1)

- Male to male interaction is not absolutely intimate. The utterances are quite short, general, and in some part incomplete. It seems that they are in a hurry or bored. Interestingly, two males quite ignored to give the address (e.g., code 78 he did not answer the male interviewer’s question at all and left the situation).

- Males are substantially less willing to talk (128 words out of 1146) and less likely to interrupt (f=19) than they do in cross-sex interaction. One reason for this phenomenon is that men are competitive, both male speakers want to take the dominate role in the conversation. In this way, both of them try to hold the same authority in the conversation.

- They use the least number of back channel frequencies (M=7.9)

**Conversation of female inquirer with males:** (see Table 1)

- The pattern in the data suggests that talking time is greater for men when interacting with cross sex partner.

- Men were the most talkative group in cross sex interaction (417 words). They, in the case of female addressee, nearly talked three times more than they did in the same sex interaction.

- Men’s interruption in this case (25), recorded the highest. It seems that men are more likely to take the dominant role in the conversation. They would like to compete for speaking right in order to control the topic of conversations. For example, they made a louder voice to compete against the current speaker. Yet, it seems that they are mostly interested in attracting the attention of the addressee not competing the floor as they did in same sex interaction. It seems that in cross-sex conversation, interruptions are a function of power position, rather than sex.
Research on interruptions has generally shown that men interrupt the women much more often than women interrupt women or men. Men are more likely to ignore what had said before and to stress his opinions. So, female are more likely to be interrupted by male. The number of interruptions seems to be tied to power in cross-sex partners. Interruptions are considered to be clearly a sign of conversational dominance.

The only gender difference that appeared among all the behavioral variables taken into consideration concerned the way males and females engaged in the sequence structuring of dialogues: Males started new conversational sequences more often than did females, whose speaking turns were more often replies to the previous turn.

To conclude, the case studies of these entertaining utterances show that the frequency of interruption during conversations is greatly influenced by the gender differences. In cross-sex interaction, male seems interrupt more than women do. Yet, for the same-sex interaction, male are holding the same authority.

**Conversation of male inquirer with females: (see Table 1)**

- Male to female interaction seems quite intimate. Females are quite to the point (209 words). The utterances are relevant and informative. They seem quite polite.
- Females are the least interruptive group talking with males (9).
- back channel frequency \( M = 9.6 \)

It seems that the difference among the two main dyads is often attributed to stable personality characteristics acquired through the different socialization of men and women. Women consistently exhibited a greater social-emotional orientation toward both men and women across a wide variety of situations. This research has revealed that this gender difference occurs primarily for cross-sex interactions. That is, women tended to be particularly social and emotional in interactions with other women, and men the least so in interactions with other men but the most to other women. For example, according to Aries the friendships of women emphasize intimacy and emotional expressiveness, the friendships of men emphasize shared activity, and cross-sex friendships tended to be less sex stereotyped than same-sex friendships. Women exhibit more positive social-emotional behavior than men in same-sex groups; in mixed-sex groups, both men and women behave more like members of the opposite sex.

**5. Discussions and Conclusion**
Sex differences in conversational behavior have long been a topic of public and scientific interest. It seems that men play a dominant role, controlling the interaction and frequently violating rules of polite turn taking. Women are more submissive, seeking permission to speak, and taking more responsibility for encouraging and supporting other speakers. In other words, participants in interactions are influenced by the communicative behavior of their partners.

Some even believe that women are more talkative than men. However, this study showed tendency for men to be more talkative than women in certain contexts, such as when they are conversing with females. Women talked more to their female partner. It indicates that, with female, women were generally more talkative when it came to using speech to affirm their connection to the listener, while men’s speech focused more on an attempt to influence, take the floor, and mostly attract the attention of female’s listener. With the same sex interactions, males however, were very impatient and short in the amount of speech.

To sum, conversations are managed and controlled by men. Men are supposed to take the floor more often, keep it longer than women, show authoritarian or even aggressive behaviors, and to be essentially interested in the pursuit of dominative and competitive goals rather than in cooperative ones. Women, on the other hand, are said to be particularly attentive conversationalists and to be primarily concerned with collaboration and mutual understanding. Clearly, this picture of the "roles" women and men are supposed to play in conversations is highly dependent on the roles they are more generally supposed and expected to play in social life. So, the notion that the Women are more talkative than men is dependent on the interactional context. In other words, the interactional behaviors reflect the dominance relationships existing between men and women in our societies. The findings show that men, in contrast with women, had higher participation in and influence on the task in cross sex interaction; the female and male speakers used interruptions and back channels *mm hmm* at high frequency but in certain social contexts: Males used more when talking to a female partner. All of these differences suggest that this area is fruitful for further investigation.

**References**


perspectives. *American Psychologist*, 28, 512--527


"Conversational insecurity


Title

Morality and Cultural Paradoxes in Teaching English to Iranian Students

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate how EFL teachers in an Islamic country deal with cross cultural paradoxes which exist in EFL books. This research investigates not only the differences between male and female teachers in facing new culture but also between more-experienced and less-experienced teachers. The study also indicates if teachers use other methods for teaching other aspects of the new culture which are not included in EFL books. For this study 30 EFL teachers; 15 females and 15 males were selected. To collect the data two questionnaires and an interview were used. The results showed that Muslim teachers value the new culture, so they are not biased toward it. Also, it demonstrated that female teachers like male teachers are not biased toward the new culture. The result was the same for less-experienced teachers compared to more-experienced ones. The study showed that teachers don’t apply other methods to introduce the new culture. Also in the interview teachers expressed that they don’t focus on some aspects of the new culture which are not accepted in their Islamic culture especially for children and in co-educational classes.

Keywords: Cross-cultural Paradoxes, Moral Values, Muslim EFL Teachers

1. Introduction
Recently, there have been great changes to language teaching and learning. Old methods go and replaced with new ones. In these changes, Johnston and Buzzelli (2008) state that there have been the beginnings of attention to the vast area formed by the intersection between language teaching and religious beliefs, a domain in which moral values are particularly prominent and often highly contentious. In recent researches, there has been motivation for searching the best way of teaching different cultures to different learners with different cultural background. There are many cultural paradoxes in EFL books which learners are not familiar with or the other cultural aspects which are not included in these books. The purpose of this study is to find out that the way EFL teachers teach in these situations, and whether EFL teachers do their mission well or not. Morality is an aspect of every body’s life, and teachers are not exception in this regard. Teachers should be also moral in their work. And the other aspect of this study is to understand to what extent teachers are moral in their teaching.

2. Literature Review

Dewey (1909, cited in Johnston & Buzzelli, 2008) drew an important distinction between the teachings of morality that is, teaching moral values to students and, the morality of teaching that means teaching is imbued with moral aspects. Different researchers have different ideas about morality. Johnston and Buzzelli (2008) stated that by moral they mean something that involves crucial yet difficult and ambiguous beliefs and decision about what is right and good for learners and others. An important goal in considering morality in education is to determine how teachers view moralities. So, it could be better understood how people in diverse cultures approach moral challenges.

In another hand English is known as an international language by which different people communicate with each other. Singh and Doherty (2004) believe that the English language and the textual practices of business and higher education no longer belong to an exclusive Western “Us,” but are tools and practices engaged with and shaped by a global “Us”, so, this claim makes us think about a global culture and a mixture of different cultural ideas and thoughts. Moral teaching also focus on this matter and regard teaching English as a dilemma in which teachers should decide right decisions not about teaching morality but a moral teaching.

In this regard different teachers and researchers do not have the same idea. Mirascieva, Petrovski and Gjorgjeva (2011) believe the right of education for everybody means the
acquisition of knowledge about faith and religion. Without knowledge of faith and religion, many problems from different scientific areas and school subjects, e.g. philosophy, psychology, history, literature, fine arts and music, sociology, law etc., will remain misunderstood. But some researchers like Mokhtarnia (2011) believe that teaching English classes have no space for local culture. She argues local culture can be worked separately with other media and vehicles. In her paper she writes the mission of preventing and preserving local culture, following a structural view of social identity, yet can be undertaken through some other avenues such as establishing or increasing Persian language courses both nationally and internationally. Furthermore, industries such as tourism can offer ample opportunities for introducing local Persian and Islamic culture worldwide. In addition, technologies such as internet and satellite channels bears the potential to introduce and advance the local culture, language and ideologies in a much more positive manner rather than hindering the dialogue and interaction between cultures by eliminating or minimizing any possible contact and negotiation in different context including English pedagogy.

This study aims to find out the ways Iranian EFL teachers teach in English classes when they face cultural paradoxes.

This study is going to answer the following questions:

1. Do EFL teachers in Iran teach the new culture of EFL books which is in disagreement with their own religious culture?
2. Is there any difference between male and female EFL teachers in teaching the new culture?
3. Is there any difference between more-experienced and less-experienced teachers in getting students familiar with the new culture?
4. Do teachers use different methods to introduce the culture of the new language better?

3. Method

3.1 Participants

Participants of this study were 15 male and 15 female English teachers. Their native language was Persian. All the participants were Muslim. Based on the results of the demographic questionnaire the teachers’ experiences were as follows: 40% of the teachers were working in English institutes for 1 to 5 years, 10% of them 5 to 10 years, 36.6% of them 10 to 15 years, and 13.3% between 15 to 20 years. The participants were divided into two groups: more experienced teachers (10-20) and less experienced teachers (1-10).
Teachers’ degrees were as follows: 53.6% of teachers held B.A degree, 40% M.A, 3.33% PhD, and 3.33% B.S. In this research only teachers who taught in English institutes were selected because school teachers teach some books which do not contain target cultures but institutes’ books are full of multicultural differences which are in mismatch with learners’ local culture.

3.2 Instruments
To accomplish the purpose of this study a questionnaire and an interview were used. The questionnaire contained three sub-questionnaires. For measuring the reliability of the questionnaire the Cronbach’s Alpha was used and it was at an acceptable level.

The first sub-questionnaire which used in this study was a demographic questionnaire filled out by teachers. The second sub-questionnaire showed the teachers’ opinions in facing and teaching a new culture. It was developed by Brown (2007, p.213). He proposed this list to show the teachers how they should face and teach a new culture in different EFL books. The questionnaire followed a Likert scale options: always, often, sometimes, seldom, and never. The third sub-questionnaire was proposed by Joiner (1974). He prepared a checklist for evaluating the cultural content of a second language text (as cited in Chastain 1988). The researchers in this part used this check list which contained various methods and principles to find out whether teachers use these methods in their teaching or not.

After filling out the questionnaire teachers participated in an interview. The interview contained 5 questions.
1. If you want to talk about some cultural differences in your class like men and women relationships, do you prefer co-educational classes or homogeneous classes? Why?
2. Are there any differences between children and adult classes in talking about some aspects of cultural differences which are not accepted as a norm in your native culture? Why?
3. Do you talk about Islamic culture or your own culture in class? Do you compare it with other cultures?
4. If you have a co-educational class would you pair off a boy and a girl or not? Why?
5. In your opinion what is a moral teaching? In teaching your local culture or target culture?

3.3 Procedure
To collect the data from the participants a questionnaire was used. After obtaining the reliability, the main experiment was done and the questionnaires were given to the participants. The purpose of the study was explained before handing the questionnaires to the teachers.

3.4 Data Analysis
To analyze the data SPSS software version 11.5 was used. To obtain the statistical results a T-test was applied.

4. Results and Discussion

The first question was to investigate whether Iranian EFL teachers value the target culture or not. Teachers were asked to complete the second questionnaire. After analyzing the data by SPSS, one sample t-test was conducted. To reject or verify the hypothesis the t-value and critical value were compared. The level of significance was .05. The obtained value for t was 3.148. T-critical was 1.69. The t-value was greater than t-critical (3.148 > 1.69). It showed that EFL teachers value the target culture (see table 4.1).

Table 4.1 EFL teachers in teaching the new culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>degree of freedom</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.400</td>
<td>7.655</td>
<td>3.148</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second question was about the difference between EFL male and female teachers in teaching the new culture. Participants were divided into two groups of males and females. Their scores analyzed separately by an independent samples t-test. T-value of the table for this hypothesis was 1.202 for both men and women and the t-critical was 2.048. So, the results indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female EFL teachers in teaching the new culture in Iran (see table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Male and female EFL teachers in teaching the new culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>degree of freedom</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>8.795</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To answer the third question “Is there any difference between less-experienced and more-experienced teachers in teaching the new culture” an independent sample test was used. T-value of the table was 1.459, and the degree of freedom was 28. The t-critical was 2.048. The results indicated that there was no difference between less-experienced and more experienced teachers in teaching the new culture in Iran (see table 4.3).

**Table 4.3** More experienced and less experienced EFL teachers in teaching the new culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More-experienced</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>7.576</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vs.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.459</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.929</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less-experienced</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>7.443</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To answer the fourth question “Do teachers use new methods in teaching the new culture?” The t-value which was obtained by analyzing the data was -1.58. The t-value of the obtained data was -1.58, which was less than 2.045, the t-critical of t-distribution table (-1.58 < 2.045). The results showed that teachers don’t use different methods to teach the new culture to Iranian learners (see table 4.4).

**Table 4.4** Applying new methods in teaching the new culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Level of significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>27.90</td>
<td>7.279</td>
<td>-1.58</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As it mentioned before teachers answered five questions through an interview. After analyzing their answers, the following results obtained. For the first question, 57% of teachers believed that it’s not easy for them to teach in co-educational classes and explain all the cultural points which are not accepted in their native culture. 43% of these teachers had an opposite idea.

For the second question, about 68% of teachers believed that children are different from adults and there’s no need to talk about cultural paradoxes in these classes. But 32% of these teachers stated that everything should be stated for children but in another way.

For the third question, about 70% of teachers stated that they talk not only about the target culture but also their native culture. 30% of them said that there’s no need to talk about their native culture and Islam because it’s a controversial issue.

For the fourth question, %43 of the teachers believed that they pair boys and girls with each other. About 43% of the teachers stated that they just pair off homogenous learners with each other. The rest, it means, %14 of teachers believed that pairing learners in homogenous or not homogenous group is a relative work; it depends to their situations and their age.

For the fifth question, 75% of the teachers said that a mixture of different cultures should be introduced to the learners. About 14% of the teachers said that they should just teach the target culture and compare it with the native culture. Also about 11% of the teachers believed that they focus on Islamic culture more.

4.1 Valuing the Target Culture
The first question was if Iranian EFL teachers value the target culture. The obtained results indicated that Iranian EFL teachers value the target culture. The survey showed the same thing as the result of Gross (2004) study. He emphasizes the importance of learning the second language culture. In his study 2500 American and European and Asian people who worked in different places and learned a second language were surveyed. Over 80% of the respondents to this survey indicated that not only their foreign language skills but also cultural knowledge has benefited them in their careers. Half of them acknowledged that their knowledge of foreign language and also culture has given them a significant competitive advantage in business.

This phenomenon also can be surveyed from religious view point. In some countries like Iran, so many teachers and learners have a tendency toward religion. Also, as these countries
are dominated by Islam, their culture is mixed by Islamic aspects, and this cultural background may affect their way of teaching. Many cultures which exist in EFL books not only are different with their native culture but also are not lawful from Islamic point of view. But, Muslim teachers focus on all the aspects of western and target culture of the EFL books; however, they are different and perhaps are in mismatch with the Islamic culture. So, this survey showed that teachers in this country value the target culture even with Islamic cultural background.

The teachers were asked about different cultural points which talking about them in local educational situation is restricted because of cultural differences. They stated that talking about these points in EFL classrooms is right of learners, although they are different from learners’ cultural background. They believed that talking about men and women relationship which are completely different in different cultures should be discussed for the learners. So, it was shown that teachers in Iran value the target culture.

4.2 Male and Female Teachers’ Differences in Teaching the New Culture
The next question was that if there’s a difference between male and female EFL teachers in teaching the new culture. Results showed that EFL teachers, male or female value the target culture and there’s no difference to be a male or female teacher.

4.3 More Experienced and Less Experienced Teachers’ Differences in Teaching New Culture
The third question which was investigated was if experiences of EFL teachers affect the way of their teaching. Experience can play an important role in teaching. This factor can affect the way of teaching. As it was stated before teachers were experienced from one years of teaching to twenty years and more. In this research, it was surveyed if experience of teachers cause differences in their teaching. Results showed that EFL teachers in Iran with different level of experiences follow a similar way in teaching the new culture and teachers with more and less experiences value the target culture.

4.4 Using New Methods in Teaching the New Culture
Teachers should teach all the new cultures they face in EFL books, whether they are in agreement with the learners native cultures or not. The results of the study are in line with Mokhtarnia’s study who found out that, countries like Iran who takes a static, structural view of identity with the view of national identity as an ideological group membership, may see English education as a cultural “invasion” rather than “investment” taking a defensive stance against integrating target culture into L2 education.
Using new methods help learners go far away from the EFL books and get familiar with other aspects of the target culture. The new culture is full of new things which learners are eager to know. Culture of a new language shows the way the people of that language live and help the learners to communicate with people of that language better, because by learning more aspects of target language they know more about those native people. Also by these methods learners know some differences in their own culture and target culture. These kinds of methods help learners to solve some misunderstanding which they can face in the target language, because something which has a good meaning in target culture may have a bad meaning in other cultures. These methods totally help learners communicate with other people in target language better.

One of the questions of this study was whether teachers use these kinds of methods which were explained above or not. After analyzing the questionnaire it was found out that EFL teachers in this field are not so active, they just focus on the aspects which presented in EFL books, and other cultural points which are not in these books may be hidden from the learners’ mind. Although, these methods are useful in getting familiar with target culture, teachers don’t use them in their teaching style and rely just on their books and their contents.

4.5 Questions of the Interview
To inquire the teachers’ opinions about teaching cultural aspects they were asked to answer five questions and their opinions were recorded and analyzed.

The first question was about teaching cultural paradoxes in co-educational classes. Results indicated that 57% of teachers do not teach all the cultural points in co-educational classes. The others believed that the details should be said in spite of learners’ gender. As it mentioned before, Iran is an Islamic country, whether people are Muslim or not, religion affects their culture. Teachers are not exceptions in this field. They may say that religion doesn’t cause some bias toward stating the truth, but actually sometimes they cannot insist against this effect. Religion may play a standing role and cause teachers to say their words indirectly. So, the learners’ needs for familiarizing with different aspects of new culture cannot be met, unlike Clapson and Hyatt (2006) who stated that to develop teaching, the needs of the learners should be met rather than those of the teacher. So, more than half of the teachers who believed that the target culture should be valued and the details of the target culture should be mentioned for the learners, have a reversed belief in co-educational classes and stated that teaching cultural paradoxes in co-educational classes make some problems like learners’ shyness or drawing learners’ attention far from educational purposes. In the
class which boys and girls sit with each other, teachers don’t focus on the cultural paradoxes which are in contrast with their native culture.

These teachers then continued that they don’t talk about these paradoxes so much because of the situation they are in. They believed that as boys and girls were not with each others at high school and pre-university, they may not be relaxed in these situations. So, they prefer not to talk about these cultural paradoxes in these situations. But some other teachers stated that it doesn’t make any difference for them to talk about cultural paradoxes. They said that learners in homogenous classes should know the details of the cultures which talking about them is to some extent hard in co-educational classes in Islamic country like Iran.

The second question was about the interface of teachers’ mission in teaching cultural paradoxes of English and the age of the learners. Although the results of the questionnaire showed that the teachers like to teach all the cultural points to the learners but the results of the interview indicated to some extent a reversed result in special situations and in these situations they don’t follow the same procedure like the EFL class of children. About 70% of teachers believed that age of the learners can play an important role in teaching cultural paradoxes and it can cause them to be conservative in this matter. The result of analyzing the first question is unlike the Chastain’s opinion. She (1988) pointed out that students are extremely interested in people who speak the language they are studying. They want to know about them, what they are like and how they live. On the other hand, they know very little about the basic aspects of their own culture, and certainly most of them are too young to have had the experiences necessary to gain more than a superficial knowledge about cultures of other countries.

These teachers believed that the minds of the children are not ready yet to know about the cultural paradoxes. So, most of them cannot understand what teachers say about these paradoxes which exist in target language. The other reason they stated was that it’s so soon for children to know about these paradoxes and may get dizzy in a diverse situation between the target and the native culture. Social problem was another reason in this part. However, these teachers believed that different cultures should be taught but they stated that this is the parents of the children who are responsible for them. So, this time the addressee of teachers are not adults or teenagers who are so eager to obtain new information about the target culture but the parents of children who live with their Islamic background culture and are sensitive to their children, so the teachers try to be to some extent conservative in this regard. All of these reasons caused 70% of teachers not to talk about the cultural paradoxes which exist in the target language in children’s class. In the previous part it was indicated
that teachers value the target culture and teach them to the learners but in interview it was shown that this phenomenon is not the same in different situations and don’t teach all the cultural aspects in children classes.

30% of the teachers stated that these paradoxes should be taught but not in details. Also some of these teachers stated that they translate drinks or food in different ways in Islamic culture, like juice instead of bear and so on. From the teachers’ answers to the questionnaire it can be concluded that they value the target language but most of them believed that children should not know about these cultural paradoxes because of all the reasons stated before. So, teachers in this regard don’t let children know about these paradoxes, and children should wait to grow up and then learn about these cultures.

The third question was about teaching the native culture in EFL classes. As it was indicated before 70% of the teachers believed that; it’s not enough to just talk about one culture. They pointed out that it’s better to teach the combination of two cultures to the learners and they stated that sometimes the native culture should be used to be compared with the target culture. So, 70% of teachers believed in teaching both cultures, not only the target culture but also the Islamic and religious culture because when learners compare two cultures they can get a good schema of the new culture, and they can learn the differences which exist between the native and the target culture. The result of the study was verified by Gholami, Maleki, and Emami’s study (2011) who asserted that the crucial subject matter in language teaching is religion. The teachers in this study stated that religion and morality are the things that help a person to get out of the difficult situations and they are strong powers that prevent a person to move toward mistakes and corruption.

Moreover, they stated that if they want to be moral, all the cultural aspects should be mentioned in their right time, because English is an international language and it doesn’t just belong to the western countries. So, teachers should try to bring other nations’ cultures into the class to introduce them to the learners and get them familiar with different cultures.

Among all the teachers, 30% of them were biased toward the target language and they pointed out that in EFL classes there’s no situation to talk about Islam and other kind of cultures which are not related to the target culture. These kinds of teachers don’t pay attention to the international role of English and just focus on the cultures of the western countries. The opinions of these teachers are in agreement with Mokhtarnia’s findings (2011). She indicated that English classes have no space for local culture. She argued that the local culture can be worked separately with other media and vehicles.
The fourth question which was asked from the teachers was if they use heterogeneous learners in dialogs between a man and a woman in EFL books. The results showed that the ratio of teachers in using homogenous and heterogeneous learners in dialogs is the same. It means that 43% of teachers believed that they should not pair off non homogenous learners and also 43% of them believed that they should pair heterogeneous learners and the rest believed that it depends on the situations in which the learners are.

It was shown that about 43% of the teachers didn’t like to pair off non homogenous learners. These teachers believed that because there was less, if any, situations in which non homogenous learners were with each other before. In EFL classroom the learners may abuse their situation and instead of paying attention to the teacher and learning, pay attention to their opposite sex in the class. So, these teachers try to not pair off them. Also they believed that some learners may not be relaxed in these situations and their shyness cause not to learn well. All of these situations make an unnatural situation in which learners cannot communicate with EFL books and its goal well, because dialogues between boys and girls in the books may have some points which are more understandable when they performed by a boy and a girl. So, because of teachers’ way of thinking a learning situation may not be completed, and the learners may not be placed in the best state of learning.

About 43% of the teachers believed differently. They thought that learners should be ready for the future, and they should learn that men and women should face with each other in near future and should learn to be in these situations. Another reason which they mentioned for pairing boys and girls was competition. They thought that non homogenous learners compete with each other better and it helps their learning. So, they try to put girls and boys in a group to cause a better learning and make a good situation in which a more perfect learning takes place. These situations can let the learners focus on the book and not on the teachers’ decisions on separating them in homogeneous groups. So, these kinds of teachers help learners more and create a better learning situation.

14% of the teachers believed that pairing boys and girls is a relative work and it depends to the class situation.

The last question was about the viewpoints of teachers about morality and the portion of different cultures which should exist in their teaching. The results showed that teachers see a moral teaching in teaching not only the target language but also different cultures of different countries. The results of this study are in strong support of Johnston and Buzzelli’s findings (2008) as they stated that by morality they mean crucial yet difficult and ambiguous beliefs and decisions about what is right and good for learners and others. According to Nostrand
(1978) who explained that The U.S. standards for foreign language learning included the objective as “gaining of knowledge and understanding of other cultures”, the findings of this study indicated that 75% of teachers believed that moral teaching is a mixture of different cultures. It means that they teach not only the EFL books culture but also they think that they should use their native cultures and other cultures in teaching English. These kinds of teachers stated that a good learning takes place when the learners get familiar with different cultures of different languages. It was said that English is an international language, and international language doesn’t just consist of western culture but all different cultures. So, they stated that they use different cultures in their teaching to show the differences of cultures to the learners. All these teachers believed that comparing different cultures for example, their native culture with western culture or other cultures make the learners get a better learning.

The rest of the teachers view this phenomenon with bias. 14% of them believed that the learners know about their native culture, and the English class is not a place to talk about it, so the focus should be just on the target culture and something which is in the books. This bias is also right for 11% of teachers in diverse situation. Also 11% of the teachers stated that the focus should be on Islamic and native culture, because the target culture may affect their mind and cause them to forget about their religion and their culture. So, teachers in this regard are biased and don’t let their learners be in the best situation of learning.

5. Conclusion

The results of questionnaires showed that EFL teachers who teach in Iran value the target culture. But, the results of interview indicated that talking about cultural paradoxes is a relative work for these teachers, as they may face some situations that limit them in this regard. Co-educational or children classes were of these kinds. Teachers’ answers showed that the result of the questionnaire was a general result and teachers tried to not be so direct and clear in teaching all the aspects of the new language in these situations. Although teachers showed that they respect the target culture but in these situations they were obligated to follow their customs and cultures.

So it’s better to teach the learners to be critical thinker about different cultures they face. It is not right to be biased toward one culture even the learners’ native culture. The right decision is that let the learners think about different cultures and then decide on the bad and good aspects of that. Teachers in Iran or other countries have this duty to introduce different
cultures to the learners without any bias toward any culture. On the other hand they should teach them critical thinking. By critical thinking learners have this opportunity to face with cultural paradoxes successfully. Teachers also have not this worry about cultural paradoxes as they just introduce them to the learners and want the learners to think about them without any bias.

References


Title

Differential Effect of Processing Depth and Task Frequency on EFL Vocabulary Learning and Retention

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Biodata

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Abstract

Certain vocabulary practice activities appear to be more effective than others in promoting L2 vocabulary acquisition (Paribakht & Wesche 1997; Rott 2004). Depth of processing is one factor Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) formulating the ‘Involvement Load Hypothesis’ emphasized in learning L2 vocabulary while frequency of exposure to a word was proposed by Folse (2006). Using two types of vocabulary activities (multiple-choice questions and original sentence writing), this study aims to investigate whether task type or the frequency of exposure promotes vocabulary learning more effectively. To this end, three conditions with different depth of processing and frequency of exposure were designed and a total of 127 EFL learners took part in the current study. To ensure that participants are from the right proficiency level, KET was used as the homogenizing instrument. The design required to compare more than two means. Therefore, repeated measures ANOVA was run to compare the three conditions. The findings appeared to show that tasks providing more frequency of exposure to new vocabulary though with lower depth
of processing yield better learning results than tasks which claim to have higher involvement load. Important implications for language teaching can be drawn. The findings showed that how many times learners meet with the target word may be more important than what they do with it in terms of vocabulary learning suggesting repetition as a key factor in the effectiveness of vocabulary exercise.

**Keywords:** involvement hypothesis, exposure, vocabulary learning, processing

1. Introduction

Second language researchers and instructors alike have long been interested in identifying vocabulary practice activities that provide good opportunities for learners to acquire new words. For researchers, a central question in understanding vocabulary learning is whether retention depends more on what one does with the word or how often one meets it. Previous studies have provided some explanations of why certain vocabulary practice activities appear to be more effective than others in promoting L2 vocabulary acquisition (Paribakht & Wesche 1997; Rott 2004). Analyzing different types of task in their respective research, these studies shed light on common features of effective tasks. Their findings regarding what makes particular tasks more effective than others revealed that exercises or activities requiring more mental effort on the learner’s part result in improved retention of L2 vocabulary.

A number of empirical attempts have been made to define this notion more precisely. An early theoretical framework is the construct of ‘Depth of Processing Hypothesis’ proposed by Craik and Lockhart (1972) in the field of cognitive psychology. More recently, in order to provide a more observable and measurable construct of depth of processing as well as to link these general cognitive notions to the second language acquisition field, Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) formulated the ‘Involvement Load Hypothesis’ by providing three specific elements to observe the depth of processing, named ‘involvement load’.

To date, a few studies have tested Laufer and Hulstijn’s (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis and produced close findings (see Hulstijn & Laufer 2001; Keating 2008; Kim 2008). They found that a task with higher task-induced involvement load resulted in improved vocabulary retention. However, Folse (2006) found that multiple retrievals of a target word had an important effect on vocabulary learning, arguing that the important feature of a given vocabulary exercise is not what learners do with a word but how often they meet it.
This study aims to empirically measure the relative effects on immediate learning and longer term retention of vocabulary of quality of exposure and quantity of exposure to new vocabulary in two commonly used types of vocabulary practice activities: multiple-choice question (MC) and original sentence writing (OSW), by varying task involvement loads (based on Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001) and varying the number of exposures to the investigated words.

The current study investigates whether task type or the number of tasks (frequency) more effectively promotes vocabulary learning both in the short term and long term, using two types of vocabulary practice activities: multiple-choice questions (MC) and original sentence writing (OSW), by varying task involvement load (Laufer & Hulstijn 2001) and varying the number of exposures to the investigated words (i.e. the number of tasks). In other words, the project was meant to answer the following research question:

How does exercise condition affect Iranian lower intermediate EFL learners’ initial learning and retention of new vocabulary?

2. Review of the Related Literature

In the field of cognitive psychology, Craik and Lockhart’s (1972) Depth of Processing Hypothesis laid the basic groundwork by stating that the chance that some piece of new information will be stored in long-term memory is not determined by the length of time that is held in short-term memory but rather by the shallowness or depth with which it is initially processed.

Craik and Tulving (1975) refined this hypothesis and specified that the depth of processing is supplemented by the concept of the degree with which the information is encoded. This refined hypothesis, however, was challenged for its limitation of not being measurable. Two of the major limitations were: (1) what exactly constitutes a ‘depth’ of processing (Baddeley 1997), and (2) how do we know that one level is ‘deeper’ than another? (Craik & Tulving, 1975; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). In order to provide a more observable and measurable construct of depth of processing as well as to link these general cognitive notions specifically to second language acquisition field, Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) formulated the ‘Involvement Load Hypothesis.’

As an attempt to operationalize the abstract notion of Depth of Processing Hypothesis (Craik & Lockhart, 1972) which is assumed to be the key to word learning and retention, Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) proposed a motivational-cognitive construct of ‘involvement’ to
capture the degree of cognitive processing of an L2 learner required by a given vocabulary learning task. The construct of involvement is composed of three components: need, search, and evaluation.

Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) claim that word learning and retention in a second language are contingent upon a task’s involvement load, that is, the amount of ‘need’, ‘search’ and ‘evaluation’ the task imposes. As Table 1 illustrates, each of the three components can be categorized as absent or present when processing a word during tasks.

Table 1. Three components of involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Operationalisation</th>
<th>Prominence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Motivational</td>
<td>Whether knowledge of new words is required to complete a given task</td>
<td>Absent (0) Moderate (1) Strong (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The attempt learners make to ascertain the meaning of unknown words in a task</td>
<td>Absent (0) Present (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Comparing a new word with other words and making a decision as to its suitability in a given context</td>
<td>Absent (0) Moderate (1) Strong (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The absence of a factor is marked as 0, a moderate presence of a factor as 1, and a strong presence as 2.

‘Need’ is the motivational, non-cognitive dimension of involvement and refers to whether knowledge of new words is required to complete a given task (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). ‘Need’ can occur in three degrees of prominence: absent (0), moderate (1) and strong (2). ‘Need’ is hypothesized to be moderate when it is externally imposed either by tasks or teachers and strong when it is self-imposed by learners (i.e. when learners decide to look up a new word in a dictionary during a composition to fulfill their own needs). ‘Search’ refers to the attempt learners make to ascertain the meaning of unknown words in a task. Although ‘need’ can occur in three degrees of prominence, ‘search’ is not conceptualized as the relative degree of cognitive processing; instead, it is either absent (0) or present (1). ‘Search’
happens when the learner tries to find the meaning of an unknown L2 word in a dictionary or from other sources, such as teachers and peers, and is absent when no such effort is required. ‘Evaluation’ requires comparing a new word with other words and making a decision as to its suitability in a given context. This could occur through comparing a given word with other known words in the L1 or the L2, a specific meaning of a word with its other meanings, or a word with other words in order to assess whether a word fits its context (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). ‘Evaluation’ can happen without ‘search’ if the meaning of the target word is explicitly provided by the text or a teacher. As shown in Table 1, Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) saw the presence of evaluation as comprising three potential degrees of cognitive processing: absent (0), moderate (1) and strong (2). Moderate evaluation requires recognizing differences between words, whereas strong evaluation involves making a decision as to how additional words will work in combination with the new word in an original sentence or text.

Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) proposed that the involvement load of a given task is determined by the combination of the presence or absence of the involvement factors: need, search and evaluation. That is the sum of the scores for need, search, and evaluation, and this value is also called the task’s involvement index. Therefore, the total possible range of an involvement index for any task can vary from 0 (0+0+0) to 5 (2+1+2). The Involvement Load Hypothesis claims that the higher the level of the involvement load index is, the more effective the task is in promoting vocabulary acquisition.

Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) validated the Involvement Load Hypothesis via two parallel experiments involving advanced Dutch and Hebrew-speaking learners of English. Learners in both experiments were randomly assigned to one of three tasks. Participants assigned to task 1 (reading comprehension with marginal glosses) read a passage and answered multiple-choice comprehension questions that required knowledge of ten target words. The target words were highlighted in the text and glossed in the margin. Participants assigned to task 2 (reading comprehension plus cloze) received the same passage and comprehension questions as task 1 but with the target words removed and replaced with blank spaces. Their task was to fill in the missing blanks using a list of words provided. Participants receiving task 3 (composition writing incorporating target words) used the target words to write an original composition in the form of a letter to a newspaper editor.

To measure learning of the words, Hulstijn and Laufer (2001) asked students to provide the L1 translation or English explanations for the ten target words immediately after the completion of the task. Additionally, to measure students’ retention, they administered the same test again one week later in the Netherlands and two weeks later in Israel. The results of
the experiments found that task 3 was superior to tasks 1 and 2 in term of vocabulary retention.

Kim (2008) conducted two experiments investigating the effect of the Involvement Load Hypothesis in terms of vocabulary learning. Experiment 1 compared the performance of 64 adult ESL learners from a range of countries at two different proficiency levels to ascertain the effectiveness of three vocabulary tasks with different levels of task-induced involvement. Experiment 2 investigated whether two tasks hypothesized to represent the same level of task-induced involvement would result in equivalent initial learning and retention of target words by 20 adult ESL learners at two different levels of proficiency. The results of the two experiments corroborated Hulstijn and Laufer’s (2001) hypothesis.

Keating (2008) also tested the claim that word learning and retention in a L2 are contingent upon a task’s involvement load with 79 beginning learners of Spanish. Participants were required to complete one of three vocabulary learning tasks that varied in the amount of involvement induced: reading comprehension with marginal gloss (1+0+0=1), reading comprehension plus gap-filling (1+0+1 = 2), and writing original sentences using the target words (1+0+2 = 3). Participants’ receptive and productive knowledge of the target words was assessed immediately after treatment and two weeks later. In line with the predictions of the Involvement Load Hypothesis, retention was highest in the sentence writing task, lower in the reading plus fill-in task, and lowest in the reading comprehension task.

Folse (2006) compared the effect of different written vocabulary exercises (i.e. fill-in-the-blank versus original sentence writing) on L2 word learning in conditions differing in involvement loads, but also in the number of word retrievals. 154 university intensive English program students practiced the same target vocabulary in three types of exercises conditions: one fill-in-the-blank exercise, three fill-in-the-blank exercises, and one original-sentence-writing exercise. An unannounced post-test was conducted measuring the meaning of the target words and usage of the target word in a learner-generated sentence. However, contrary to the predictions of the Involvement Load Hypothesis, the results revealed that three fill-in-the-blank exercises was more effective than writing original sentence in terms of vocabulary retention.

3. Method

3.1 Design of the Study
This study utilized a repeated measures experimental design in which the same subjects are used for each treatment. Three experimental conditions were employed: one set of multiple choice questions (MC) as condition 1; three sets of different multiple choice questions (MCs) as condition 2; and one set of original sentence writing (OSW) as condition 3. Vocabulary exercise condition is the independent variable and score as dependent variable under investigation.

3.2 Participants
To accomplish the objectives of the study, 127 male EFL learners at lower-intermediate proficiency level, within the age range of 16-20, took part in the study. They were learning English as a foreign language at Jahad-e-Daneshgahi Language Institute in Tehran, Iran. To guarantee participants' homogeneity in terms of their language proficiency, KET was used. The obtained data from the proficiency test revealed the mean score of 61.22, out of 100. Subjects whose scores fall between one standard deviation below and above the mean were selected to receive the activities for all conditions.

3.3 Materials and Instruments
To collect data on the variables under investigation, the following materials instruments were used in this study.

3.3.1 Proficiency test
To guarantee participants' homogeneity in terms of their language proficiency, the Key English Test (KET) was employed. This instrument was used as a reliable and valid test for the selection of 127 participants out of 156 learners. The KR-21 reliability of the test was found to be 0.86.

3.3.2 One multiple-choice exercise (Condition 1)
According to Laufer and Hulstijn’s (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis, this task condition would induce a moderate ‘need’ because this ‘need’ was externally imposed by the task, rather than by the students. No ‘search’ is generated because the target words were glossed with meanings provided. Additionally, moderate ‘evaluation’ would be induced because the participants need to check the meaning provided to decide which word best fits the given context in the multiple-choice question. In terms of task-induced involvement load, condition1, therefore, induced moderate need (value = 1), no search (value = 0) and moderate evaluation (value = 1), which indicated an involvement index value of 2 (1 + 0 + 1 = 2).

Table 2. The comparison of the three exercise conditions.
### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Conceptualization</th>
<th>Involvement Load</th>
<th>Involvement Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One multiple-choice exercise (MC)</td>
<td>Low involvement Single exposure</td>
<td>Moderate need (1) No search (0) Moderate evaluation (1)</td>
<td>$1 + 0 + 1 = 2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three different multiple-choice exercises (MCs)</td>
<td>Low involvement Multiple exposures</td>
<td>Moderate need (1) No search (0) Moderate evaluation (1)</td>
<td>$1 + 0 + 1 = 2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One original sentence writing (OSW)</td>
<td>High involvement Single exposure</td>
<td>Moderate need (1) No search (0) Strong evaluation (2)</td>
<td>$1 + 0 + 2 = 3$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.3.3 Three multiple-choice exercises (Condition 2)

Condition 2 represents a key manipulation to test Laufer and Hulstijn’s (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis. Condition 2 was, therefore, operationalized as practicing the target words in three different multiple-choice question exercises. According to Laufer and Hulstijn (2001), this condition induced the same ‘need’, ‘search’, and ‘evaluation’ as condition 1 as they are the same type of exercise. Each word in condition 2, however, was practiced three times in different multiple-choice questions, though the ‘evaluation’ was moderate as in condition 1. Condition 2 was thereby operationalized to examine whether a word with multiple exposures, though moderately evaluated, could yield better initial learning and longer-term retention than with strong ‘evaluation’ when time on task is the same.

#### 3.3.4 One original sentence writing (Condition 3)

Condition 3 is conceptualized as tasks with high involvement load and single exposure. To operationalize condition 3, students are required to practice the target words by producing a meaningful sentence for each. Laufer and Hulstijn (2001) proposed that the involvement index of this condition was 3 ($1 + 0 + 2 = 3$), including moderate need (value = 1), no search (value = 0), and strong evaluation (value = 2). This is because the participants have to generate their own sentences with the target words, which means words must be evaluated to be fit into a learner-generated context and this would induce strong evaluation.

#### 3.3.5 Target words

Twelve target words were used in the current research:
These words were selected according to the following criteria. The major concern is that the selected words in the treatment should be unknown to the participants as the current study is to measure levels of word knowledge retained by the participants after the treatment. To begin with, the researcher perused the vocabulary study list for lower intermediate learners and identified 60 potential low frequency words that the participants would not be expected to know.

In the case of the current study, it is undesirable to give a pretest because the pretest itself may alert the participants as to what the treatment concerns and which target words are going to be tested. However, a check of knowledge of the target words is still critical. The resultant list of 60 low frequency words were tested with five students at the same participating institute, whose English proficiency is higher than the participants. Results of the test revealed that only three words were known by these five high-proficiency students. As the participants in the current study were of lower language proficiency, the results suggested that the words chosen were appropriate for the study. Twelve target words were thus selected and randomly clustered into three groups to provide three groups of word for three conditions:

Group A: bandit, comet, magnet, peasant
Group B: banquet, conceit, missile, skull
Group C: cactus, cradle, orphan, yacht

3.3.6 Vocabulary practice booklet

Vocabulary practice booklets consisted of the three exercise conditions and twelve target words were used as the treatment in this study. The first page provided general instructions. Condition 1 was one page long with four target words, that is one group, practiced in one set of multiple-choice questions; condition 2 was two pages long with another group of target word practiced in three sets of different multiple-choice questions; condition 3 was one page long with the remaining four target words practiced by making original sentences using each of the target words.

Each participant practiced all three groups (i.e. group A, B and C) of target words but with a random assignment of the three conditions (i.e. conditions 1, 2 and 3) to each word group. The presentation order of the three word groups and of the three conditions was also randomized. This means that, within any one of the six combinations, there were also six possible orderings. Based on these combinations of conditions, target word groups, and
orderings, 36 different versions of booklets were created, and were randomly assigned to the participants. The meaning of the target words was glossed in a box at the first page of each exercise condition. An example is given in Table 3.

Table 3: Example of the gloss box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Persian translation</th>
<th>Part of speech</th>
<th>(un)countable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>banquet</td>
<td>میهمانی</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>Countable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conceit</td>
<td>غرور</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>Uncountable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missile</td>
<td>موشک</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>countable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skull</td>
<td>جمجمه</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>countable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The target words were alphabetically listed in each gloss box. The gloss box contained pertinent information regarding the meaning of target words in Persian translation. This was followed by part of speech and information on whether the word is countable or uncountable.

3.3.7 Post-tests

Two unannounced post-tests, adapted from the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (Paribakht&Wesche 1993), were used to assess participants’ knowledge of the target words in terms of meaning (indicated by L1 translation or L2 synonym) and usage (indicated by student-generated sentence in the L2) immediately after and again two weeks after the treatment. This test instrument used a three-point scale (0, 1 and 2) combining self-report and performance items to measure both self-perceived and demonstrated knowledge of specific words in written form. Each score indicates the following level of vocabulary demonstrated knowledge: 0 (not familiar), 1 (correct English synonym or Persian translation is given), and 2 (target word is used in a meaningful sentence). Table 4 illustrates the example of the post-tests and how points would be awarded.

Table 4: Example of the post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>I don’t know this word</th>
<th>I know this word</th>
<th>I can use this word</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td>خانواده</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruit</td>
<td>میوه</td>
<td>We always have</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
plenty of fruit after dinner.

| constrain | 0 |

### 3.4 Data Collection

On the treatment day, each participant was randomly given one of 36 versions of the vocabulary practice booklet. Time for the treatment session was approximately 40 minutes. When all students had finished, the booklets were collected and the unannounced immediate post-test, designed to measure their initial learning, was distributed. All copies of the immediate post-test were collected following the test. Two weeks later, the participants received the unannounced delayed post-test, which was a parallel test displaying the same test items but in a different presentation order, to measure their longer-term retention of the target words.

The post-tests were scored separately by the researcher and an independent evaluator trained on the use of the scoring protocol. Blind scoring was used at all times. Scoring discrepancies were discussed between the researcher and the independent evaluator until consensus was reached. To show the degree of agreement among raters, inter-rater reliability using Pearson’s $r$ was calculated. Pearson’s $r$ obtained was .94 for the immediate post-test and .92 for the delayed post-test, indicating a high degree of agreement between the two raters.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The scores obtained by each condition were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 17.0. In the current study, the participants are subjected to repeated measures, in which the same subjects are used for each treatment. Therefore, repeated measures ANOVA is adopted. In order to validate repeated measures factor ANOVA, Mauchly’s test is a statistical measure used to test the assumption of sphericity. Effect size was also calculated using Cohen’s $d$ (Cohen, 1992).

### 4. Results

#### 4.1 Effect of exercise condition on initial vocabulary learning

The first part of the data analysis concerns the effect of exercise condition on initial vocabulary learning. The descriptive statistics firstly summarized participants’ initial vocabulary learning resulting from each exercise condition in post-test 1. The scores of the immediate post-test were then submitted to repeated measures ANOVA with exercise condition as independent variable and score as dependent variable, comparing the three
exercise conditions in order to find out which condition had a better result of initial learning. The alpha level for the analysis was set at .05 for tests of significance. Measures of effect sizes using Cohen’s $d$ are also reported in the results.

The descriptive statistics for the immediate post-test is displayed in Table 5 and indicated that the means for practicing target words three times in three different multiple-choice questions were higher than the means for the other two conditions.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for initial learning by exercise condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (one multiple choice)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (three different multiple choice)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (original sentences)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$N = 127$

Table 5 shows that, on average, the score of VKS in condition 2 was the highest (4.22). Condition 3 came second (2.25), and condition 1 was the third (1.67). Based on the results, doing a vocabulary exercise with the word being practiced with three different multiple-choice questions appears to be more effective than the word being practiced with making one original sentence. This suggests that the quantity of exposure to new vocabulary contributes to initial vocabulary learning.

Repeated measures ANOVA provides information whether there is significant effect of exercise conditions on vocabulary retention. To ensure the accuracy of the results from the repeated measures ANOVA which tests the assumption of sphericity which hypothesizes that the variances of the differences between conditions are equal. If Mauchly’s test statistics is significant (i.e. $p < .05$) we would conclude that there are significant differences between the variances of differences and, therefore, the condition of sphericity is not met. In order to meet the assumption of sphericity, Mauchly’s test should be non-significant (i.e. $p > .05$). Table 6 reported the significance value (.196) of Mauchly’s test which is more than the critical value of .05.

Table 6: Mauchly’s test for the scores of the immediate post-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within subjects effect</th>
<th>Mauchly’s $W$</th>
<th>Approx. Chi-Square</th>
<th>Epsilon</th>
<th>Greenhouse-Geisser $Df$</th>
<th>Greenhouse-Geisser Sig</th>
<th>Huynh-Feldt $Df$</th>
<th>Lower-bound</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
It is thus reasonable to conclude that the variances of differences are not significantly different (i.e. they are roughly equal). In other words, the assumption of sphericity has been met.

Table 7 shows the results of the repeated measures ANOVA for the effect of vocabulary exercise conditions. This ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of vocabulary exercise condition on the immediate post-test, $F(2, 260) = 123.64, p <.001$. The results suggest that initial vocabulary learning was significantly affected by the exercise conditions. However, the main ANOVA test does not inform us how conditions differed from each other. An ANOVA of contrast variables was conducted to contrast significant difference between conditions in order to identify which condition is more effective than the other two.

Table 7: ANOVA for effect of exercise condition on initial vocabulary learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>449.8</td>
<td>224.9</td>
<td>123.64*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>472.8</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p< .001

Since repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant difference between the means, an ANOVA of contrast variables was conducted to contrast significant difference between conditions.

Table 8: ANOVA for contrast of exercise condition on initial vocabulary learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contrast</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Effect Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conditions 1 versus 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1038.96</td>
<td>1038.96</td>
<td>142.05*</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions 1 versus 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>6.65</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions 2 versus 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>879.38</td>
<td>879.38</td>
<td>111.69*</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>1204.62</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p< .001

As shown in Table 8, there was a significant difference between conditions 1 and 2 as well as between conditions 2 and 3. There was no significant difference between conditions 1 and 3. This suggests that, in terms of the effectiveness of exercise conditions, tasks with practicing the word in three different multiple-choice questions would be the more effective one compared either with tasks with the word being practiced by writing original sentences or tasks with one multiple-choice question. This again suggests that the quantity of exposure to...
new vocabulary would be more of an impact than the quality of exposure in terms of initial learning.

When condition 2 is compared with condition 1, it is not surprising that condition 2 outperformed. The reason would be that the two conditions are of the same type of exercise and the target words of conditions were practiced triple times as those of condition 1. Corroborating with Folse’s (2006) findings, with more exposures to new vocabulary, condition 2 yields a better retention result than condition 1. This means the quantity of exposure to new vocabulary improves initial vocabulary learning when task type is the same. When condition 1 is compared with condition 3, condition 3 was more effective in terms of vocabulary learning. This result supports the Involvement Load Hypothesis (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001) in which task effectiveness is determined by the involvement load it induced. When condition 2 is compared with condition 3, the mean score of condition 2 was significantly higher than that of condition 3. This is an important finding because condition 3 was predicted to induce high level of task-induced involvement, according to Laufer and Hulstijn (2001), as learners were required to process the lexis by generating an original sentence. However, with three times of word retrievals but shallow-processed, three MCs (condition 2) yielded a better initial learning result than one OSW (condition 3). The current study produced an outcome which was similar to that of Folse’s (2006) experiment, where three fill-in-blanks outperformed one OSW as the former. It could be inferred that the task with more chances of word exposure though with lower involvement load may outperform the one with higher level of involvement when time on task is held the same.

4.2 Effect of exercise condition on vocabulary retention

The second part of the data analysis focuses on the effect of exercise condition on participants’ longer-term retention of new vocabulary. To find out which condition had better result on retention of new vocabulary, the scores of the delayed post-test were submitted to repeated measures ANOVA. Table 9 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of the delayed post-test. The descriptive statistics indicates that the mean score of condition 3 (.69) was slightly higher than that of condition 2 (.60). Condition 1 was the lowest at 0.53. However, compared with the mean scores in the immediate post-test, the means of the delayed posttest were considerably lower.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (one multiple choice)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean scores of the delayed post-test were all less than 1. That is to say, the retention of the target words were fading away noticeably, which could be a phenomenon attributed to the nature of incidental encounter with new vocabulary. Based on this result, the effect of these three conditions on long-term retention of new vocabulary appears to be insignificant.

Take condition 2 as an example. In the immediate post-test, the mean score (4.22) was much higher than that of condition 3 (2.25). However, in the delayed post-test, the mean score of condition 2 (.60) appeared to be slightly lower than that of condition 3 (.69). A plausible reason is that the elapsing of time may have lessened the effect of exercise condition on retention of new vocabulary, and that, as long-term memory is concerned, a task with higher quality of cognitive processing might produce memory trace which was slightly stronger or nearly the same as a task with lower involvement load but with more chances of exposure to the word.

Scores based on the delayed post-test were submitted to repeated measures ANOVA, with vocabulary exercise condition as independent variable and score as dependent variable, to investigate whether there was an effect of vocabulary exercise condition on participants’ word retention. Mauchly’s test (W=.941, p>.05) indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been maintained. The values produced by the repeated measures ANOVA were therefore accurate and reliable. The results of ANOVA show that the retention of new vocabulary was not significantly affected by exercise conditions, $F(2, 260) = 1.53, p>.05$. This means that these three exercise conditions contributed no different effect on retention of new words when the delayed post-test was administered. Table 10 details the figures. From the results of the delayed post-test, the effect of the three exercise conditions appears to be less apparent in two weeks duration after the target words were encountered.

Table 10: ANOVA for effect of exercise condition on longer-term retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Type III SS</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>183.13</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion, Conclusions and Implications

The current study operationalized two variables, the quality of exposure and the quantity of exposure to new vocabulary, by exploring the effect on new vocabulary learning and
retention brought by multiple-choice question (MC) and original sentence writing (OSW) under three conditions, varying in task type but also in the number of tasks, namely: (1) one set of MC, (2) 3 sets of different MCs, and (3) one set of OSW.

Further, the study tests the prediction of Laufer and Hulstijn’s (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis in which the effectiveness of a task is determined by the involvement load it induced during incidental meetings. Table 11 summarizes the effect of the three exercise conditions on both initial learning and longer-term retention of new vocabulary.

The results indicated that the mean score of condition 2 (4.22) was significantly higher than that of condition 3 (2.25) and condition 1(1.67), and all three exercise conditions had significant effect on initial learning of new vocabulary, $F(2, 260) = 123.64, p < .001$. However, in terms of practicality, condition 2 appears to be more useful as the effect size involving condition 2 is large, reporting .95 (condition 1 versus condition 2) and .78 (condition 2 versus condition 3). This is because condition 2 provides more chances of exposure to new vocabulary compared with condition 1. Further, when time on task is the same, condition 2 is also more effective than condition 3, although condition 2 is claimed to have lower task-induced involvement when compared with condition 3 (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

Table 11. Effect of exercise condition by initial learning and longer-term retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Condition 1</th>
<th>Condition 2</th>
<th>Condition 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial learning</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The least effective</td>
<td>The most effective</td>
<td>The 2nd least effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer-term retention</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The least effective</td>
<td>The 2nd least effective</td>
<td>The most effective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears that tasks providing more chances of exposure to new vocabulary though with lower involvement load appear in this study to yield better initial learning results than tasks which claim to have higher involvement load. This is a significant finding. A key factor to explain the success of condition 2 here is multiple exposures. As seen in Folse’s (2006) study, what may be important is not what you do with the target word but rather how many times you meet it. The current study supports the notion that an important factor in L2 vocabulary acquisition is the number of exposure that a learner receives to a given word. The results from the delayed post-test indicated that long-term retention of a target word was not significantly affected by all three exercise conditions, $F(2, 260) = 1.53, p>.05$, with all
the mean scores of the three exercise conditions declined significantly in two weeks duration. The mean score of condition 1 dropped from 1.67 to .55 and from 4.22 to .64 in condition 2, and from 2.25 to .71 in condition 3. These results indicated that effect of the exercise conditions become less apparent and fades out through time. A reason why the mean scores dropped noticeably could be the nature of incidental vocabulary encounter, in which the retention of words becomes weaker with the elapse of time (Herman et al. 1987; Nagy& Herman & Anderson, 1985). In language teaching, this suggests that without enough review or recycling of the target words, as time passes by, learners would forget new words they have encountered (Folse 2006).

Although the results are not very significant in the delayed posttest, minor differences between scores of condition 2 (.64) and 3 (.71) are noted. These might suggest that tasks, though triggering lower involvement, with more exposures to the word (condition 2) might still produce retention similar to tasks with higher involvement and only single exposure (condition 3).

Comparing the quality and quantity of exposure to new words, a crucial question in understanding vocabulary learning is whether retention depends on what one does with the word or how often one meets it. In practice, a concern for language instructors is whether type of task or number of tasks is as important in which a new word appears when designing a vocabulary learning activity. In the current study, results showed that learners acquired nearly twice as many words in condition 2 (4.22) as they did in condition 3 (2.25) in the immediate post-test. The findings showed that learners were able to produce a higher number of meaningful sentences with the target words practiced in three different multiple-choice questions (condition 2) than with target words practiced in writing original sentences (condition 3), which requires more mental effort as claimed in the Involvement Load Hypothesis (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

This highlights a key factor to explain the effectiveness of condition 2 because it provides learners with more frequency of exposure to new words. This would suggest that what may be important is not so much task type but rather the number of tasks. Put differently, rather than what you do with the word, how often you meet it may be more important in terms of vocabulary learning. This supports the notion that repetition is considered to be one of the major factors involved in the learning of vocabulary (Dempster, 1987; Joe, 1995; Nation, 2001; Webb, 2007).

Implications for English language teaching
Based on the results of the current study, important implications for language teaching can be drawn. The findings showed that how many times learners meet with the target word may be more important than what they do with it in terms of vocabulary learning. This would suggest that a key factor in the effectiveness of vocabulary exercise is repetition, as found in other empirical studies (Folse, 2006; Nation, 2001; Webb, 2007). In the practice of language teaching, there are multiple ways to practice vocabulary in textbook or classroom activities, such as matching, true-false, multiple-choice, gap-filling, and original sentence wiring. A common myth is that the more elaborate an exercise looks, the more likely a learner is to retain a word that is practiced in that kind of activity. The findings of the current study indicate that frequency of exposure is a key in L2 vocabulary learning.

After learners have learned some new vocabulary, the teacher can do an activity such as asking simple questions at various cognitive levels about the word. For example, if students have studied *swing*, *peasant*, *banquet*, *cactus*, *monkey*, *gorilla* and *comet*, the teacher could ask the whole class these questions to see who can answer first: (a) Which three words are related to animals? (b) Which word is a verb that means to move freely while hanging? (c) What is a plant commonly found in the desert? (d) What is the longest word? This kind of activity takes little teacher preparation. It is interesting and also effective because it forces learners to retrieve the word form or its meaning multiple times.

Regarding the findings of the poor retention results over two weeks, the need for follow-up tasks after the MC/OSW initial tasks must be provided to improve the retention results. According to Nation (2001), research has been conducted on the importance of word repetition to improve the learning and retention of new words. Dempster (1987) has found that spaced repetition (i.e. the spreading out of repetitions of a word) is more effective to the learning of vocabulary than massed repetition (i.e. the concentration of repetitions of a word). Spaced repetition can be described as giving the same amount of attention to a word but spreading it over a longer period of time. To apply spaced repetition in vocabulary teaching, for example, a word might be studied for two minutes now, another two minutes ten minutes later, one minute the next day, and finally one minute a week later. The total study time of the word is only six minutes but the repetitions are spread across a week’s time. Following this line of thought, the idea is that the teacher could make an effort to incorporate new vocabulary or review vocabulary in every lesson.
References


Title

A Contrastive Analysis of English and Persian Politeness Principles Used by Iranian Female language learners

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Abstract

During the last years acquiring politeness strategies as part of learning L2 pragmatics have attracted a lot of attention in the second language acquisition. Since 1970s politeness has been one of the main fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics. The present study intends to probe into English and Persian politeness principles used in a variety of situations by Iranian female language learners and carry out a comparative study to find out about the similarities and discrepancies between the way they establish and maintain their social relationships with politeness strategies. First, in a pilot study a pre-designed Persian questionnaire and its English version based on Van Ek's (1976) six language functions were given to a sample of 18 students randomly. Then in order to find the differences that may exist between Iranian females' native language and second language, the researchers selected 18 female EFL learners as participants of the present study. A Persian questionnaire including different situations was answered by 18 female EFL learners of Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch. After two
weeks, in order to control L1 transfer and practice effect, the researcher distributed
the English version to the same participants in order to compare their responses in
English with Persian questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that Iranian
females’ tendency to choose polite responses in Persian prompts them to choose
similar polite utterances in English.

**Keywords:** Contrastive analysis, EFL learners, Politeness principles, Speech acts

1. **Introduction**

Development and success of theories of second language acquisition (SLA) happened to a
large extent on the accuracy of definitions given to the language (Gass & Schachter, 1993).
Wolfson (1983, as cited in Savic, 2012) stated that if an individual wants to learn a language,
he /she must, in addition to grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, learn the rules of
speaking. These rules are shared by the speakers of the language and govern their spoken
behavior. Wolfson (1983, as cited in Savic, 2012) maintained that second language learners
might fail to communicate effectively, even when they have an excellent grammatical and
lexical command of the target language. In Hymes' (1972, as cited in Savic, 2012)
communicative competence, competence (seen as the overall underlying linguistic
knowledge and ability) includes concepts of 'appropriateness' and 'acceptability'. One of the
important components of communicative competence into which a lot of research has been
done is 'rules of politeness'. Politeness generally involves taking into account of others'
feelings. According to Mills (2003), "politeness is the expression of the speaker's intention to
mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward another" (p.6). Different
speech communities emphasize different functions and express particular functions
differently. According to Eslami- Rasekh, Tavakoli, & Abdolreza (2010), Iranian
EFL students are notorious of being able to come up with grammatically correct sentences,
but failing to communicate in real situations. It has also been observed that even the
advanced learners tend to transfer the Persian functions and norms into English. This may
result in misunderstanding on the part of their interlocutors. McCormick (1994) state that
linguistic choices appropriate in one language may not be appropriate in another language,
and this may result in breakdowns in real communication. Accordingly, despite many
criticisms, contrastive analysis as a basic branch of linguistics is a relatively sound basis. So,
as contrastive analysis of various languages/cultures have revealed a number of important
findings, the researchers intended to investigate how Iranian female language learners
employ English and Persian politeness principles in various situations. What is important to point out is that politeness is interesting from contrastive analysis point of view, since it involves communication regarding social factors of two different cultures. Karatepe (1998, as cited in Kilickaya, 2010) suggests that even high proficiency EFL learners of English have difficulty in performing some speech acts appropriately.

2. Review of the Related Literature

The concept of communicative competence is considered to be the inseparable element in any social life whose great importance is not hidden for anyone in his/her life. According to Rickheit, Strohner, and Vorweg (2008), the goals of everyday life are achieved by people's ability in doing Communicative competence. In the 1970s, Habermas (1970) and Hymes (1972) argued that Chomsky's concept could not be manifested in real-life communication. According to Hymes (1972), communicative competence includes the concept of grammatically as well as the concept of appropriateness. In other words, in order to an utterance to be communicatively acceptable, it must be both linguistically and grammatically correct, and socially appropriate.

Since 1970s, politeness has been one of the main fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics. According to Watts (2005 as cited in Savic, 2012), politeness is an object of knowledge and not people's experiences. Watts, Ide, and Elich (2005) claimed that, "politeness is a dynamic concept, always open to adaptation and change in any group, in any age, and, indeed, at any moment of time. It is not a socio- anthropological given which can simply be applied to the analysis of social interaction, but actually arises out of that interaction" (p.11). A large number of theoretical and empirical books and articles concerning politeness theories have been published in the last decades. Lakoff's (1990, as cited in Hayashi, 1996) definition of politeness is "a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange" (p.34). According to Leech (1983), Using indirect requests and indirect illocutions increases the degree of politeness because of the degree of optionality. Leech (1983) studied two types of rhetoric: interpersonal (politeness principles and Grice's cooperative principles) and textual rhetoric. He defined politeness principle as follows: "minimize (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs or maximize (other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs" (p.81).
Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed the concept of politeness in 1978 and then revised it in 1987. Face and Rationality have been focused in their theory. Face is defined as "a public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (Brown & Levinson 1987, p.61) that is universal and has been divided into negative face (i.e. a want of freedom) and positive face (i.e. a want of approval and appreciation). In their notion, rationality is "the application of a specific mode of reasoning which guarantees inferences from ends or goals to means that will satisfy those ends" (p.64). Brown and Levinson argue that that many speech acts such as requests, offers, disagreement and compliments, are intrinsically threatening to face. Speech acts are realized through three main strategies: positive politeness (which enhance the addressee's positive force and decrease the distance between interlocutors), negative politeness (which enhance the addressee's freedom of action or freedom from imposition and highlight social distance), and off-record politeness (which enhances the addressee's ability of inferring the intended meaning) (Behnam & Niroomand, 2011).

According to Austin (1962), speech acts included both propositional meaning and illocutionary meaning. In propositional meaning, certain words and grammatical rules are important in understanding an utterance. While illocutionary meaning is the intention of utterance. Searle, Kiefer and Bierwisch (1980) distinguished between direct (the speaker says what he means) and indirect speech acts (the speaker says something, but he means something else).

Van Ek (1976) has proposed language functions as follows:
1. Imparting and seeking factual information which includes: identifying, reporting (such as describing and narrating), correcting, and asking.
2. Expressing and finding out intellectual attitudes, such as: expressing agreement and disagreement, inquiring about agreement or disagreement, denying something, accepting an offer or invitation, declining an offer or invitation, inquiring whether offer or invitation is accepted or declined, offering to do something, stating whether one knows or does not know something or someone and etc.
3. Expressing and finding out emotional attitudes, such as: expressing pleasure, liking; expressing displeasure, dislike; inquiring about pleasure, liking, displeasure, dislike; expressing interest or lack of interest; inquiring about interest or lack of interest; expressing surprise; expressing hope; expressing satisfaction, and etc.
4. Expressing and finding out moral attitudes, such as: apologizing, granting forgiveness, expressing approval, expressing disapproval, inquiring about approval or disapproval, expressing appreciation, expressing regret, expressing indifference.

5. Getting things done, such as: suggesting a course of action, requesting others to do something, invite others to do something, advising others to do something, warning others to take care or to refrain from doing something, instructing or directing others to do something, offering assistance, requesting assistance.

6. Socializing, such as: to greet people, when meeting people, when introducing people and when being introduced, when taking leave, to attract attention, to propose a toast, to congratulate, when beginning a meal (pp.76-77).

A large number of studies have been undertaken on language in order to identify the differences of females' speech styles. One of the major differences is linguistic politeness. According to Holmes (1995), females use polite speech. She further adds that females use positive politeness and they are more considerate listeners. In other words, they less interrupt others' speech. According to McCormick (1994), unlike males, females try to maintain conversation by using fillers such as *mhm, yeah* and asking question.

Every society has its own norm, position, and cultural context, i.e., what is supposed appropriate for linguistic behavior of working class English woman is different from what is seemed appropriate for the middle class Chinese woman (Mills, 2003). In Persian, words and expressions such as *eva, naz, che lus, xoda margam bede,* are female-used ones.

Gordon (1997) in her study of New Zealand mentioned "that women used higher prestige forms because of the association of sexual immorality with lower-class women" (p.48). So, women's speech is more merely adjusted to prestige dialect than men. Trudgill (1972) adds that women are more mindful of the social importance of linguistic variables. Because social status of women is less secure than men. Although females cannot be evaluated socially by their profession, strength, and capability, they consider their situation for instance, where, when, to whom, for what, with what purpose, in what mental and emotional conditions they are.

Many studies have done a contrastive analysis of the use of politeness principles in different languages. Guodong and Jing (2005), for example, in "a contrastive study on disagreement strategies for politeness between American English and Mandarin Chinese" examined how college students of American English and Mandarin Chinese have disagreed with a higher status, peers, and a lower status. So the participants responded to a DCT involving five situations. The findings revealed that Chinese have used more address forms
than American do when speaking to a person of higher status. Speaking to a peer, both American and Chinese students use less politeness strategies. Positive correlation was found between the rates of disagreement and the change of the social distance for the Chinese students while negative correlation for the American students. When disagreeing with the sister, the Chinese male has used the least politeness strategies while the Chinese female has used the most politeness strategies. Female students behave more sensitive to politeness and use more politeness strategies than male subjects do.

Ahmadian and Dastjerdi (2010) investigated a comparative study of perception of politeness of American Reprimands (a significant speech act in the daily communication) by Iranian EFL learners and Americans. This study represented the result of an exploratory empirical study into the perception of reprimand speech act in American English and Iranian culture. As an initial step, open role-play situations were performed by 10 Americans in order to elicit reprimands and responses to reprimands in four different situations. Second, politeness rating questionnaire constructed based on the role plays was given to 25 Americans and 35 Iranian EFL learners to measure the perceived politeness of reprimands. Subject's perception of politeness was compared according to their native language. The study suggested that there are indeed some differences between the two cultures regarding the politeness perception. The findings indicated that learners should be taught the appropriate use of pragmatic reprimand proficiency.

Jalilifar (2009) in his article investigated a cross-sectional study into the request strategies used by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language and Australian native speakers of English. The sample involved 96 BA and MA Persian students and 10 native speakers of English. A DCT was used to generate data related to the request strategies used by each group. Selection of request situations in Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was based on two social factors of relative power and social distance. Although results revealed pragmatic development, particularly in the movement from direct to conventionally indirect strategies on the part of EFL learners, learners with higher proficiency displayed overuse of indirect type of requesting; whereas the native group was characterized by the more balanced use of this strategy. The lower proficiency learners, on the other hand, overused the most direct strategy type. In terms of the influence of the social variables, the findings of this research revealed that as far as social power is concerned, EFL learners display closer performance to native speakers. But considering social distance, it seems that Iranian EFL learners have not acquired sufficient sociopragmatic knowledge to display proper social behavior.
Smith (1992) in the article "politeness and directives in the speech of Japanese women" examined the linguistic practices of Japanese men and women giving directions and explained gender differences in terms of both a general theory of politeness as well as the culturally specific strategies for encoding politeness and authority in Japanese.

It seems that one phenomenon which appears in EFL/ESL atmospheres is the interference of the mother-tongue into the target language. So the present study tries to answer the following question:
Is there any difference between Iranian female learners' use of politeness principles in Persian and English?

3. Methodology
3.1. Participants
At the onset of this research project, in a pilot study, the researchers distributed the English as well as the Persian questionnaire among 18 MA English language students who were similar to the main participants of the study. Then based on their answers the reliability of the questionnaires was calculated. Then as the main participants another 18 female MA English language students were selected randomly from a pool of 25 students. They were studying English language teaching at Tabriz branch of Islamic Azad University. They came from a bilingual background (Turkish and Kurdish). They were between the age range of 24-30.

3.2. Instrumentation
To collect the necessary data, the researchers designed the Persian questionnaire and English questionnaire, each of them included 47 multiple choice questions based on six language functions of Van Ek (1976). They were piloted, and the unclear questions were removed, then the reliability estimate of both questionnaires was calculated and showed a high value.

3.3. Design
The present study required a descriptive design. There was no manipulation of treatment. It was a survey based research. In order to investigate the differences between Iranian female EFL learners' use of politeness principles in English and Persian, the researchers gave participants two questionnaires, one in Persian and another in English. Each questionnaire consisted of 45 situations.

3.4. Data Collection Procedures
The present study was conducted in three stages:
In the first phase, a questionnaire including 47 multiple-choice questions in Persian was developed by the researcher. The present questionnaire included different situations in which all the participants were asked to choose one of the four responses. Responses were arranged in more polite, polite, less polite, and impolite ones. The questionnaires were piloted and based on the participants’ responses, two of the questions (32, 47) were excluded in the main study. Then their reliability was calculated. The reliability index of Persian questionnaire was 0.77 and for the English questionnaire it was equal to 0.83. So the questions were highly reliable.

In the second stage, the modified Persian questionnaire including 45 situations was given to the main participants, 18 females (MA students of English Language Teaching of Islamic Azad University, Tabriz Branch in the fall semester of the academic year 2012/2013).

In the last stage, the English version of the Persian questionnaire was given to the same participants after two weeks in order to control L1 transfer and practice effect (Farhady, Ja'farpur, & Birjandi, 2006). It is necessary to mention that participants were non-native speakers of Persian. Their first languages were Azari and in some cases Kurdish.

3.5. Data Analysis

The participants' responses were analyzed in three steps:

In the first stage, the researchers designed a Persian questionnaire and its English version, the numerical responses of the subjects were calculated. Students, who marked more polite responses, got 4. Those who chose polite responses received 3. The less polite responses were given 2 and impolite ones received 1.

In the second stage, the researchers first found the frequency of females' responses in Persian questionnaire and applied descriptive statistics. Then they calculated the frequency of females' responses in English questionnaire.

In the last stage, the responses to both Persian and English questionnaires of females were analyzed and paired-sample t-test was implemented.

4. Results

Two multiple-choice questionnaires were given to the students in order to obtain their total score. Table 4.1 shows individual female's scores in each language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>The Row Scores of Females in Persian and English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To answer the research question, and find out if there is any difference between Iranian female EFL learners' use of politeness principles in Persian and English, the researchers ran the following analyses.

First, the frequency and percentage of females' responses in Persian questionnaire was calculated as follows.

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage of Females' Responses in Persian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more polite</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As indicated in Table 2, Iranian female EFL learners displayed a high frequency (77.8%) of more polite responses in Persian. Also the results showed that no one had tendency to choose less polite or impolite responses. Then, the frequency and percentage of females' responses in English questionnaire were computed as follows.

**Table 3** Frequency and Percentage of Females’ Responses in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polite</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more polite</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of females' politeness principles in Table 3, showed a high frequency (88.9%) of more polite responses in English. After that, females' politeness principles were compared in Persian and English and mean and standard deviation were obtained.

**Table 4** Mean and Std. Deviation of Females in Persian and English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 4 shows, females' mean in Persian is equal to 3.77 and in English is equal to 3.88. So, there are differences between females' responses in Persian and English. In order to determine whether the difference is meaningful or not, the researcher run a paired sample t-test of females' responses in Persian and English which is shown in Table 5 below.

**Table 5** Paired Samples Test of Females in Persian and English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Paired Differences</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>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.34 to .12</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As shown in Table 5 the significant value, 0.33 is not less than or equal to 0.05. Therefore, females' discrepancies in Persian and English are not significant and there is not a statistically significant difference between the two languages of Persian and English.

5. Discussion

This part homes in on providing discussion and theoretical foundations for the question raised in the previous section in the light of the results presented above. The main purpose of this study was to probe into English and Persian politeness principles used in a variety of situations by Iranian female language learners and carry out a comparative study to find out about the similarities and discrepancies between the way they establish and maintain their social relationships with politeness strategies.

In order to validate the results gained in the study, we drew on the transfer theory which provides strong evidence for carrying over of politeness principles one uses in particular situations from one language to another. The results of this study are consistent with transfer theory since the results obviously indicate that Iranian female language learners tend to transfer their politeness intentions, to a considerable degree, into English. In other words, the tendency to choose polite responses in Persian prompts them to choose similar polite utterances in English as there is no sizeable difference between the frequency and percentage of responses as indicated in tables above. What is more, regardless of the language, female learners opt for more polite responses. What needs to be taken into consideration regarding the findings of this study is the employment of questionnaires as the instrument for the process of data collection. Providing one with ample time, the questionnaires enabled the targeted people to deliberate over their responses to elaborately choose polite responses whereas they could have demonstrated different reactions if they had encountered real situations and as a consequence the study would have revealed different results.

The results of Karunatillake and Sussendirajah (1975), studying Sinalese culture, who dealt fully with the use of address forms among Buddhist clergy are at variance with those of the present study since they documented the use of different strategies to express politeness to people of different religious status, while as this study indicated, Iranian female language learners exhibit similar polite behavior both in Persian and English regardless of the situation and their interlocutors.

Ide (1992) who investigated gender and politeness in the Japanese context in his article "gender and function of language use" examined the phenomenon of politer speech among
Japanese women than among Japanese men which is to some extent in line with the findings of this study which demonstrate that women’s speech comprise a higher degree of politeness and formality in comparison to that of men, even though this difference did not reach significant level.

6. Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this research showed that both in Persian and English, females choose more polite responses. Furthermore the research shows that Iranian female language learners attempt to transfer their intent into English. It means that if they choose very polite responses to different situations in Persian, they are also to choose the same very polite utterances in English. In terms of the question raised in this study, the frequency and percentage of the females’ responses in Persian in table 2 indicate that not a single person opted for less polite and impolite responses and the ones, who chose more polite responses, by far, outnumber the rest who tended to choose polite ones. The same trend follows in the frequency and percentage of the females’ responses in English according to the statistics in Table 4.3. That is, Iranian female language learners exhibit the tendency to transfer their politeness intentions from Persian into English in the light of the marginal difference between the results in each case.

The findings of this study have implications for language teachers and syllabus designers. This study has also an implication for material preparation for Iranian learners of English. Also it would be effective if teachers and textbook writers prepare language learners with more realistic and authentic forms in English. In addition the fact that females tend to use more polite forms, must be taken into account both in the class situations and in the materials prepared for them.

References


Kihekaya, F. (2010). The pragmatic knowledge of Turkish EFL students in using certain request strategies. 9(1), 185- 201.


فرزند که در موقعیتی که زیر قرار گرفته اید، لطفاً نخستین کلام خود را از بین گویند تا داده شده انتخاب کنید.

در محل کار یکی از همکاران مرتکب خطای خطا شده. عکس العمل شما:

1. (اور 10 سال از شما بزرگتر) 2. (در مقابل سایر همکاران، مخاطی عریان آن نسبت به رییس گویید) 3. (پنهانی در این مورد با رییست جنرفت می رنگند) 4. (به یکی از همکاران چه را بپردازد برای رییس گوید)

در خواص درک یکی از هم اتفاق تان شب ها موقع خواب در صورت می کنند. عکس العمل شما:

1. (لطفاً رعایت حال دیگران را هم بکن) 2. (مشه بعد از خوابیدن من صرفاً نکن) 3. (بلندی که در را نشان به اعتراف به هم می کوبید) 4. (با عصبانیت نسول خوابیدن می روید)

شاغرتان درس نمی خواند، به این خواهید گفت:

1. مشکلت چیه؟ 2. از این به بعد نخوندی، نیا کلاس. 3. می خواهی صفر بگیری؟ 4. چه میشه اخه نمی خونی؟

دوستتان میگوید: این روزها هزینه زندگی خیلی زیاده. به این خواهید گفت:

1. همینطوره! 2. به‌ایدی به گاری وام خودمون دست و یا کنیم. 3. با حاش ما که فرقو کنم که! 4. به جون تو از ما بیل مالی خبر داشتينما نمی دونینم!

برای تبریک به دوستتان که از امتحان دکترا قبول شده، خواهید گفت:

1. تبریک میگم، واقعا لیاقتی را داشتی. 2. خیلی خوشحال شدم خیر قولی ات را شنیدم!
3. همیشه در حال پیشرفت و ترقی!
4. تو چه در انتظار خودی؟ چطوری قبول شدی؟
7. پدرتان برای امروز چگونه است؟ چگونه گفتند بوده شما به حسابش بوده و وارزی کنید و لی فراموش کرده اید. بنابراین خواهید گفت:
1. معطرت می خواند، فراموش کردم!
2. کاری برای پیش از این رفته و دقیقا بپایه!
3. دیگر یک کار نمیشه!
4. وای که یک چند رفت!
8. همسران خود تولدتی بلند رفت و پرگشته بفرسته، تهیه کرده، اولین احساس شما بعد از دیدن هدیه:
1. غیر ممکن!
2. چقدر خطرات انگیز خواهید بود!
3. این بهترین همیشه تولد!
4. منونی (وظیفه اش را انجام داده).
9. به عنوان معلم از شاگردانش که خواهید گفت، دیگر به کار برام پیش اموما یادم رفته، دوباره بخواند. بنابراین خواهید گفت (آور زمین شما):
جوانتر و همجنس شما (به یاد)
میشه لطفا یکبار دیگر تلفظ کنید؟
1. لطفا یکبار دیگر تلفظ کن!
2. دوباره تلفظ کن.
3. تلفظات اقتصادیه!
4. - در انتظار خودی چگونه خواهید گفت (آور همسر و همجنس شما (به یاد):
1. ببخشید میشه باید رو پایین بکشی؟
2. لطفا باید رو پایین بکش.
3. باید این باید رو که نمیشه!
4. چچین نمی گوشی و شهشه را پایین من کنید.
10. - آن که دوست دارد یک دارد بخشه را باید رو یک بکشند (آور همسر و همجنس شما (به یاد):
1. ام، باید رو!
2. باید رو...
3. خوشه رو گرفته!
4. چقدر... می پذیری!
11. - چه باید بگم من... دوست ندارم!
12. - بزرگترین آرزوهای زندگیتان:
1. قبولی در دکتر
2. ازدواج موفق
3. خوش هنی
4. داشتن مالی مثل بالا.
13. - پدرتان قول خرید مالی به عنوان کادوی عروسی شما داده بود، ولی به دلیل برخی مشکلات مالی قادر به خرید آن نیست؛ عكس العمل شما:
1. کاری به که شد!
2. خوب به همه ای دست اومد!

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لعنتبهایی شانس!

به من رضایت نداره، قول داده باید بخره!

در یک عروسی، به خدمتکار گفته اید که آب بیاورد ولی فراموش کرده، خواهد گفت:

1. ببخشید میشه یک لحظه تشریف بیار؟
2. اقای خانم، آن آب چطور نیست؟
3. اقای خانم پس این آب ما چی شد؟
4. اقای خانم خیلی وقت منتظریم!

16. خیلی گرسنه هستید در یک مهمانی رسمی، سر میز شام قرار گرفته اید. بنابراین:

1. منتظریم مناسبی بازیگری تعارف کنند و بعد شروع به خوردن می کنند.
2. طوری رفتاری که مناسبی به علیکه رسیده، من بازیگری تعارف گردد، بین آنها شروع نماید.
3. بدون تعارف، شروع به خوردن می کنند.

17. به یک چشمه عروسی که در کشتی برگزار میشود دعوت شده اید. آنها گفتند:

1. من عاشق دریا می‌شوم.
2. از خوشحالی نمی‌برم، چیکار کنم!
3. عروسی مناقصه‌ای خواهند بود.
4. مردم چقدر بیکارند!

18. به عنوان استاد، پایان نامه یکی از دانشجویان را که عالی کار کرده می‌خوانید. به او گفته‌اند:

1. عالیه!
2. یکی از این چهارشیره!
3. مطمئناً مقاله‌تان به مجله‌ای معتبری می‌رسد.
4. حتماً خودتون بر این انجام داشته‌اش، آماده‌ایم کنید.

19. تلفن خانه زنگ می‌زد. شما مشغول انجام دادن کارهای هستید و نمیتوانید پاسخ بدهید. بنابراین خطاب به افراد خانه خواهید گفت:

1. طلایا یکی به تلفن جواب بده.
2. به نفر نیست باید اگر بده.
3. تلفن خودش شکست!
4. مگه نمی‌شود با عصبانیت؟

20. فاصله‌ای که پرسیدن از کامپیوتر پاک شده، به افراد خانه خواهید گفت:

1. معاصرت می‌خواهیم.
2. باید حواسمو بیشرت جمع می‌کردیم!
21. خواهان درباره ی مهمانی بزرگ و مفصلی که دختر عمه تان (که زیاد باهم صمیمی نیستید) ترتیب داده بود او نتوانسته بود شرکت کند، می پرسد. پاسخ شما:
1. جای خالی! خوب بود.
2. خیلی خوش گشت!
3. یا... بدن نیو!
4. همین хотя که نیومند!

22. به مدی یک ماه است که کارمندتان وظایف خود را به درستی انجام نمی دهد. عکس العمل شما به عنوان رئیس:
1. چه مشکلی دارید که وظایفان را به درستی انجام نمی دهید؟
2. این نشانه بی اعتنایی و بی مسئولیت شماست!
3. در صورت تکرار، اخراج می شوید.
4. من اینجا پول منتادار به کسی بدهم!

23. به عنوان پدر/ مادر خانواده، به فرزندتان که نمره کم گرفته، می گوید:
1. عزیزم، باید بیشتر سعی میکردی!
2. دختری/ زنی باز کنی!
3. من شب و روز کار میکنم که تو با خیال آسوده درس بخونی. این هم نتیجه اش!
4. مگه از بچه های دیگری که درس نمی خونند؟

24. همسایه دیور به دیوارتان به برادرتان تهمت دزدی می زند. پاسخ شما:
1. احترام خودتونو نگه دارین
2. تهمت ناروا نزنید
3. حرف دهنتو بفهم
4. دزد خودتی

25. دریک اتوبوس هستند و به عنوان گرمی هوا از فرد کناری خود می خواهند که پنجره را باز کند. بعضی از خواهید گفت: (اواز
شما 10 سال جوانتر و همجنس شما می باشند)
1. پاشو پنجره رو باز کن (ینو نمایی)
2. پاشو پنجره رو باز کن (ینو نن)
3. اقاق/ خانم پنجره رو باز کن.
4. عزیزم، ممکنه پنجره رو باز کنی؟

26. پسر/خانم عمه همسرتان که سالی یکبار هم سراغی از شما می گردد، با شما تماس می گیرد. پاسخ شما:
1. راه گم کردی؟
2. چه عجب بادی از ما کردی؟(با کنایه)
3. باز کارت جایی گیره؟
4. (تلفن را قطع می کنید).

27. به دلیل مشغله کاری شما، همکلاسیتان کارهای اداری شما را انجام داده. اولین حرف شما:
1. با تمام وجود سپاسگزارم.
2. خجالت زده ام کردین.
3. نمی دونم چطور تشکر کنم.
4. خیلی ممنون.

28- دو روز مانده به امتحان پایان ترم، به عروسو یکی از اقوام نزدیک دعوت شده اید. پاسخ شما:
1. شرمنده، دیسک کم دارم.
2. بی اعتنا به او رد می‌شوید.
3. از یکه نفر دیگه کمک خواهم کرد.
4. مگه من نوکرت؟!

29. در خیابان فرد جوانی که همجنس شما می‌باشد، از شما می‌خواهید در حمل کردن بسته‌گی به داخل خانه اش به او کمک کنید. شما نیستیم که خواهید کمک کنید. به او خواهید گفت:
1. شرمنده، دیسک کم دارم.
2. بی اعتنا به او رد می‌شوید.
3. از یکه نفر دیگه کمک خواهم کرد.

30. به عنوان شاگرد درسخوان و زرنگ، در یکی از درس‌ها نمره پایینی گرفته‌اید. پاسخ شما به اعتراض استاد:
1. نیترم، نمی‌توانم به تقصیر ما نبود.

31. دوست دوران دانشگاه خود را بعد از مدت‌ها می‌بینید. اولین بیان شما:
1. سلام، خیلی چاکرم!
2. سلام، الهی فدات شم!
3. خیلی خوشحال شدم!

32. دختر/پسر خاله شما که وضع مالی خوبی دارد مدام زندگی کارمندی شما را تحقیر می‌کند. پاسخ شما:
1. من به نمی‌خوانم، با او گفتم، من که قانع ام.
2. راضی ام به رضایت خدا!
3. من به راضی آم، شما راه نیافتیم!
4. جیکار کنم، از دیگر مردم برم بالا!

33- دوستان یکی که وارد پردازش بزرگ هر که به آنها توجه نمی‌کند، یکی از شما می‌خواهید گفت:
1. فکر نمی‌کنی بعداً فرصت با آنها به دست بردون رو اینجا نمی‌گوشی؟
2. به عمر آنها مواظب تن بودن، حالا نوبت توست!
3. باید بیشتر هوا را به ویران داشته باشی!
4. بعدا حسرت این روزهارو می‌خوری!

34. به عنوان رئیس یکی از داده‌ها واقعی صبح وارد اتاقتان می‌شود، به کارمندان خواهید گفت:
1. سلام، صبح همگی بخیر!
2. سلام داده و پشت میزانی می‌شینید.
3. منتظر می‌مانید اما به شما سلام کنند.
4. جواب سلام اناها با اکرانه می‌دهید.
35- به‌عنوان پرستار در بیمارستان، به دو آقای میانسال که با صدای بلند در راه‌های حرف‌های زند، خواهید گفت:
1. آقایان لطفاً سکوت را رعایت کنید.
2. دوستان عزیز لطفاً اطلاع مراوعت کنید.
3. چرا مراوعت نمی‌کنید؟
4. حرف نزنید!
36- بعد از مدت‌ها دوست‌های متشنج را که به تازگی ازدواج کردند، در خیابان می‌بینید. به او خواهید گفت:
1. پارسال دوست، امضا اشنای!
2. نیاز به نیاز!
3. چقدر به همدمی می‌خواهید!
4. کجایی، دیگر از دوستان خبر نمی‌گیرید؟(با کنایه)
37- از هم‌انگلیزی تان می‌خواهید به سر راه، برای شما... بخرد. خواهید گفت:
1. عزیزم، می‌شته لطف کنی سر راهت برام... بخری؟
2. لطفاً برام... می‌خواری؟
3. برگشتی برام... می‌خواری؟
4. برام... بخر اومندی.
38- در یک میهمانی، می‌بانی از شخصیت شما بسیار تحسین می‌کند. پاسخ شما:
1. خوبی از خودتان است.
2. ما که قابل نیستیم.
3. مرسی.
4. از لطف شما سپاسگزارم.
39- در خیابان عابری پای شما را لگد می‌کند. به او خواهید گفت:
1. ببخشید که پایم رفت زیر پایتان!
2. مواظب باش آقا/خانم.
3. مهم نیست!
4. بی خیال!
40- درحال تست کنکور هستید که به داشته‌ای نزدیک است، سرویس قرار دارد. وی یک ساعت دیگر حاضر در صندوق شما: اولین حرف شما:
1. ساعت خواب!
2. خوب کاشتی مارو!
3. دیگر داشته‌ای نبود.
4. چقدر به موقع امیدی؟(با کنایه)
41- روز قبل از کنکور در حال تست زدن هستید که به داشته‌ای نزدیک است، سرویس قرار دارد. وی یک ساعت دیگر حاضر در صندوق شما: اولین حرف شما:
1. به چه ها تروخ خدا سرویس‌ها نکنید.
2. میشه آروم تو بزری کنید؟
3. به چه ها یک خورده آروم تو.
4. میریم یا بیا تیم‌تان چا بیارم؟
42. با دوستان خود به کوهی رفته اید که می‌توانید خواندن کنید. خواهد گفت:
1. چقدر نازه!
2. به به چه رنگی!
3. عجب باحاله!
4. آدم فک می‌کنه!

43. همکاران را به یک جشن تولد در منزل خود دعوت کردند. برای بازدید کردن چای و کیک به آنها خواهد گفت: (آنها همسن و هم جنس شما می‌باشند)
1. بیابن چای بخوریم.
2. بفرماشیدی چای میل کنید.
3. بفرماشید.
4. بفرما جایی.

44. کارمند یک اداره هستید. همکاران به خاطر سهل انگاری شما در انجام کار، به مق مهم شما فریاد می‌کنند. به او خواهد گفت:
1. لطفا موذب باشید.
2. احترام خودت را نگه دار.
3. چه خبره هان؟
4. رفتارتون اصلا درست نیست.

45. برای خرید نان در صف نانوایی ایستاده اید. فردی بدون توجه به دیگران می‌خواهد بدون نوبت نان تهیه کند. به او خواهد گفت:
1. لطفا صف را رعایت کنید.
2. صفه ها چرا تو صف نمی‌ایستی؟
3. جو تو صف نمی‌ایستی؟
4. برو تو صف بین.

46. با دوستان خود به باغی رفته اید. ناگهان می‌خواهید بگویید. برای نشان دادن احساس خوایده گفت:
1. خنده‌ی خوشبیوندی ساخته.
2. آدم رو مست می‌کنید.
3. آدم حال می‌کنی.
4. چه عطری!

47. دوستان سردرد شدیدی دارند. به او خواهد گفت:
1. حتما شنب شو یک خوابید!
2. شاید سرما خورد.
3. حتما جایی پربوسودا بودی!
4. از چیزی ناراحتی؟
Appendix II

English questionnaire

Imagine yourself in the following situations. What would be your reaction in each situation?

1- A colleague of yours has committed an error at work. What would be your reaction: (He/ she is 10 years older than you and of the opposite sex)
   1. You would bring it to your boss's attention in front of other colleagues.
   2. You would talk to your boss about it in private.
   3. You wouldn't interfere.
   4. You would break the news to the colleague who has a good relationship with your boss.

2- One of your roommates keeps banging around late at night. Your reaction:
   1. Please be more considerate!
   2. Could you stop making noise after I go to the bed!
   3. You would slam the door shut.
   4. In a fury, you would take the matter up with the dormitory superintendent.

3- Your student's performance is not satisfactory. How would you treat him/her?
   1. What's your problem?
   2. If you don't smarten up your acts, you will have to drop out.
   3. I bet you don't want to flunk out. (roughly)
   4. What the hell is wrong with you?

4- Your friend says "the cost of living is too high these days". What would you say to him/her?
   1. Yeah, I see what you mean!
   2. We make a good living. We can't complain.
   3. We should be looking for another way to make a living.
   4. How come you're aware of financial problems!

5- What would you do to draw attention to yourself in a workplace where you don't get noticed at all?
   1. You would be wearing stylish and expensive clothes.
   2. You would attract their attention by ingratiating yourself with anyone at work.
   3. You would carry on regardless.
   4. You wouldn't care whatsoever.

6- Your friend has been accepted in PhD. What would you say to him/her?
   1. Congratulations, you really deserve it.
   2. Glad to hear that!
   3. Always making headway!
   4. I wonder how you got into PhD without studying!

7- Your father's cheque bounced because you forgot to deposit money into his account. How would you apologize?
   1. I'm sorry, I forgot!
2. Something happened to me which really took my mind off it!
3. It won't happen again
4. It totally slipped my mind!

8- Your husband/wife has booked two round-trip tickets to France. Your reaction:
   1. That's impossible!
   2. That will undoubtedly be the most memorable event of my life!
   3. This is doubtless the best surprise in my entire life.
   4. Thanks (you were supposed to do so).

9- As a teacher, how would you want your student to pronounce the word he/she has just mispronounced? (Your student is younger than you and of the same sex)
   1. Would you please pronounce it again?
   2. Please pronounce it again.
   3. Pronounce the word again.
   4. Your pronunciation is awful!

10- How would you ask someone sitting beside you on a bus to open the window? (He/she is the same sex and age)
   1. Excuse me, could you open the window?
   2. Please open the window!
   3. Don't you think the wind is bothering you?
   4. You would open the window yourself.

11- Your mom has cooked something you don't like at all. Your reaction:
   1. Oh, no. Not again!
   2. Yuck, the whole house smells…..!
   3. I wonder why you insist on cooking…… very often!
   4. Shall I remind you every time that I hate…..!

12- What is your greatest/dearest wish?
   1. Getting starting into PhD.
   2. A successful marriage.
   3. Happiness.
   4. Buying a prestigious car.

13- Due to financial problems, your father didn't manage to buy you the car he had already promised to you as a wedding present. What would be your reaction?
   1. There's nothing to do about it!
   2. He fell back on his old excuse again.
   3. What rotten luck!
   4. He can't go back on his word!
14- You have asked for a glass of water at a wedding but the servant has forgotten to bring it to you. What would you say to him?
   1. Excuse me, could you come over here?
   2. Excuse me, you seem to be really busy tonight!
   3. Hey guy, where is my water?
   4. What happened to my water?

15- You have just received an invitation from a friend who lives in Canada but you have to refuse his/her invitation due to financial problems. How would you turn it down?
   1. I'd really like to come but I can't afford it yet.
   2. Thanks for your invitation, but I'm afraid I can't make it.
   3. Traveling abroad is just a waste of money.
   4. You seem to be enjoying humiliating me.

16- You have been invited to a dinner party and you are really hungry, so:
   1. You would wait for the host to serve the food to you.
   2. You would act as if you're not very hungry.
   3. You would start eating before the host wants you to help yourself.
   4. You would wolf down your dinner as soon as it arrives.

17- You've been invited to a wedding held on a ship. Your reaction:
   1. I'm a sea maniac!
   2. I'm looking forward to it!
   3. That will be a different one!
   4. Some people must be out of their senses.

18- As a university lecturer, how would express your approval to your student's thesis?
   1. Fantastic!
   2. It can't be bettered!
   3. I'm dead sure it will be published in a reputable journal.
   4. You'd better prepare yourself for PhD.

19- You're busy doing something important and can't answer the phone. How would you ask somebody to answer it?
   1. Will somebody answer the phone please?
   2. Somebody answer the phone.
   3. Somebody answer that infernal phone.
   4. Don't you hear the phone ringing?

20- You have mistakenly deleted your father's text file. Your reaction:
   1. I'm sorry!
   2. I should have been careful!
   3. There's nothing to do about it!
4. If I had my own computer, it wouldn't have happened!

21- What would you tell your sister about your cousin's party which your sister didn't make? (They are not very close)

   1. You should have come. You missed out on all the fun.
   2. We had a great time.
   3. It was so-so!
   4. You didn't miss out on anything.

22- What would your reaction to your employee who has been skiving at work for a month?

   1. What has made you so neglectful of your duties?
   2. You must be an irresponsible person!
   3. You will get the sack if you keep evading your responsibilities.
   4. I'm afraid I will have to let you go! (roughly)

23- As a parent, how would you treat your child who has got a low mark?

   1. You should have tried hard honey!
   2. Why have you been so careless recently?
   3. Is this how you appreciate my working around the clock?
   4. What is your life lacking in? Why are you lagging behind others?

24- Your next door neighbor has accused your brother of theft. Your reaction: (He/she is younger than you and of the opposite sex)

   1. Behave yourself!
   2. Watch your language!
   3. Keep your mouth shut!
   4. You're lying!

25- It's too hot and you want the person sitting beside you on a bus to open the window. How would you want him to do so?

   1. Please open the window.
   2. Open the window. (gently)
   3. Open the window. (roughly)
   4. Will you please open the window?

26- Your wife's/husband's cousin who inquires after you once in a blue moon, calls you. (He/she is 10 years younger than you and of the same sex)

   1. Where on earth have you been all this time?
   2. You? I can't believe my ears!
   3. What do you need help with?
   4. (You would hang up on him/her).

27- Because of your busy schedule your friend has done your work. How would you thank him/her?

   1. Thanks a world!
2. I wonder how I can make it up to you!
3. I owe you one!
4. Thank you very much!

28. You've been invited to the wedding party of a close relative when you've got two days' time to study for your final exam. How would you turn down his/her invitation?
   1. I'd like to come but I have to study for my final exam.
   2. If you had invited me a few days ago, I might be able to come.
   3. I have an exam, I can't make it.
   4. Party?! During the exams!

29. Someone of the same sex wants you to give him/her a hand with a heavy bag and you're unwilling to help him/her. What would you tell him/her?
   1. Sorry, I have back problems.
   2. You would turn a blind eye to him.
   3. Ask someone else to help you.
   4. That is unheard of!

30. As a hard-working student, you get a low mark on one of the courses. How would you apologize to your teacher?
   1. I'm sorry. I will make up for it.
   2. I'll do my best next time.
   3. I'm not to blame. The questions were very difficult.
   4. (You would remain silent).

31. After a long time, you run into an old friend. What would you say to express your initial feelings?
   1. It's wonderful to see you after such a long time!
   2. I missed you loads!
   3. Where have you been?
   4. Long time no see!

32. Your friend is neglectful of his/her old parents who need his/her care and attention. How would you advise him/her?
   1. Don't take your parents for granted.
   2. You should take them under your wings.
   3. It's your turn to care for them.
   4. Later you will bitterly regret taking your parents for granted.

33. As the manager of your company, how would you greet your employees in the morning?
   1. Good morning everyone!
   2. You would say hello and start your work.
   3. You would remain silent to be greeted by your employees.
   4. You would grudgingly greet them back.
34- You are working as a nurse in a hospital. How would you ask two middle-aged men who are
talking loudly to be quiet?
   1. Please, can you keep your voices down?
   2. Keep your voices down!
   3. Please, this is a hospital!
   4. Please be quiet!

35- You run into your close friend and his/her spouse who have just married recently. What would
you tell her?
   1. Long time no see!
   2. Congratulations!
   3. You are a perfect match for each other!
   4. You seem to have forgotten your old friends!

36- How would you ask your roommate to pick up a….on his/her way home?
   1. Would you mind buying a….on your way home?
   2. Could you pick up a….on your way home?
   3. Please pick up a….on your way home.
   4. Buy a….when you come back home.

37- At a party, the host compliments your personality. How would you react?
   1. It is really kind of you!
   2. Come on, Your personality puts mine to shame.
   3. You're flattering me.
   4. I feel flattered.

38- In the street, someone steps on your foot. How would you treat him/her?
   1. Hey, can't you be more careful?
   2. Hey, watch out!
   3. Oh, my foot!
   4. You would ignore it.

39- Your colleague, who is your friend as well, shows up an hour late for an appointment. What
would be your first reaction?
   1. Typical!
   2. You're so inconsiderate. You've kept me waiting for ages!
   3. You really stood me up. Shame on you!
   4. Where the hell have you been?

40- A day before university entrance examination, your neighbors' children are playing outside
making a lot of noise distracting your concentration. How would you react?
   1. Please, stop it for God's sake.
   2. Go home kids!
3. Hey kids, I need silence.
4. You're asking for it!

41- You go mountain-climbing with your friends. The rain has just stopped and a beautiful rainbow has appeared in the sky. What would you say to your friends concerning this beautiful scenery?
   1. What a beautiful rainbow!
   2. Hey, look at the rainbow!
   3. Oh, the rainbow is magnificent!
   4. Wow, awesome!

42- You have invited your colleagues to a birthday party in your house. How would you serve some cake and coffee to them?
   1. Do you want some cake and coffee?
   2. Will you have something to eat?
   3. Help yourself to some cake and coffee.
   4. Please have some cake and coffee.

43- You work in an office as an employee, a colleague shouts at you for being lax in carrying out your duties. How would you react?
   1. Mind your manners?
   2. Keep your voice down!
   3. It's got nothing to do with you!

44- You are standing in line at a bakery to buy bread. A person tries to cut in line. What would you tell him/her?
   1. Would you please go to the end of the line?
   2. Please, it's my turn.
   3. Get back to the end of the line.
   4. You're denying us our rights.

45- You've gone to a garden with your friends. Suddenly, you notice that there are so many beautiful, sweet-smelling flowers there. What would you say to your friends expressing your feelings?
   1. The flowers sure smell great here.
   2. Oh, what a lovely aroma!
   3. Please come smell these flowers.
   4. Smell the flowers.