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Length of Stay in Study Abroad Context and Development of Request and Apology Speech Acts

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Note: *This article is based on partial findings from the author's doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Prof. R. Subbakrishna at the University of Mysore, Mysore, India.*

ABSTRACT
There is a common belief that learners who learn a language in its native context are more sociolinguistically and pragmatically competent than those who learn it in a traditional classroom curriculum in their home country. This longitudinal study was to assess this assumption in study abroad program that "the more is better". Specifically, this study focused to measure the impact of duration of sojourn on the learners' pragmatic development in request and apology speech acts. To this end, 72 Iranian study abroaders who enrolled in a six month program were selected as participants in this study. These students were already placed in the intermediate level by conducting a proficiency test and an interview by the language institutes in India (Mysore). A Discourse Completion Task (DCT) including request and apology scenarios were administered to these students in three phases. At the beginning of the course as *pre-test*, after three months as *post-test 1* and after six months as *post-test 2*. Comparing the learners' gains in post-test 1 and post-test 2 reveals that longer duration results in more progress in these two most frequent speech acts. Consequently, this study adds support to the belief that longer study abroad programs are more beneficial to have more fluent and pragmatically proficient language learners.

KEYWORDS: study abroad, length of stay, pragmatics, interlanguage pragmatics, request, apology

INTRODUCTION
There is a popular assumption that second language context is a perfect setting for learning a new language. The abundant direct exposure to the language made SL learning context conspicuously better-quality than FL context. FL setting uses formal and usually regular classes with a good deal of linguistic knowledge *about* language while little is done to present the language itself. On the other hand, SL context yields a remarkable amount of cultural and pragmatic input through a great deal of interaction with native speakers. Therefore, a combination of a sojourn (for acquiring cultural and pragmatic knowledge) with a classroom support (for acquiring linguistic knowledge) in a form of study abroad program may bring the best condition for maximizing language learning process because it enjoys both the advantages of FL and SL learning environments. Kinginger (2011) claimed that study abroad is endowed with development in different domains of language competence and social interaction abilities. Khorshidi (2013) suggested that "While regular language classes are good sources for providing linguistic knowledge, context which is study abroad program

equipped with, seems to be a flourishing source for providing cultural and pragmatic knowledge through interaction with L2 natives" (p. 62). This popular belief has become so popular that a great number of students leave their home to spend a period abroad and expect to return with a good level of proficiency in target language skills.

Research supports that study abroad provides learners with gains in all four language skills especially in oral proficiency skill (e.g., DeKeyser, 2007; DuFon & Churchill, 2006; Segalowitz & Freed, 2004) which is not manifested as much in FL context. As a matter of fact, among the language proficiency skills, learners' pragmatic ability makes them different from FL learners because it is generally observed that even advanced FL learners with a good repertoire of linguistic knowledge, are not successful to communicate appropriately in social contexts.

Pragmatics or Inter-language Pragmatics?

Pragmatics is nothing but the study of language in context. In other words, pragmatics is "the study of those relations between language and context that are *grammaticalized*, or encoded in the structure of a language" (Levinson, 1983, p. 9). As a part of linguistics, syntax studies sentences, semantics studies propositions but pragmatics is the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed (Stalnaker, 1998). Huang (2007) states that "syntax is the most and pragmatics is the least abstract, with semantics lying somewhere in between" (p. 5). Consequently, as Recanati (2004) asserts syntax provides input to semantics and semantics provides input to pragmatics.

As a domain within L2 studies, pragmatics is usually referred to as inter-language pragmatics. Inter-language pragmatics (ILP) studies the *inter-language*, which is related to the second language acquisition research and *pragmatics* which is the study of language in context. ILP applies pragmatic theories, principles and frameworks to study how L2 or foreign language learners encode and decode meaning in their L2 or foreign language (Schauer, 2009). In simple words, ILP studies the second language acquisition in its context.

Kasper and Rose (1999) define ILP as the study of second language use, and assert that inter-language pragmatics is the study of non-native speakers' comprehension, production and acquisition of linguistic action in L2, or put briefly, ILP investigates how to do things with words in a second language. Kasper and Rose (2002) introduce inter-language pragmatics as interdisciplinary or hybrid because inter-language pragmatics belongs to both pragmatics and SLA. Schauer (2009) holds that ILP utilizes pragmatic theories, frameworks and principles to examine how foreign/second language learners encode and decode meaning in their L2. In second language acquisition and inter-language pragmatics, pragmatic competence has been an area of immense concern over the last three decades. Pragmatics research, in applied linguistics, mostly focuses on the relationship between language use and the social and interpersonal context of interaction (Roever, 2010).

Context of Learning in Study Abroad

Context is the cornerstone of success in study abroad. If the learners are supported to make the most of it, they may acquire different aspects of linguistic and cultural features of the target language. Lafford (2006) states that the term context refers not only to the environment in which the learner is situated, but it also refers to the learner's relationship with the environment. Using the context varies in different learners due to

their individual differences" (Khorshidi, 2013, p. 63). For instance, different personality traits behave differently in different contextual conditions. As an example extrovert learners may involve themselves in interactions more than introvert ones.

Unlike FL, whatever the SL learners receive as input in their classes, they have the chance to testify those language elements in the context to check its applicability. Previous studies support this assumption that a combination of formal classes and immersion in the native context can serve as a facilitator in L2 learning (Brecht, Davison & Ginsberg, 1993; Carrol, 1967; Freed, 1995; Huebner, 1995; Lennon, 1995; Spada, 1986). Lafford (1995, as cited in Freed, 1998) argued that study abroaders "have a far broad repertoire of communicative strategies for initiating, maintaining, expanding, and terminating a communicative situation than do those [at-home learners] whose learning has been limited to the formal language classroom" (p. 44).

Studies highlight that language acquisition is influenced by social and contextual factors (Douglas, 2004; Kramsh, 2000; Lantolf, 2000; Swain, 2000; Tarone, 2000). Studies by Carsello and Creaser (1976), Kuh (1995), and Limburg-Weber, (2000) show that study abroad affects language learning and personal development. All the above studies suggest that study abroad learners' linguistic, sociological and pragmatic competence is bolstered during their sustained sojourn.

What Learners Acquire in Study Abroad?

Study abroad is often considered as an ideal way for learners to be inundated with the target language skills and culture. Previous research (Felix-Brasdefer, 2004; Matsumura, 2003) supports that because of the direct exposure, learners acquire pragmatic knowledge through interaction with native speakers. Other studies (Collentine, 2004; Kinginger, 2011) also hold that study abroad learners demonstrate great gains in language skills and pragmatic competence.

Hassall (2012) presented a list of items learners acquire in study abroad (SA) context:

- ***Routines:*** pragmatic routines or formulaic expressions that are used in different speech acts (e.g., "Would you like a …?," "Sorry about that," etc.). Studies indicate that study abroad learners get a good repertoire of greeting formulaic expressions in different speech acts ((Barron, 2003; DuFon, 2000; Hoffman-Hicks, 2002; Lafford, 1995; Marriott, 1995).
- ***Informal Style:*** the informal language or colloquial words and phrases that learners pick up to use during their sojourn. This is corroborated by studies by Marriott (1995) and Kinginger (2008) in which their learners developed a plain style of language and improved to understand colloquial expressions and words.
- ***Sociopragmatics:*** according to Hassall (2012) sociopragmatics refers to the development in social "end" of pragmatics. In other words, it is the learners' capability to assess the contextual condition based on which they decide to make an appropriate request or apology (see Barron, 2003; Felix-Brasdefer, 2004; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Kinginger, 2008; Matsumura, 2003). This kind of pragmatic competence is often achieved in the context of the target language than FL context.
- ***Modifiers:*** 'modifies' are the linguistics elements that are employed to decrease or increase the illocutionary force of a request. For instance, study abroaders may learn to use downtoners like "*possibly"* to mitigate or employ intensifiers such as *"really"* to increase the impact of a request. Previous studies namely

Cohen and Shively (2007), Warga and Scholmberger (2007) and Schauer (2009) proved that context in study abroad greatly enhances learners' repertoire regarding request and apology strategies.

- ***Global Sensitivity:*** this refers to the learners' pragmatic awareness which enables the learners to detect pragmatic errors. Previous research studies also support that learners' pragmatic awareness increases with a long-term stay in second language context (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998; Schauer, 2009).

Factors affecting study abroad

The advantage of study abroad over study at-home has been well attested by previous research studies. However it is often the case that, success in the language achievement depends on various variables such as individual differences in learning styles, personality dimensions, motivation and aptitude, attitude, and the amount of submersion in the L2 community. Kinginger (2011) holds that individual differences play a key role in the amount of achievement during study abroad. According to Martinsen (2010) there are factors such as *interaction*, *cultural sensitivity*, *living arrangements*, *length of stay*, and *motivation* which affect the amount of gain in study abroad. Hassall (2012) added two more items to this list namely *input* and *identity*. Among all these factors, length of stay seems to be the most important one as others can be subordinated by the duration of sojourn. Longer stay does certainly bring more interaction, input, progress in cultural sensitivity, etc. and may result in both linguistic and cultural proficiency (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Dwyer, 2004).

Several studies have been investigated to test the benefit of longer period of stay in L2 community with adequate exposure and sufficient input. Results demonstrate that learners made a good deal of progress in pragmatic ability in conversational routines (House, 1996), employment of request strategies (Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985), and use of fewer external modifiers (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1986).

Taken as a whole, research has suggested that a second language learning setting provides both quantitatively and qualitatively richer input than a foreign language learning setting and that learners tend to show gradual convergence to native speakers' pragmatic behavior as their length of residence is prolonged.

Request and Apology speech Acts

Request and apology are the most frequent speech acts in communication. While request utterances are made to ask someone for a favor, apologies are often employed to express one's regret about what happened or said. Because of their face-threatening culture specific nature, these two speech acts are very important to get mastery over by speakers. In other words, if for any reason the interlocutor rejects a request or an apology, the speaker may lose face. Therefore, mastery of making requests and apologies may be beneficial to settle a positive atmosphere for an ideal communication.

Whenever a request is made, the requester is showing power by requesting; therefore the requestee's negative face (i.e. the wish to be unimpeded) may be threatened. If the hearer refuses to carry out the required act, the speaker is eminent to lose face. The difference between a request and other speech acts such as suggestions, warnings, or pieces of advice, is the fact that this speech act totally lies in the interest of the speaker and is at the cost of the hearer (Trosborg, 1994). On the other hand, apology means an

acknowledgment expressing regret or asking pardon for a fault or offense. Therefore, it is needed for language learners to be equipped with apology strategies and also to know the appropriate strategies to use for a specific context or situation otherwise, there will be a misunderstanding which may lead to unpleasant outcomes. The speech act of apologizing is rather different from that of requesting, since apologies are generally post-event acts, while requests are always pre-event acts.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the investigator tested a group of 72 Iranian English language learners who enrolled to study English two in Indian language institutes as a study abroad program. The researcher investigated to see if the amount of duration affects learner's pragmatic competence in request and apology speech acts.

Participants

The participants in this study were the Iranian students who enrolled in a six month study abroad program in India (Mysore). These 72 language learners were already administered a placement test and an interview and placed in intermediate level.

Instruments

A Discourse Completion Task including 16 request scenarios developed by Schauer (2009) and 10 apology situations originally developed by (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984) in Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) was used to measure the amount of gains in the three phases of the learners' stay in L2 context.

Procedure

The data for this study were collected by conducting the DCT in three phases:

- ***Phase 1:*** at the beginning of the program as pre-test in order to have a criterion for comparing the gains in post-test 1 and post-test 2.
- ***Phase 2:*** after three months as post-test 1 to measure the amount of gain for the first three months.
- ***Phase 3:*** after six months as post-test 2 to measure the total amount of gain during the study abroad program.

Final step: three native speaker English language teachers scored the papers based on the Speech Act Measure Rating Criteria prepared by Cohen et al. (2005). (see Appendix A)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To measure the participants' performance and the amount of their gains in the three phases the scores were submitted to SPSS to be analyzed. The output for the participants' scores is presented below.

Table 1: ANOVA

Scores	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	115.750	2	57.875	275.213	.000
Within Groups	44.792	213	.210		
Total	160.542	215			

The ANOVA test as illustrated in table 1 presented a Sig of .000 at the level of $p = .05$. Consequently, it demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the scores in the tests.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the scores in the tests and gains

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre_test	72	1.38	3.77	2.4771	.45162
Post_test1	72	2.13	4.72	3.4575	.52653
Post_test2	72	3.27	4.85	4.2675	.38689
Gain 1	72	.16	2.07	0.9767	.38332
Gain 2	72	.18	2.93	1.7694	.53640

Table 2 depicts the descriptive statistics regarding the amount of gains in three phases of measurement. The learners' achievement in post-test 1 (after three months) and post-test 2 (after six months) and a comparison between the amount of gain 1 and gain 2 show that the learners' pragmatic knowledge repertoire regarding request and apology speech acts increased along with lengthening their length of stay. As the data in the table above reveals, the average gain in post-test 1 was 0.97 (after three months) which increased to 1.76 in post-test 2 after six months of stay. A comparison in the means related to pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 confirms a linear development in learners' request and apology pragmatic competence. This finding supports the findings by House (1996) and Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, (1985), and Schauer, 2009) in which their participants made a good progress in conversational routines and employment of request strategies.

Table 3: Paired Sample Test

	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Df	Sig. (two-tailed)
			Lower	Upper			
Pre-test – Post-test 1	.36651	.4319	-1.06654	-.89429	-22.698	71	.000
Pre-test – Post-test 2	.0522616	.6201	-1.91404	-1.66678	-28.874	71	.000
Pre-test 1 – Post-test 2	.55389	.06583	-.94016	-.67984	-12.409	71	.000
Gain1-- Gain 2	0.59015	.06955	-.93146	-.65410	-11.339	71	.000

Table 3 illustrates if the differences among the tests and gains are significant. As the table demonstrates, the differences among the tests in three phases and gains are

significant at the level of p = .05. In table 3, a One-way ANOVA also supports this significance.

The results of this research through quantitative analysis suggest that learners' overall performance on the requests and apologies has been higher in the group with longer stay i.e. those who have been abroad for longer period appear to access more on inter-language pragmatics in using request and apology strategies. The results in this quantitative study suggest that the learners' overall performance in request and apology speech acts has definitely improved with longer period of sojourn.

CONCLUSION

This empirical study adds support to the common belief that because of the linguistic and pragmatic competence it provides, study abroad language learning is beneficial. Among factors introduced by Martinsen (2010) and Hassall (2012) affecting study abroad success such as the amount of interaction, cultural sensitivity, living arrangements, length of stay, motivation, input, and identity, length of stay seems to be one of the most dominant ones because duration period can influence others. What differentiates study abroad from study at-home is not the amount of linguistic input. As a matter fact, exposure with native speakers gives the chance to the learners to apply what they have learned in classes and get to know the pragmatic aspects of the language as well. Through study abroad, learners also learn how to behave in different contextual conditions which are often very difficult to acquire through study at-home language learning. Therefore, getting pragmatically and communicatively competent is the most outstanding feature of language learning through study abroad. This study is in line with previous studies (House, 1996; Olshtain and Blum-Kulka, 1985; Dwyer, 2004; Roever, 2010; Schauer, 2009) emphasizing the effectiveness of longer stay in L2 context. Longer duration in study abroad with a classroom support means being more proficient in linguistic and pragmatic aspects of language. The amount of gains in post-test 1 and post-test 2 show that longer residency results in more proficiency in request and apology speech acts.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study investigated the development of two frequent speech acts in study abroad context without a study at-home group as a control group. The researcher couldn't include a study at-home group due to some contradictory educational regulations for PhD studies in the two countries. Other research studies can investigate the impact of length of stay in study abroad with a study at-home support.

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Appendix A

Speech Act Measure Rating Criteria (by Cohen et al. 2005)

Notes:

- "Respondent" refers to the research subject who completed the *Speech Act Measure* (i.e., the "You" on the instrument). "Hearer" refers to the person rating the measure, imagining that they are in the position of the interlocutor talking to the research subject.
- Do not give the respondent a lower score for grammatical errors, UNLESS those grammar errors inhibit the ability of the hearer to understand what the speaker is trying to communicate. But if you cannot understand what the speaker is trying to communicate because of grammar errors, you can give him/her a lower score.
- Do not give the respondent a lower score for spelling errors. The instrument is meant to reflect oral speech, in which case spelling errors would not be important.

1. Speech Act Measure Rating Criteria: Request

Overall Success of the Request Item:

Please judge the overall success of the request made by the respondent. Think about whether you would want to comply with the request if you were in the position of the hearer. Please rate each answer with **1-5** based on the speaker's responses using the criteria listed below, if you were the hearer…

5 = I would happily comply with the speaker's request

4 = I would comply with the speaker's request, but somewhat reluctantly

3 = I would comply with the speaker's request, but reluctantly

2 = I would comply with the speaker's request, but only very reluctantly

1= I would absolutely not want to comply with the speaker's request

Note: The same measure rating criteria was used for apology as well.

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AN OVERVIEW ON READING COMPREHENSION AND READING SPEED

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ABSTRACT
Reading comprehension may be one of the most important skills which is usually investigated by language specialists in the field of second and foreign language acquisition. It is also becoming more and more significant in the new knowledge economy, and remains the most useful human activity for converting information into knowledge, be it reading on paper or from the screen. The importance of reading as a key skill and of its sub-skills is well confirmed. In the same line, the present paper is an overview over different types of reading such as extensive and intensive reading as well as the relationship between reading speed and reading comprehension.

KEY WORDS: reading comprehension, extensive reading, intensive reading, reading speed

DEFINITION OF READING COMPREHENSION

Reading is the most significant one of the four fundamental skills (Carrell, 1989). Reading can also be defined as the efficiency "to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately" (Grabe & Stoller, 2002, p.09). Or it may further be defined as understanding written material that is read to us, or as the process of 'constructing meaning' from written material.

Miller (n. d.) defined comprehension as a crucial tool for reading in our modern age through which we: obtain meaning from the words constructed by others, gain knowledge of something new, and understand another person's opinion.

As Alyousef (2005) proposed, reading can be considered as an "interactive" process between a reader and a passage that leads to fluent reading. In this process, the reader interacts dynamically with the text as he/she tries to extract the meaning.

Gough and Tunmer (1986) suggest a much simpler view of reading, in which reading comprehension is considered as the product of decoding. It can be considered as a useful technique for improving students' success in receiving valuable knowledge from the text (Mayer, 2003, p. 34).

Coady (1979) mentioned that reading is mainly a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' (cf. Goodman, 1967). Aebersold and Field (1997, p. 15) wrote that reading is what happens when people take a look at a text and allocate meaning to the written signs in that text. The text and the reader are two physical units essential for the reading process to commence. It is, however, the communication between the text and the reader that forms actual reading.

Therefore, we can say that reading is often considered as a hierarchy of skills, from processing of individual letters and their related sounds to word identification to text-processing competencies. Complete comprehension entails fluid communication of all these processes, beginning with the sounding out and identification of individual words to the perception of sentences in paragraphs as part of much longer texts (Pressley, 2000).

With regard to various purposes of reading, Rivers and Temperley (1978, p. 187) note that L2 learners may require or want to read: to acquire information for some purpose or because we are interested in some subject, to get instructions on how to do some task for our work or daily life, to keep in touch with friends or companies by letters, emails, or messages, to know when or where something will occur or what is accessible, to recognize what is happening or what has happened, to enjoy or be excited.

These definitions of reading comprehension can shed light on reading and reading comprehension altogether. In the following part, we turn to take a glance at various kinds of reading comprehension among EFL learners.

TYPES OF READING

Most of the scholars suggest that generally we have two kinds of reading: extensive reading (ER) and intensive reading (IR). The former involves fast reading of great amount of materials or longer readings for overall understanding with the focus mainly on the meaning of what is being read than on the language (Carrell & Carson, 1997), whereas the latter is concerned with short texts with close supervision from the teacher, which helps students to gain thorough meaning from the text to develop reading skills and to improve vocabulary and grammar knowledge (Carrell & Carson, 1997; Nuttall, 1996).

Richards, et al. (1992, p.133) defined extensive reading as "reading in quantity … in order to gain a general understanding of what is read. It is intended to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and to encourage a liking for reading." 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.

Inspired by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, researchers have shown new interest in extensive reading in current years. This is seen most obviously in various styles adopted by ELT Institutions. Krashen (1982, p. 164) calls ER as pleasure reading and states that pleasure reading is a significant source of comprehensible input for acquisition. Thus, students are forced to read alone by using the resources within their access (Hedge, 2003, p. 200-201). ER, with its emphasis on motivating learners to read autonomous, large quantities of meaningful language, fits well with recent principles for good second and foreign language pedagogy (Day & Bam ford, 1998).

THE READING SPEED

A broadly known problem encountered by learners throughout the ESL/EFL world is that of slow reading (Hamp-Lyons 1983; Cooper 1984). Records from Segalowitz, Poulsen, and Komoda (1991, p. 15) specified that the second language (L2) reading rate of bilingual readers is "30% (or more) slower than L1 reading rates." These data are also held by Weber (1991), who indicates that highly skilled bilinguals naturally have a slower reading speed in a second language. Jensen (1986, p. 106) pointed out that "at the end of a reading course, even advanced ESL students may read only 100 words or less per minute." This has often been related to classroom approach in reading lessons, mostly where such lessons concentrate on language development rather than reading *per se*.

A number of specialists have remarked on a regular practice in intensive reading lessons (Nuttall 1982; Alderson & Urquhart 1984; Bartram & Parry 1989; Hyland 1990; Susser & Robb 1990). Text comprehension research shows that readers regulate reading speed based on the difficulty or contradictions which they encounter (Haberlandt & Graesser, 1985).

Slow reading as a difficulty for learners has been described by Brown & Hirst (1983, p.140) as a "weakness independent of the purpose of reading", concerning the processing of information at such a slow pace that the reader is not capable of holding enough detail in short-term memory to allow interpretation of the general message of the text. In this context, it should be noted that diverse reading purposes need different reading speeds, and though the development of sufficient reading speed should be given a high priority in our learning programs, we should also remember, as Nuttall (1982) does that reading speed without comprehension is useless.

It was in the 1960s that interest in reading speed got impetus from the writings of Fry (1963) and De Leeuw (1965). Fry claimed that good readers reach a speed of 350 words per minute, fair readers 250 words, and slow readers attain 150 words per minute. De Leeuw mentions 230-250 words per minute as an average primary speed.

The earliest studies conducted on native English speakers showed that fast reading was only a skimming strategy used to cover the entire reading material (Brown, Inouye, Barrus, & Hansen 1981). However, later studies indicated that readers attained not only rapid reading skills but also better comprehension when they were purposely taught rapid reading techniques (Cranney, Brown, Hansen, & Inouye 1982). Fast reading is often encouraged as a good way to understand the main ideas of a text (Haynes, 1993).

These contradictory views made the researchers to examine the relationship between reading speed and reading comprehension. While it is usually disputed that the two are closely linked (Broughton et al 1978; Berkoff 1979; Champeau de Lopez 1993), the exact nature of the relation between them has been the center of a continuing debate lasting more than half a century. What is thought clear is that a very slow reader is more apt to read with little understanding. Before he/she arrives at the end of a page, or even of a sentence, he has forgotten the beginning.

Champeau de Lopez (1993) made the helpful difference between 'timed readings', in which learners read at their own speed, and 'paced readings' where the teacher manages the time permitted. In her study, she found that students improved their reading speeds

on average from 120 to 170 words per minute (a 50% increase), after pursuing a course based on a mixture of timed and paced readings. However, she also observed a negligible drop in comprehension over the same period, from 78% to 67%. Coady's advice (1979, p. 12) on this point appears valuable "..... comprehension is achieved by reading neither too fast nor too slow".

In a study by Bell (2001) on reading speeds and comprehension in two groups of learners defined as intensive and extensive groups respectively, it was revealed that subjects exposed to extensive reading gained both significantly faster reading speeds and significantly higher scores on reading comprehension tests. The extensive group was exposed to a system of graded readers whereas the intensive group learned short texts followed by comprehension questions.

The question of how comprehension is influenced by altering the pace of reading was also considered by Poulton (1958). This study established that the amount of remembering a criterion of comprehension increased considerably when the pace of reading decreased from around 300 words/min to about 150 words/min. However, one of the conclusions of conventional studies on reading like those done by Tinker in the 1930s and 1940s (summarized in Tinker, 1963) was that the fast reader tends to grasp better. Reasons for the apparent inconsistency have been recognized and explained by Carver (1990). Both negative and positive correlations between reading speed and comprehension have been reported as these are two different types of correlations: between-individual and within-individual. When an individual raises his or her reading rate, his or her comprehension reduces (e.g. Poulton, 1958), which is a within-individual negative correlation. However, people who naturally read fast also tend to display a high level of comprehension (e.g. Jackson &McClelland, 1979), which is a between-individual positive correlation.

In view of the above, many factors such as limited perceptual duration (word-by-word reading), slow perceptual reaction time (slow recognition and response to the material), vocalization (reading aloud), faulty eye movements, regression (needless or unconscious re-reading), faulty habits of attention and concentration, lack of practice in reading, fear of losing comprehension, causing the person to intentionally read more slowly, habitual slow reading, poor evaluation of which parts are important and which are unimportant, and the attempt to remember everything rather than to remember selectively should be considered.

In the same line, one of the factors that may affect the speed of reading and reading comprehension is the difficulties which readers have in word identification or recognition (Lyon, 1995; Torgeson, Rashotte, and Alexander, 2001; Hook & Jones, 2002). Many students who try to learn to read are able to make up for primary reading problems by becoming perfect decoders, but are unsuccessful in reaching a level of adequate fluency to turn into fast and proficient readers (Hook & Jones, 2002).

Another important factor to consider in studies of reading rate is word length. There is a common finding in reading research that in skilled readers, length does not affect the reading speed for high frequent words, whereas longer pseudo words do take more time to recognize than short pseudo words (Carbonnel & Valdois, 2004; Weekes, 1997 as cited in Martens & de Jong, 2006). Field (2004, p. 12) proposed that "longer words often take the same time to read as short ones … without loss of comprehension."

However, the converse body of research is also robust. For example, reading speed is said to slow down when words are read via the non-lexical route. In other words, "reading speed decreases with each additional letters. The larger the length of a word, the more readers rely on sub-lexical decoding strategies" (Martens & de Jong, 2006, p. 141).

Contradictory data also exist concerning the best or adequate reading rate. Some authorities propose that 180 words per minute "may be a threshold between immature and mature reading and that a speed below this is too slow for efficient comprehension or for the enjoyment of text" (Higgins & Wallace, 1989, p. 392). Dubin and Bycina (1991, p. 198) claimed that "a rate of 200 words per minute would appear to be the absolute minimum in order to read with full comprehension." Jensen (1986, p. 106) suggested that second language readers seek to "approximate native speaker reading rates and comprehension levels in order to keep up with classmates" and recommends that 300 words per minute is the best rate. This pace is supported by Nuttall (1996, p. 56), who stated that "for an L1 speaker of English of about average education and intelligence… the reading rate is about 300 words per minute."

However Pakhare (2007) believed that reading at the pace of 200 to 220 words per minute is measured as a normal speed of reading. For normal reading rates 75% is a satisfactory level of comprehension. This means if a child can recognize the meaning of at least 75% of the whole text, then he/she has reached suitable levels for reading comprehension.

In his article on how to increase reading speed and comprehension, Lee (2009) proposed that we have three ways to increase our reading speed: know the vocabulary in the text, read a lot of books, relate the text to your personal experience.

In the same line, Feldman (2006) introduced 9 important ways to improve reading speed, which are presented below: skimming before reading, categorizing reading materials from the most important parts to the least ones, selecting the proper environment, reading early in the day, turning headings into questions, avoiding using highlighter, previewing before reading, being flexible with your reading speed, and reading correspondence only once.

CONCLUSION

The present paper was an attempt to highlight the importance of reading comprehension as one of the important language skills to be developed by language learners in both EFL and ESL contexts. In the same line, some of the previous studies were reviewed to highlight some of the problems that language learners encounter while trying to comprehend a text were considered. As the speed of reading is affected by many factors, language learners particularly at the low level are encouraged to skim the passage before reading, categorize reading materials from the most important parts to the least ones, turn headings into questions, and preview before reading.

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AN INVESTIGATION AND DETERMINATION OF NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURES IN E-LEARNING DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION OF HAMEDAN AND KURDISTAN PROVINCES, IRAN

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ABSTRACT

This study, by considering the importance of e-learning in higher education system, has the aim to identify and explore alternative solutions of the development and application of e-learning. This research has been conducted using an exploratory qualitative research methodology with two groups of respondents including both faculty members and PhD candidates in six different higher education institutions in Hamedan and Kurdistan provinces that selected randomly. Data were gathered through interviews technique. The data collection process was conducted to obtain complete and comprehensive data, and saturation was attained by 30 respondents. The results revealed that influencing factors of e-learning development and application in these provinces were: promoting cultural environment for both faculty members and the students,

supporting technical infrastructure, removing technological and economical barriers and also conducting continuous training courses and workshops.

KEYWORDS: E-Learning, Higher Education, Internet, Vensim's Software, Hamedan and Kurdistan Provinces, Iran

INTRODUCTION

A quick review of the changes of the previous periods shows that the educational systems of each period relates to the changes of that period. In the present time, the internet network has transformed the classical and traditional educational system; and, the new educational methods and practices are extending so quickly. With the advent of internet, traditional roles in society have changed and each of these current traditional roles present a new manifestation both electronically and virtually which added new terms into the nations' culture and language (Ahmadi & Virjiniyari, 2003). The development of virtual education is one of the facilities that have created in the light of development of computers and, in the broad sense, information technology. Internet, which is located among the top ten inventions of the twentieth century, has achieved the concept of long-life learning and driven learning out from the limitation of time and place. Currently, educational institutions, research centers, government agencies, business centers and many other people are looking for the access to the internet so fast. It is clear that internet and World Wide Web have profoundly affected the society, especially universities and faculties. Thus, ICT (information and communication technology) has a major role in the guarantee the quality of higher education and this would be considered as a competitive advantage for universities. However, the development and use of communication technologies in the educational system is an infrastructure for applying changes in education which this can facilitate the presenting and receiving the training programs in different places. New technologies can alter the type of people and organization needs. Advances in technology such as computers and robots have opened new ways to create and enhance innovative teaching methods for instructors. This technological change has had a significant impact on the education, especially teaching methods. Wonderful development of electronic communication has given Distance Learning a new position and the development of these types of education has changes it to such an educational approach that employees and the people whom are not able to attend physically in classes can continue their education. In response to these demands, the distance learning organizations are trying to provide a comprehensive training system, from registration to examination, for learners. These organizations make attempt to enhance the quality, quantity and presentation methods of education and to equate these elements to developed countries (Murphy and Terry, 1998).

The higher education centers are the applicants of the utilization of electronic education, because, these educations are not limited to a special time and place. Thus, the higher education centers consider this fact as a prominent advantage (Garrison, 1999). Generally, virtual education means making the best use of electronic systems such as computers, internet, multimedia discs, electronic journals, virtual newsletters, etc. The virtual education aims are to make the learning easier, and more effective, and it can save time, cost and energy (Anderson & Elloumi, 2004).

The present time that is considered as ‘Information Age and Information Revolution’ has created major changes in human lifestyle and it provided a new concept which is

called 'information society'. Information society is a symbol of all conventional and traditional social processes such as business, education and the like which is located in a new format by using information and communication technology (ICT).

E-learning, which is considered as both internet use and digital technologies in teaching and learning, has always been identified as either an alternative solution or a new procedure to boost traditional approaches of education. Educational institutions apply e-learning in teaching process for the following reasons:

IT promotion: E-learning is becoming an ideal tool for teaching and learning.
Rich information: E-learning provides the accessibility of rich information resources every time and everywhere for both learners and teachers.
Alternative learning approach: E-learning can give the possibility and opportunity of learning process to those who were marginalized as disable students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Miladi and Malek Mohamadi (2010), based on Yaghoubi's quotation (2008), believe that broader approach towards E-learning indicates that the education and e-learning system have unique benefits and advantages for organizations and educational institutions.

Chahill (2008), based on Duderstat (2001), in this regard, stated that the higher education must meet these changes and they should invest in capacities which make the new types of learning, independent of time and place limitation, possible, in order to create a persuasive view in their future in the next millennium (Chahill, 2008). Soltani (2004) in a study entitled 'A Survey of Affecting Factors of the Use of Information Technology in Teaching and Research Activities of Faculty Members' considered the familiarity of faculty members with the information technology, and the use and attitudes of them toward it and its relationship with the individual characteristics of the faculty members. Moreover, it was found that there is a positive and significant relationship between positive attitudes of faculty members and their proficiency in computer knowledge (Soltani, 2004). Naghavi (2007), in his study, discussed about 'the Attitudes of Faculty and Graduate Students of Agricultural Extension and Education toward Distance Learning via the Internet'. Additionally, he considered the proficiency level of Information Technology of faculty and graduate students as a necessary element of e-learning development; moreover, he investigated the barriers of the expansion of this type of education (Naghavi, 2007).

Yaghoubi (2008), in his study, entitled 'the design of E-learning systems in the field of agricultural extension and education' refers to 'educational and technical factors affecting the E-learning system' and 'E-learning program restrictions' as stimulants and inhibitors of E-courses (Yaghoubi, 2008). He also refers to the following elements as important factors affecting students' attitudes toward e-learning: the evaluation of e-learning capabilities in solving the problems, the access to the internet, the use of internet, students' overall assessment of the problems of the present system (Yaghoubi, 2008).

Mohamadi (2009) in his paper entitled 'Determination and analysis of the components of E-learning system in agricultural scientific-applied educations of Iran' investigated the following elements in e-learning system in agricultural scientific-applied educations:

incentives and the driving factors, the necessities and urgencies, the educators attitudes, the barriers and disincentives, the availability of e-learning technologies and organizational strategies of e-learning. Sadri Arhami et al. (2003), in a study entitled 'e-learning in Iran: challenges and alternative solutions in higher education' refers to the concept of e-learning and web-based studies, and he considers the issues and obstacles of its implementation.

A study entitled "Evaluation of ICT development strategies in the education system in Australia, the U.S. and India, and comparing them with Iran" have been conducted by Ghaedi (2007) and he compares 'the facilities', 'equipments', 'development methods' and 'barriers' of the mentioned countries. Jokar (2007) in an article entitled 'information resources as one of the support systems in E-learning courses' studied the students of virtual courses of Shiraz University, and he considers lack of information resources and E-learning content as the barriers of such educations.

Some, like Nasiri (2005), has studied about easier and better implementation of these educations in a virtual interactive environment. In other studies, including Farahani (2001), it has been shown that implementing e-learning would be merely successful when the courses are theoretical. In a study conducted by Salajeghe (2011), the factors that facilitate virtual education are discussed. Finally, the research by Salim Abadi (2006), and Jafari (2002), the obstacles and challenges of implementing e-learning have been investigated. There are also some researches indicating that e-learning is improper due to the following reasons: technical limitations like, lack of accessibility to telecommunications infrastructure, and the limited interaction between teacher and learner; therefore, the traditional face to face educational method is emphasized. The researches of Chizari (2010), and Ghaedi et al (2007), based on Brown's research are included in this study. There are some other researches in the field of E-learning that each of which have a particular look at it. The most important of these researches are: Salajeghe (2011), Musa Khani (2005), Martines (1997) etc.

Lynch (1999), in a study entitled 'investigation of effective variables for students participation in an electronic evaluation', that was conducted by regression analysis, showed that 'computer', 'gender' and 'the experience of participating in Electronic evaluation' are of the predictor variables of the variability of the dependent variables. There is a significant relationship between the variables 'attitude toward computers and CBT' and 'psychological readiness of the learners to participate in electronic evaluation (Lynch, 2004).

Oliver (2002) in a study entitled 'quality assurance of E-learning in Australian higher education' discusses the factors leading to successful adaptation and sustainable use of virtual learning in higher education in Australia.

Mohamadi (2009) in his study entitled 'investigation of ICT infrastructure and human resource capacity in Liberia' concluded that the development of ICT in this country is depended on the improvement of the following factors: telecommunication infrastructure, human resources, economic, social and information-technology-based curriculum planning.

Naghavi (2007) in his researches, about Development, establishment and application of e-learning, stated that in the e-learning readiness of human resources, these items are

essential and effective: physical, cognitive, emotional, social and cultural factors. A glance at the recent changes in educational system shows that most of these changes in the phase of educational technology utilization have focused on acquiring early technology skills. This can clarify the importance of the application of technology for basic skills (Rosenberg, 2001). Frazeen (2006), in his final dissertation, entitled 'effective factors in quality of web-supported learning' stated the relationship and impact of several basic factors. He divided these elements in following six groups: organizational and educational factors, instructor, students, technology and educational designing (Frazeen, 2005).

Panitz (2008) in his study, about the advantages of electronic and participatory learning about motivating the learners, stated that working students, had less interest in face to face education (Panitz, 2008). Chahill (2008) in his paper entitled 'motivating factors of faculty members to participate in e-learning' refers to a significant relationship between 'vocational factors' (time, credit, career development, rewarding and high responsibility at work) and 'structural factors' (access to training materials over the course of learning, presenting different learning styles) with the implementation of e-learning courses (Chahill, 2008). Gamble (2009) in his research entitled 'The learning effects in a multicultural environment' compared and investigated the impacts of an E-learning course that was held in China and the US (Gamble, 2009).

In table 1, the effective factors of e-learning promotion such as infrastructure facilities, motivation factors, knowledge and skills of learners and etc. and with the other researches in this field have been briefly discussed.

Table 1: Summary of studies in the field of e-learning in Iran and other countries

Nr.	Effective factors in E-learning promotion	Author/ organization and date
1	infrastructure facilities: (infrastructure, designing and preparation of learning system components)	Sadri Arhami (2003), Miladi and Malak Mohamadi (2001), Chizari (2010), Ghaedi et al (2007), Chahill (2008)
2	importance and advantages	Miladi and Malek Mohamadi (2010), Farahani (2010), Panitz (2008)
3	motivational factors	Gamble (2009), Chahill (2008), Frazeen (2006), Oliver (2002)
4	technical skills and knowledge of teachers and learners	Soltani (2004), Naghavi (2007), Yaghoubi (2008), Mohamadi (2009), Murphy and Terry (1998)
5	barriers and Challenges	Salim Abadi (2006), Jafari (2007), Jokar (2007), Lynch (1999)

The main research questions, regarding the research purpose, would be:
- What are the requirements and necessary infrastructures of e-learning development?
- What are the advantages of e-learning in comparison to traditional learning?
- What are proper guidelines for the establishment and development of e-learning?

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METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHOD

In order to answer these research questions, a qualitative approach was used; and, in order to collect the necessary data, the meaningful and snowball sampling method were used.

PARTICIPANTS

Statistical population of this study was the following groups: 1) faculty members of agricultural higher education of Hamedan and Kurdistan provinces; 2) faculty members and PhD students of electronics, telecommunications, Hamedan Jahad Daneshgahi (JD).

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

It must be mentioned that, in the qualitative researches, the sample size does not matter; since, the crucial aspects are the procedure of sample selection and the quality of research process. As soon as the theoretical saturation is obtained, sampling and data collection would be finished. Totally, there were 25 respondents in this study and the interviews ended as soon as the data were saturated.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The main approach of data collection in this study is semi-structured interviews. Since, the main purpose was, as much as possible, to collect the data from the respondents, it was tried to use the open questions.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis was performed by using open coding. The reason for coding is to convert the data into concepts. Therefore, at the beginning, the data were separated from each other and the phrases are categorized based on the semantic units in order to attach the codes to the data. Then, these codes were classified based on the discovered phenomena of the data, which these data are directly relevant to the research questions, and these codes were conveyed to the abstract codes and finally these codes were reported jointly and commonly. The literature review was profoundly investigated to ensure the data validity and reliability. This deep investigation was conducted for both a better understanding of the subject and an appropriate formation of the interview questions. The professors and faculty members' point of view were used in this study.

This is a dynamic study, therefore the system dynamics methodology is a suitable method for this study. The present research was analyzed conceptually by Vensim software. Using the system dynamics makes the investigation of different behaviors and their feedbacks in various times possible and it helps with the management development and appropriate policies in the case of this study. The systemic thinking is considered as a framework, procedure, rule and a rationale for recognizing the problem and it includes analytic and synthetic aspects. Table 2 indicates the faculty members' view point of the above universities.

Table 2: the respondents' view about e-learning development approaches

Topics in terms of repetition	Common topics	Conclusions/recommendations
economic infrastructures technological infrastructures human infrastructures	material and immaterial infrastructure	The required investment for updating technical knowledge and skills as well as telecommunications infrastructure and the required equipment should be provided.
culturalization	culturalization	Logic and proper culture of using this type of education must be institutionalized among the users.
computer and internet knowledge computer use english proficiency	technical knowledge and skills of the users	Familiarity with the English and how to use the Computer software, networks and the Internet and etc. will increase their participants' ability in this field.
technical-vocational courses workshops	presenting preliminary training	The learners must have passed International Computer Driving License (ICDL) and should have participated in relevant workshop

RESULTS

In table 2, respondents view and comments, stated issues, common topics, the conclusions and recommendations were briefly discussed. As it can be seen in the table, the approaches of e-learning development includes material and immaterial appropriate infrastructure (economic, technological and human), culturalization, development and skill training and technical knowledge of the users and providing fundamental educations to the teachers and students. Generally, the content analysis of respondents' views of their questions was presented in four general areas and the investment in the mentioned sectors is considered as a development approach. For example, the following elements were taken into account in the sector of 'skill and technical knowledge of the users' which familiarity with English and proficiency of different tutorial and computer software are of those elements.

In table 3, frequency and the percentage of each of the e-learning elements, based on table 2 conclusions, were presented both individually and in association with the other elements.

Here, some comments are quoted directly:

One of the respondents commented on the advantages and barriers of e-learning in comparison to traditional teaching "the main advantages in establishment of e-learning are: flexibility, the elimination of unnecessary and costly traffic of learners, lack of limitation to a particular time and place; and, lack of access to high-speed and inexpensive internet and lack of understanding of responsible men and the audience from e-learning are the main barriers of this era".

Table 3: Infrastructures and requirements of e-learning development

Priority	Common topics	Frequency	Percentage of each element individually	Percentage of each element in association with the other elements
1	material and immaterial infrastructure (economic, technological, human infrastructures)	22	88	18.2
2	Culturalization	21	84	17.4
3	technical knowledge and skills of the users (Computer and internet knowledge, computer use, English proficiency)	19	76	15.7
4	presenting preliminary training (technical-vocational courses, workshops)	17	68	14

Another respondent said: "e-learning is not limited by time and place and the management of e-learning plans can be practicable for a large group of students."

Regarding necessary facilities and resources, another respondent stated that: "information, knowledge and ability of learners to use computers and E-learning tools and hardware facilities, such as: computer, webcam, headset, tablet and etc. are of utmost importance."

Regarding the skills of e-learning learners, another respondent stated that: "the learners of this system should be familiar with computer, web, network and hardware and software"; another interviewee said that "the learners of this system must attend in tutorial courses of authoritative organizations like technical-vocational organization, and they should participate in seminars and workshops in order to acquire the essential skills."

In table 4, frequency and percentage of each of the effective elements in describing the benefits of e-learning in comparison to traditional education are discussed both individually and in association with the other elements.

As it is inferred from table 4, the four major advantages of e-learning in comparison to traditional education are: saving the costs, diversity in training (flexibility, the number of admissions), updating the data (data access, effectiveness and efficiency of training), lack of need to the physical presence of the master. Since, in the present time, the increasing pace of human life and their different roles and responsibilities in communities has caused time shortage and economic problems, therefore, e-learning utilization seems to be so essential and cost-benefit.

In table 5, frequency and the percentage of each of the elements (both individually and in association with the other elements) and necessary facilities to establish E-learning system is discussed.

Table 4: e-learning advantages in comparison to traditional education

Priority	Common topics	Frequency	Percentage of each element individually	Percentage of each element in association with the other elements
1	saving the costs	24	96	28.9
2	diversity in training (flexibility, the number of admissions)	22	88	26.5
3	updating the data (data access, effectiveness and efficiency of training)	19	76	22.9
4	lack of need to the physical presence of the master	18	72	21.7

In table 5, the essential facilities and equipments to establish e-learning system are presented in the above six major factors. The most important factor is essential and appropriate hardware and software equipments for starting up and holding e-learning courses.

Regarding the mentioned results we can conclude that the main advantages of e-learning are: Saving time and cost, expanding communication domain, expanding courses, up to dating information, having a flexible method of study, increasing interaction and increasing curiosity and initiative.

Also the main e-learning barriers would be: high costs of infrastructure creation, reduction of face to face interaction, the high initial cost of preparing materials, and lack of appropriate hardware and software, and unfamiliarity with the technology of e-learning for both teachers and learners. Of course, e-learning for different groups (e.g., teachers, students, planners, managers and executives) have different advantages and disadvantages.

Table 5: proper guidelines for the establishment and development of e-learning

Priority	Common topics	Frequency	Percentage of each element individually	Percentage of each element in association with the other elements
1	Essential hardware and software equipments	23	92	19.5
2	High-speed and inexpensive internet	22	88	27.1
3	Professional human resources (professors, managers, experts)	19	76	16.1
4	Learners' knowledge and skills	17	68	14.4
5	Holding tutorial courses for the learners	14	56	11.9
6	culturalization	13	52	11

In figure 1, dynamic relationships of essential material and immaterial infrastructure for the operation and development of e-learning system were investigated by Vensim Software.

As it is inferred from figure 1, economic, technological and human infrastructure has positive effects on necessary infrastructure for e-learning development and they are considered as approaches of e-learning development. For example, 'material and immaterial infrastructures' and 'technology infrastructures' develop 'human

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infrastructures'; and, 'material and immaterial infrastructures' and 'technology and human infrastructures' promote 'economic infrastructures'. And yet, 'material and immaterial infrastructures' enhance 'economic, human and technological infrastructures'.

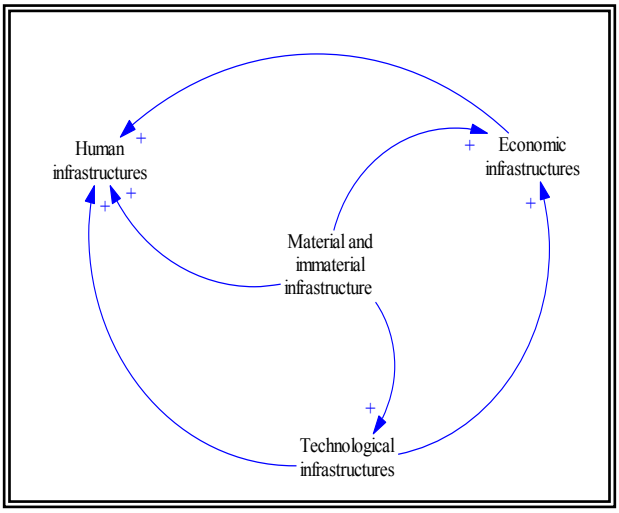

Figure 1: dynamic relationships of essential material and immaterial infrastructure

In figure 2, the dynamic relationships of the learners' skills and knowledge were considered.

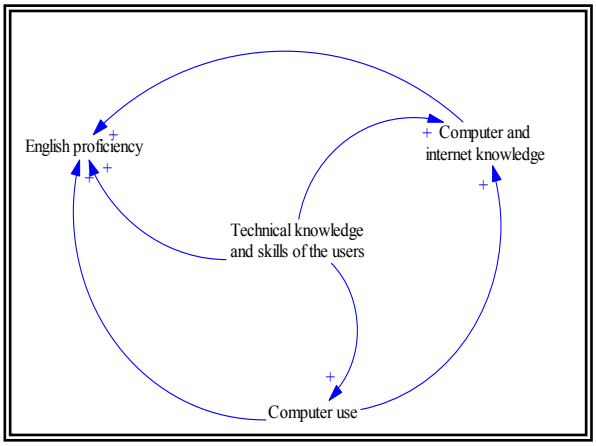

Figure 2: the dynamic relationships of the learners' skills and knowledge

In figure 2, it is shown that, the learners' skills and knowledge which includes internet and computer knowledge, English proficiency are considered as the factors that affect positively on e-learning development.

As figure 2 shows, increasing the learners' skill and knowledge enhances internet and computer knowledge, English proficiency and computer user. And, increasing level of computer user enhances computer and internet knowledge and also English proficiency. And, finally, increasing computer and internet knowledge develop English proficiency. In figure 3, the approaches of e-learning promotion is presented.

In figure 3, the approaches of e-learning development is presented with all its subcategories. As the figure clearly shows, each of the four branches of presenting preliminary training, material and immaterial infrastructure, culturalization and the

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learners' skills and knowledge along with its subparts have positively and directly affected on e-learning development. Deficiency and shortage in each of the above parameters are considered as the barriers of e-learning development.

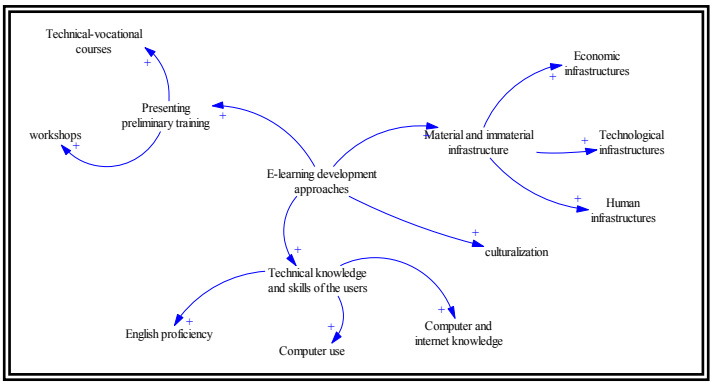

Figure 3: the approaches of e-learning development

Figure 4 represents the flowchart of the findings and conclusions of effective factors of e-learning development especially in Iranian higher education system.

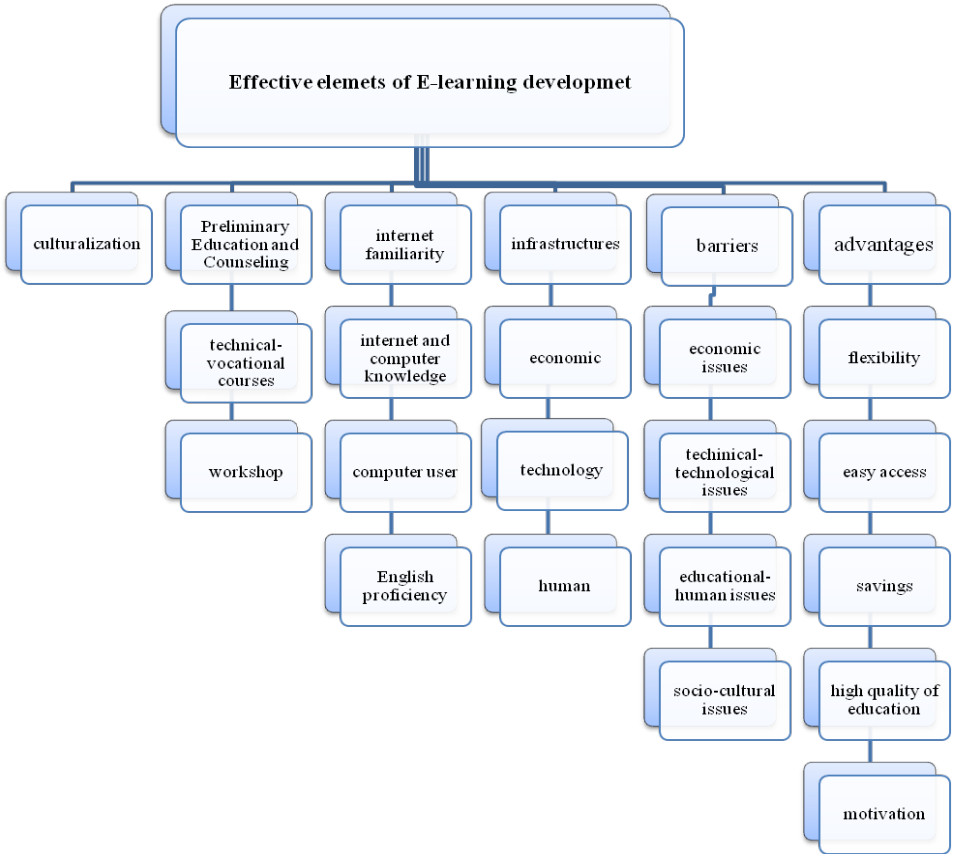

Figure 4: Effective elements of e-learning development

DISCUSSION

New information technologies are opening extraordinary abilities to change or reshape teaching and learning activities in all institutions of higher education. They also provide tools to design modern scientific environments that have never been possible before. For this reason, many universities want to establish electronic courses using the capabilities of information technology in the form of e-learning or online learning. However, the study several research of illustrates that the development of e-learning in education systems are faced with many problems. That unfamiliarity of policymakers and educational planners with them can impose heavy costs on educational institutions.

If the government and the responsible authors invest properly in e-learning, the development and extension of economic, technological, telecommunication, electronic infrastructures and human resources would be achieved. This finding matches to Howard (2008) study in Liberia that states: "the development of ICT would be possible by reinforcement of telecommunication, human resources, economic, social infrastructures and IT-based curriculum planning."Creating the appropriate cultural context and establishing reasonable and proper use of education cybernetic and electronic environments is a part of development and extension requirements of e-learning.

The most important skills of e-learning learners are 'technical skill and knowledge of learners in English proficiency', 'software, hardware and network proficiency' and other required potentials in e-learning. This finding accord to Yaghoubi (2008) study which asserts that: "internet and computer knowledge and the students' interest in e-learning must be taken into account."

It is necessary for the virtual course students to be familiar with internet skills and English proficiency. Also, they should participate in tutorial workshops.

Massive spending and investment plans in developing appropriate and essential infrastructures have a significant effect on 'the scientific growth and development of the country' and 'increasing the scientific potential of Iran universities in comparison to foreign universities.'

It seems that if it is invested on the development of infrastructures and proper physical and technical contexts of e-learning, then it will be more efficient than a situation in which huge budgets are spent for creation of educational environment.

CONCLUSIONS

The educational system of the country must present more comprehensive services in English education and computer skills for students.

The government and responsible people of cultural and social affairs should provide proper social and cultural contexts for developing and establishing of public use of e-learning.

Training interested and knowledgeable E-learning professors and also producing electronic content in educational syllabus is of utmost importance while lack of such a thing is felt.

Regarding that no exact and documented study in the field of 'the payment of teaching per hour' has not been done either in a traditional or electronic way, it seems that, if an exact and proper research is done in the field of investigating the technical and economic justification, then, responsible men will be convinced to invest in e-learning development.

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MOTIVATION AMONG IRANIAN LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated 50 state high school and private institute learners in Najafabad, 25 each, to see if there was any difference between their motivation. These students were selected to answer a motivation questionnaire and the analysis of the results gained through this questionnaire. Although there was no significant difference between these two groups with regard to proficiency. The analysis of the learner's responses to the motivation questionnaire showed that the private language institute learners were more motivated to learn English than the high school learners. The findings of this study are useful for teachers to apply motivated methods to improve learners' motivation. Also, students who take responsibility for their learning enjoy freedom and power to make decisions in their learning. Knowing that learning is a product of one's own activities, a student feels more rewarded and enhances his courage to get involved in an active learning process.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, Private institute, Motivation questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Students should be active agents of their learning, not merely passive receivers of information. Learning is a product of learners' own actions and is based not only on the learners' prior skills and knowledge but also on their experience and interest. If learners have role in defining and choosing the goals, the course content, and methodology, learning will be more relevant to them (Decorte, 1993). Although many teachers admit that learners differ in terms of needs and preferences, they may not consult learners in conducting language activities. The basis for such reluctance to cooperate may be that learners are not capable to express what they need to learn and how they want to learn it.

Recent research on motivation has demonstrated that students' goals and expectancies are referred as motivational variables can have considerable influence on their academic performance, and achievement (e.g., Barker, Dowson, & McInerney, 2002; Dowson, 2001, 2003). McInerney (1992) proposed that individuals' internal motivations (such as their goals and expectancies) may promote positive academic behavior and achievement, external (or at least externally referenced) forces in students' social environments may facilitate or inhibit the translation of these internal motivations into actual behavior. There is a large body of research concerned with the impact of attitudes and motivation on second language acquisition, and much of it has demonstrated a relationship between attitudinal and motivational variables on the one

hand and proficiency in a second language on the other (Clément, 1978, 1980; Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner et al., 1983; Gardner et al., 1976; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995).

Furthermore, it is often suggested in the literature that L2 learning motivation is affected by specific L2 learning contexts to which L2 learners are exposed (Clément & Kruidenier, 1983; Dörnyei, 1990; Oxford, 1996; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Schmidt, Boraie, & Kassabgy, 1996). For instance, in an ESL (English as a Second Language) situation, where direct contact with native speakers of English is possible, English is mastered through direct exposure to it. In an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, however, English learning mostly takes place in academic or formal classroom settings without regularly interacting with the English language community, thereby limiting generalization of the studies based on an ESL sample. Motivation is commonly defined as the "energization" and "direction" of behavior (Cofer & Appley, 1964; Heckhausen, 1991), that is, motivated behavior involves both the activation of motives, values, or interests by internal or external cues and the guiding of these activated motives, values, or interests toward potentially satisfying objects, outcomes, or end states.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Motivation plays a significant role in the EFL learning process, and most learners may feel disappointed if the method of teaching is not appropriate for them. Regarding language teaching in Iran, Bakhshi (1997) notes: ″One of the problems is an old belief that just knowing about the language and its grammatical patterns suffice teaching English, so there are no rooms left for advancement through insight of linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and motivation″ (p.14). Teachers do not use classroom activities that increase students' commitment for learning English. This makes students feel reluctant to the task of learning. This study attempts to investigate this issue in an Iranian context. In this study, the researcher wants to compare motivation in the high school and the private language institute. In the high school teacher has the central role but in the private language institute learners have central role and in the private language institute learning English is an optional course but an obligatory one in the high school then the researcher wants to find motivation in these two settings.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The importance of motivation in educational setting necessitates the investigation of this factor involved in the process of teaching. Therefore, the present study was designed to show the difference between motivation experienced by learners. With regard to what has been presented above, the present research will address two major questions:

1) Is the motivation in high school different from the motivation in the private language institute?
2) Is the type of motivation (instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, attitude toward learning English, attitude towards English textbooks, Coercion Index, and overall achievement) different in high school and the private language institute?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

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The participants of this study ranged from 15 to 17 year-old students selected randomly from 50 high school female students and 50 female students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) in a private language institute in Najafabad. Learners in these two settings enrolled in the second grade and their major was computer. Then, a Nelson test was administered to the students to select and homogenize the intended number of students for the study. Next, 50 students, 25 from Mahjub high school and 25 from Parto private institute, whose scores on the Nelson were between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean, were selected to take part in the study; to answer questions of a motivation questionnaire.

Instruments

Data in this study were collected through using instruments as follows:

1) A Nelson test (1999). It consisted of 40 multiple-choice items on grammar and vocabulary to estimate the proficiency level of the learners. The validity of the test was established by consulting with three experts. **The validity of the test was established by consulting with my supervisor and advisor. It' reliability was measured via cronbach's alpha that was 0.72.**

2) A motivation test. It was developed by Celce Murcia (1991) and consisted of 41questions. This questionnaire was translated into Farsi to avoid participants' confusion. According to Seliger and Shohamy (1989), one of the main problems with questionnaires in a foreign language (FL) is that participants often have problems in providing answers in FL and there is no assurance that the questions are properly understood and answered correctly. The participants were asked to rate their attitudes on a 5-point Likert scale. The researcher measured its reliability via Cronbach's alpha (r=0.81).

Data Collection and Procedure

Data were collected through the following stages: At first 100 students from the high school and the private institute, 50 each, were selected randomly. Then, via the administration of the Nelson test, 50 students (25 from the high school and 25 from the private institute) were selected as the participants of the study. Then the motivation questionnaire was distributed among the participants. They were asked to read the questions carefully and express their feeling by choosing one of the alternatives written in front of each statement.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES TO THE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Table 1 gives a summary of the findings for both groups, that is, the high school and the private institute learners, on the motivation questionnaire, and Figure 1 presents the graphical representation of the same results.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Two Groups on the Motivation Questionnaire

High School					Language Institute				
Min	Max	Mean	SD	Variance	Min	Max	Mean	SD	variance
99	205	183.08	20.845	434.493	153	230	195.24	18.622	346.773

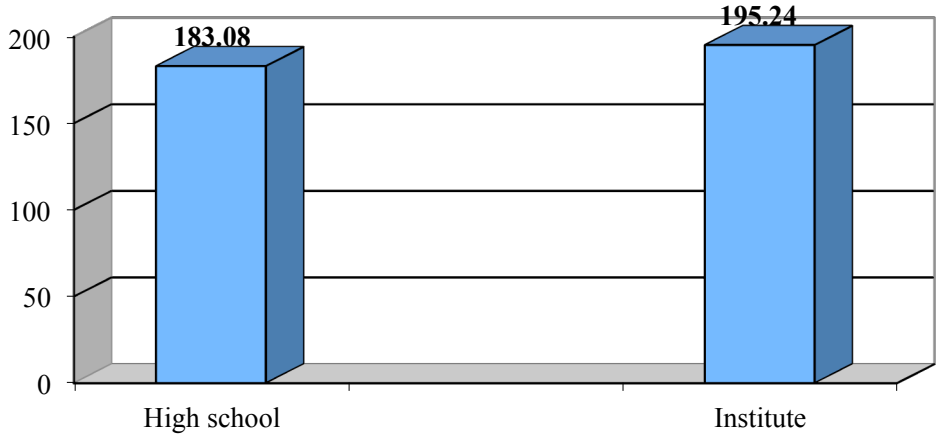

Figure 1: The graphical representation of the results for the motivation questionnaire

As Table 1 shows, the mean and the standard deviation scores of the high school students on the motivation test are respectively 183.08 and 20.84. For the language institute students the mean and the standard deviation scores are 195.24 and 18.62 respectively. In the high school group, the highest score and the lowest score are 205 and 99, but in the private language institute the highest score is 230 and the lowest score is 153. The above table shows that the mean score for the motivation obtained by the language institute students is higher than that obtained by the high school learners.

In order to find out whether or not this difference is statistically significant, a *t*-test was run. Table 2 shows the results of this *t*-test.

Table 2: The Results of the t-test for the Motivation Questionnaire

Group	No.	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t	P
High School	25	183.08	20.845	4.169	48	-2.229	.031
Institute	25	195.24	18.622	3.724			

Table 2 reveals that the amount of *t*-observed (*t*= -2.229) is significant at the probability level of p= .031, which is smaller than .05. In other words, motivation is significantly higher for the language institute students than for the high school students.

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THE RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES TO DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The motivation questionnaire is divided into six parts. The researcher compared the learners' responses to 4 parts in the high school and the private institute because these 4 parts are more related to this research.

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of different parts of the motivation questionnaire for each group and Figure 2 presents the graphical representation of the same results.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Different Parts of Motivation Questionnaire for Both Groups

Group	Parts of motivation	No.	Mean	SD
School	Instrumental	25	15.498	1.5831
	Integrative	25	16.212	4.0901
	Coercion index	25	14.280	4.7734
	Attitude	25	14.347	3.1979
	Textbooks	25	14.808	1.6036
	Achievement	25	14.784	4.5559
Institute	Instrumental	25	17.046	1.6848
	Integrative	25	18.480	2.2683
	Coercion index	25	10.920	3.0911
	Attitude	25	17.270	3.1531
	Textbooks	25	15.480	2.9189
	Achievement	25	17.976	4.1151

As this table shows the mean scores of the private institute in instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, attitude toward learning English, attitude towards English textbooks, and overall achievement are higher than the high school learners. The mean score of the high school learners in the coercion index is higher than the private institute.

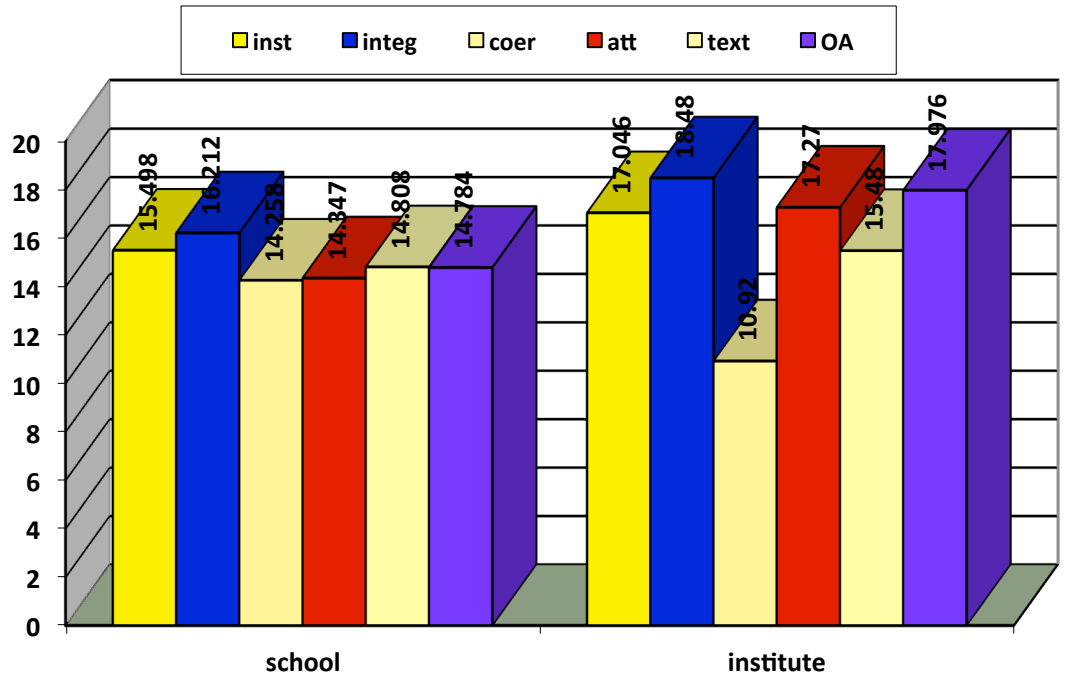

Figure 2: Graphical representation of the means in different parts of the motivation questionnaire for both groups

As figure 2 shows the mean score in each part of the motivation questionnaire for the private institute learners is higher than the high school learners except in the coercion index.

THE RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES TO THE FIRST PART OF THE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The first part of this questionnaire deals with the learners' reasons for learning English. It consisted of 8 questions: 4 items ask instrumental motivation, 2 items are about integrative motivation and 2 questions are about coercion index.

The Analysis of the Learners' Responses to the Instrumental Motivation Questions

These questions of the questionnaire deal with the instrumental motivation:

1. *I think it will some day help me get a good job.*
2. *Proficiency in English is a sign of good education.*
3. *I study English to go to the university.*
4. *English is the language of progress and modernization.*

As Table 3 shows, the mean and the standard deviation of the private institute students on the instrumental motivation questions are respectively 17.04 and 1.68. The mean and the standard deviation of the high school students on the instrumental motivation questions are respectively 15.49 and 1.58. By comparing the means of the two groups shown in the table 3 it can be said that the amount of instrumental motivation is higher for the private institute learners. A *t*-test was

applied to find out if there is a significant difference between these two groups. Table 4 reveals the results of this *t*-test.

Table 4: The Results of the t-test for the Instrumental Motivation

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High School	25	15.49	1.58	48	-3.348	.002
Institute	25	17.04	1.68			

It can be seen in Table 4 that the amount of *t*-observed (*t*=-3.348) is significant at the probability level of p= .002 which is smaller than .05. In other words, instrumental motivation in these two settings is different. The amount of instrumental motivation is higher for the private institute learners.

In order to find a correlation between test anxiety and instrumental motivation, a Pearson Correlation Test was employed.

Table 5: The Results of the Correlation Analysis for Instrumental Motivation

		Test Anxiety	Instrumental motivation
Test Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-.446(**)
	Significance(2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	25	80
Instrumental motivation	Pearson Correlation	-.446(**)	1
	Significance(2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	25	120

** Correlation at 0.01(2-tailed):...

This table depicts a significant negative correlation between the test anxiety and the instrumental motivation (r= -.446). In other words, it can be said that the higher the test anxiety, the lower the instrumental motivation, and vice versa.

The Analysis of the Learners' Responses to the Integrative Motivation Questions

These questions of the questionnaire deal with the integrative motivation:

1. *I think it will help me to better understand English- speaking people.*
2. *I like English.*

As Table 3 shows, the mean and the standard deviation of the private institute students on the integrative motivation questions are respectively 18.48 and 2.26. The mean and the standard deviation of the high school students on the integrative motivation questions are respectively 16.21 and 4.09. By comparing the means of the two groups shown in the above table it can be said that the amount of integrative motivation is higher for the private institute learners. A *t*-test was applied to find out if there is a significant difference between these two groups. Table 6 reveals the results of this *t*-test.

Table 6: The Results of the t-test for the Integrative Motivation

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High School	25	16.21	4.09	48	-2.425	.019
Institute	25	18.48	2.26			

It can clearly be seen in Table 6 that the amount of *t*-observed (*t*=-2.425) is significant at the probability level of p= .019 which is smaller than .05. In other words, the amount of the integrative motivation is significantly higher for the private institute students than the high school students.

The Analysis of the Learners' Responses to the Coercion Index Questions

These questions deal with the Coercion Index:

1. *It is a part of the school curriculum.*
2. *My parents want me to learn it.*

As Table 3 shows, the mean and the standard deviation of the private institute students on the coercion index questions are respectively 10.92 and 3.09. The mean and the standard deviation of the high school students on the coercion index questions are respectively 14.28 and 4.77. By comparing the means of the two groups shown in the above table it can be said that the amount of coercion index is higher for the high school learners. In other words, high school learners attend the English classes only because it is a part of the school curriculum not because of their motivation. A *t*-test was applied to find out if there is a significant difference between these two groups. Table 7 reveals the results of this *t*-test.

Table 7: The Results of the t-test for the Coercion Index Questions

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High School	25	14.28	4.77	48	2.954	.005
Institute	25	10.92	3.09			

As Table 7 shows the amount of *t*-observed (*t*=2.954) is significant at the probability level of p= .005 which is smaller than .05. In other words, the amount of the coercion index is significantly higher for the high school students than the private institute students.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES TO THE SECOND PART OF THE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The second part of this questionnaire deals with the learners' attitude toward learning English and consisted of 5 questions:

1. *Studying English is an enjoyable experience.*
2. *I would study English in school even if it were not required.*
3. *I do not like to spend my time on subjects other than English.*
4. *I think learning English is the best experience in my life.*

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5. *Learning subjects other than English is a waste of time*.

As Table 3 shows, the mean and the standard deviation of the private institute students on questions about learners' attitude are respectively 17.27 and 3.15. The mean and the standard deviation of the high school students on these questions are respectively 14.34 and 3.19. By comparing the means of the two groups shown in the above table it is clear that the private institute learners have positive attitude toward learning English. It can be said that learners' motivation cause positive attitude to learning English and vice versa. A *t*-test was applied to find out if there is a significant difference between these two groups. Table 8 reveals the results of this *t*-test.

Table 8: The Results of the t-test for Learners' Attitude toward Learning English

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High School	25	14.34	3.19	48	-3.255	.002
Institute	25	17.27	3.15			

It can clearly be seen that the amount of *t*-observed (*t*=-3.255) is significant at the probability level of p= .002 which is smaller than .05. In other words, the amount of the positive attitudes toward learning English is significantly higher for the private institute students than the high school students.

THE RESULTS OF THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES TO THE THIRD PART OF THE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The third part of this questionnaire deals with the learners' attitudes toward their English textbooks and consisted of 7 questions:

1. *The topics and reading texts in our English textbooks are enjoyable.*
2. *The materials and activities in our book are interesting*.
3. *Reading texts and topics encourage me to read more English*.
4. *The pictures of the book help me to understand English better.*
5. *Reading passages present an up-to-date picture of the target language people.*
6. *Reading texts and topics are in harmony with the students own needs and interests*.
7. *The reading texts are interesting*.

As Table 3 shows, the mean and the standard deviation of the private institute students on questions about the learners' attitude toward English textbooks are respectively 15.48 and 2.91. The mean and the standard deviation of the high school students on these questions are respectively 14.80 and 1.60. By comparing the means of the two groups shown in the above table it can be said that the private institute learners have positive attitude toward their English textbooks and this attitude can increase their motivation. A *t*-test was applied to find out if there is a significant difference between these two groups. Table 9 reveals the results of this *t*-test.

Table 9: Results of the t-test for Learners' Attitude toward English Textbooks

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High School	25	14.80	1.60	48	-3.176	.003
Institute	25	15.48	2.91			

As Table 9 shows the amount of *t*-observed (*t*= -3.176) is significant at the probability level of p= .003 which is smaller than .05. In other words, the amount of the positive attitudes toward English textbooks is significantly higher for the private institute students than the high school students.

THE RESULTS OF THE LEARNERS' RESPONSES TO THE FOURTH PART OF THE MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This part, consisted of one question, asks learners' satisfaction with their achievement in English:

1. *I am satisfied with my achievement in English*.

As Table 3 shows, the mean and the standard deviation of the private institute students on overall achievement are respectively 17.97 and 4.11. The mean and the standard deviation of the high school students on this question are respectively 14.78 and 4.55. By comparing the means of the two groups shown in the above table, the private institute learners are more satisfied with their achievement in English. It can be said, there is a positive relationship between motivation and overall achievement. In other words, the higher the motivation, the higher the overall achievement, and vice versa. A *t*-test was applied to find out if there is a significant difference between these two groups. Table 10 reveals the results of this *t*-test.

Table 10: The Results of the t-test for the Satisfaction with Overall Achievement in English

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
High School	25	17.04	4.55	48	2.600	.012
Institute	25	17.97	4.11			

It can be seen in Table 10 that the amount of *t*-observed (*t*= 2.600) is significant at the probability level of p= .012 which is smaller than .05. In other words, satisfaction with overall achievement in English in these two settings is different. Satisfaction is higher in the private institute learners.

DISCUSSION

The First Research Question: Is there any difference between learners' motivation in the high school and the Private language institute?

To answer this research question, a *t*-test was used and the results show that motivation is higher in the private language institute learners than the high school learners. Also, Boggiano *et al* (1992) found that if teachers be as facilitators in the class, use interesting materials (photographs, objects,…) and give learners an active role that learners can decide what to teach and how to teach, learners' motivation will increase.

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The Second Research Question: Is the type of motivation (instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, attitude toward learning English, attitude towards English text books, Coercion Index, and overall achievement) different in high school and the private language institute?

To answer this research question a series of *t*-tests were used to analyze the learners' answers to the motivation questionnaire. It was clear that instrumental and integrative motivations are higher in the private institute learners. They want to learn English because they want to find a good job and learning English help them to have a better understanding of English-speaking people. Private institute learners have positive attitude toward learning English and their textbooks. Also, they were satisfied with their achievement in English. But, in the high school, learners attended the English class because it was a part of their school curriculum. They have negative attitude toward learning English because they think learning English is a dull activity and waste of time. Learners in the high school were not satisfied with their progress in English because they just want to pass their course.

A previous study by Giles and Coupland (1991) found that integrative and instrumental motivations are very useful factors to engage learners in learning process. Integrative motivation comes from the learner and it has a very strong power to move learners toward learning. Also, if learners want to have a good position and a good job in their society they are engaged in learning process. The result of Giles and Coupland's research is similar to the results of the present study.

CONCLUSION

According to this study if learners have an active role in learning process, their motivation will increase. Then, students should take responsibility for their learning. They should ask for freedom and power to make decisions in their learning. It is also necessary for students to know that learning is a product of their own activities and it is based on their prior skill, knowledge, and interest. Therefore, it seems that the effective language learning occurs when students collaborate with teachers and textbook writers in designing useful materials by expressing their attitudes and opinions.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

No study is complete by itself and cannot take every detail into consideration. Therefore, there are always aspects which are not accounted for. This research is no exception. There are some issues which were not controlled in this study and can be topics for further research by other researchers.

1) This study was done only in one city with a limited number of students. It is suggested that another study be performed with large numbers of students from more cities.
2) In this study data collection was done through questionnaires; some other studies can be carried out to incorporate interviews with students as well.
3) In this study only female students were questioned. Some other studies can be performed on both genders and see if they differ in motivation and test anxiety.
4) In this study, the participants were adolescents; in other studies adult language learners can be the focus of attention to see whether the same results will be obtained.

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ON DELOGOCENTRISM: A DECONSTRUCTIONIST READING OF TOM STOPPARD'S TWO SELECTED PLAYS; *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD* AND *ARCADIA*

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to examine a deconstructive concept of theatre as it specifically relates to the theatre of post-structuralism by investigating the works and ideas of Tom Stoppard. Accusing Western philosophy of being obsessed with binary oppositions, Jacques Derrida's deconstructive approach represents language as an instable and delogocentric system by means of which no fixed meaning can be created. Together with conceptualism and rejection of modern doctrines, Derrida's theory of post-structuralism is utilized to analyze the inner dynamics of Stoppard's two selected plays: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and *Arcadia*.

KEY WORDS: Post-structuralism, Postmodernism, Deconstruction, Binary oppositions, Différance, Dissemination, Delogocentrism.

INTRODUCTION
The primary aim of this study was to trace deconstructionist features in Tom Stoppard's two selected plays: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and *Arcadia*. After a very brief introduction to a post-structuralist school of criticism by Jacques Derrida called deconstruction, Tom Stoppard's dramaturgy is given a close deconstructionist reading in the selected plays.

Deconstruction
Deconstruction is a school of philosophy and literary criticism associated closely with French philosopher, Jacques Derrida, one of the most influential thinkers of the latter part of the twentieth century, and also the Belgian/North American literary critic Paul de Man. Derrida's deconstruction theory, basically, refers to the re-reading or breaking down of a text to show the multiple meanings at work which tries to subvert the logic of opposition within language. As Butler (2002) asserts:

> The central argument for deconstruction depends on relativism, by which I mean the view that truth itself is always relative to the differing standpoints and predisposing intellectual frameworks of the judging subject. It is difficult to say, then, that deconstructors are

> committed to anything as definite as a philosophical thesis. Indeed, to attempt to define deconstruction is to defy another of its main principles – which is to deny that final or true definitions are possible, because even the most plausible candidates will always invite a further defining move, or 'play', with language. For the deconstructor, the relationship of language to reality is not given, or even reliable, since all language systems are inherently unreliable cultural constructs. (16)

According to Derrida, this demands a close analysis of the basic "distinctions" and "conceptual orderings" which have been formulated by the predominant tradition of Western philosophy. In a series of discussions on philosophers as Plato, Hegel, Rousseau, Kant, Husserl, Austin, and Lévi-Strauss, Derrida embraces a strategy or reading which throws doubt on the presumptions and limitations of textual meaning by uncovering how the uncertainties and certainties a text has presented have indeed been formed through a chain of "preferences" and "repressions" which own advantaged special ideas, values and arguments above others. As Derrida (1978) puts it:

> the movement of signification is possible only if each so called 'present' element, each element appearing on the scene of presence, is related to something other than itself, thereby keeping within itself the mark of the past element, and already letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element, this trace being related no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past, and constituting what is called the present by means of this very relation to what it is not. (32)

Derrida's idea, here, is that what has been put forward as a dichotomy (binary oppositions) in Western philosophy, such as masculine/feminine, is only a difference which has been influenced by a hierarchy. Reshaping Saussure's notion of binary oppositions, Derrida argues that, in each pair, one term is "suppressed" and one "privileged". Derrida aimed to demonstrate how the privileged term relied on the suppressed one for its meaning. Derrida's idea does not seek the information of analytic distinctions altogether, nor does he deal with a simple reversal of hierarchical oppositions. As Derrida and some of his more keen followers well known, "positing difference against identity succeeds only in falling back within the very logic of binary opposition their deconstructive enterprise tries to resist". (Payne and Barbera, 2010:79)

As an alternative, Derrida tries to substitute and recast concepts into larger and inclusive contexts. His procedure simply embodies use of the meaning and potentiality of a concept against the limits within which it has been formulated. Therefore, his doubt on the "structurality of structure", the cause of the cause, or the context of the context attempts to uncover the metaphysical termination or the limits of Western philosophy. Derridean deconstruction reveals the logic, assumption and, structure which construct the predominant tradition of Western Philosophy. Deconstructive criticism does not assert that it can clear up textual conflicts and contradictions. On the contrary, it argues that, there is something inherent to the structure of language which perplexes any attempted textual unity. Derrida's terms "différance" and

"dissemination" point out to both the possibility and the impossibility of defining a certain meaning of a text.

Différance is a pun in French, combining the meanings of "differing" (as in any set of items lined up in space differ from one another) and "deferring" (as in putting off, delaying). Since all texts contain ambiguities and can be read in different ways (la différence), exhaustive interpretation must be forever deferred (la différance).

> Suspended between its two senses of differing and deferring, this neologism represents the non-originary origins of a generalized system of language that encompasses both speech and writing; where meaning is never located within the sign as a self-sufficient entity but is, rather, constituted through the differential play between an infinite number of signifiers and signified. As a result, meaning is always deferred. Thus, the 'concept' of différance represents a powerful critique of *presence* and its associated values. (Childs and Fowler, 2006:55)

Dissemination, however, suggests the process by which, in language, the meaning of any term or set of terms is distributed and diffused throughout the language system without ever coming to a final end.

> Dissemination designates the idea that meaning is never stable, or fixed, but is, rather, dispersed or scattered throughout the language system. Thus, like the notion of *undecidability* (to which it is related), dissemination calls into question the possibility of definition itself. For this reason, it is best conceived of as an effect of writing. (Childs and Fowler, 2006:61)

Derrida's recognized notion of writing plays the role of a metaphor for the "absence" of both a "unified subject" and a "constant referent" in any text- it is not important if spoken or written. For him, such absences are the inescapable aftermath of using "signs" which produce and communicate meaning.

The involvement of the linguistic sign separates the "subject" and the "referent" from themselves, and it is such separations and absences which creates the possibility of textual "misinterpretations" and "misunderstandings". The desire for these systematic incoherence and unmanageable ambiguities in meaning can be regarded as the best characteristic of deconstructive criticism.

In relation to literary analysis, when beginning the interpretive process, by means of what has been defined as Différance and Dissemination, deconstructors seek to overrule their own logocentric ways of viewing a text, moving towards delogocentrism.
A deconstructive reading strategy, as Bressler (1999) represents a linear procedure in his text analysis, would follow the following steps as a simple representation, having a clearly delineated beginning, middle and end:

> 1. Discover the binary operations that govern the text. 2. Comment on the values, concepts and ideas behind these operations. 3. Reverse these present binary operations. 4. Dismantle previously held worldview. 5. Accept the possibility of various levels of a text based on new binary inversions. 6. Allow the meaning of the text to be undecidable (81-82)

In sum,

> Derrida's philosophical enterprise claims to deconstruct pervasive shibboleths as these occur in both academic work and in the language of everyday life. Everyday language is not neutral; it bears within it the presuppositions and cultural assumptions of a whole tradition. At the same time, the critical reworking of the philosophical basis of the tradition in question results, perhaps unexpectedly, in a new emphasis on the individual autonomy and creativeness of the researcher/philosopher/reader. Maybe this anti-populist yet anti-Platonic element in grammatology is Derrida's most important contribution to the thought of the post-war era. (Lechte, 1994:124)

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

Beginning with his early writing career as a playwright, his writing strategy and career, Tom Stoppard, himself, believed that:

> The reason why *that* idea appealed to me rather than another one is that it does have this under-structure to it. . . . The important thing about a successful work of art is not that it should communicate X to everybody but that it should run through the absolute alphabet for each 26 people. (Taylor, 2001:28)

Most embodied to the mentioned idea, one that in a metaphoric situation represents a system of meaning, all at once possible, is his most famous play: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1967). The play is not a mere 'Shakespearean pastiche'. For,

> While retaining the broad context given by Shakespeare, Stoppard develops his 'borrowed' characters into his own creations speculating philosophically upon the 'reality' of a dramatic situation – the plot of *Hamlet* – which they cannot understand. This obliges Stoppard to adopt a critical view of the way in which his 'heroes' are handled by Shakespeare. (Brassell, 1985:37)

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two dead characters from the Shakespear's well-known play *Hamlet*, enter a new context designed by Stoppard with the writer's tendency toward lots of doubt and irony. The text's complexity encounters the reader with lack of coherency, and as a result, the existence of binary oppositions within the play.

In the course of the play, Stoppard divides all three acts of the play into two forms of the 'borrowed characters', which is the characters' "on-stage" and "off-stage" selves. While the

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Shakespearean style is evident in the "on-stage" sections where passages of *Hamlet* enter directly into the play, Stoppard's art craft delivers the much longer "off-stage" sections where Rosencrantz and Guildenstern – as frightened strangers in a world somebody else seems to have made – are left on their own to make sense of the "on-stage" sections and their own relationship to these two parts. Brassell (1985) elaborates on the same idea:

> In creating these "off-stage" realities, however, Stoppard does nothing to make Shakespeare's minor characters major, refusing them the complex and lavish attention that 'heroes' traditionally receive. Instead, his objective is to explore the undeveloped nature of the perpetual minion, the man constantly relegated to the furthest recesses of the stage, without the faintest understanding of the action unfolding around him. (ibid)

There are sections in the play that reflect the same ideas, where the suspended characters are in search of the "off-stage" realities, created by not Shakespeare but Stoppard, the lines that represent the characters confusion on the notions of their reality or fictionality:

> **GUIL:** Why is he mad?!
> **ROS:** I don't know!
> *Beat.*
> **PLAYER:** The old man thinks he's in love with his daughter.
> **ROS** (*appalled*): Good God! We're out of our depth here.
> **PLAYER:** No, no, no---he hasn't got a daughter---the old man thinks he's in love with his daughter.
> **ROS:** The old man is?
> **PLAYER:** Hamlet, in love with the old man's daughter, the old man thinks.
> **ROS:** Ha! It's beginning to make sense!
> (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 49)

They never get significantly further than the chaotic affairs around them. Unable to remember their instructions or how they have arrived, they are never aware of the fact that they are participants of a perplexing drama.

> **GUIL:** ... What's the first thing you remember?
> **ROS:** Oh, let's see... The first thing that comes into my head, you mean?
> **GUIL:** No---the first thing you remember.
> **ROS:** Ah. (*Pause*.) No, it's no good, it's gone. It was a long time ago.
> **GUIL** (patient but edged): You don't get my meaning. What is the first thing after all the things you've forgotten?
> **ROS:** Oh I see. (*Pause*.) I've forgotten the question.
> **GUIL** leaps up and paces.
> **GUIL:** Are you happy?

ROS: What?
GUIL: Content? At ease?
ROS: I suppose so.
GUIL: What are you going to do now?
ROS: I don't know. What do You want to do?
(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 11)

Although they are two dead characters in Shakespear's text, now they are present in Stoppard's one, alive, bewildered with their existence, and not sure about their perception of reality, completely aware that, with their engagement in Stoppard's new game, their fate cannot be changed and this new game cannot save them from their previously-held death.

PLAYER: Lying down. (*He laughs briefly and in a second has never laughed in his life.*) There's a design at work in all art surely you know that? Events must play themselves out aesthetic, moral and logical conclusion.
GUIL: And what' that, in this case?
PLAYER: It never varies---we aim at the point where everyone who is marked for death dies.
GUIL: Marked?
PLAYER: Between "just desserts' and "tragic irony" we are given quite a lot of scope for our particular talent. Generally speaking, things have gone about as far as they can possibly go when things have got about as bad as they reasonably get. (*He switches on a smile.*)
GUIL: Who decides?
PLAYER (*switching off his smile*): Decides? It is written.
He turns away. **GUIL** *grabs him and spins him back violently.*
(*Unflustered.*) Now if you're going to be subtle, we'll miss each other in the dark. I'm referring to oral tradition. So to speak.
GUIL *releases him.*
We're tragedians, you see. We follow directions---there is no choice involved. The bad end unhappily, the good unluckily. That is what tragedy means. (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 80)

By eliminating the characters binary opposition of presence/absence and the condition made for the audience to experience Rosencrantz and Guildenstern "live" on the stage and at the same time "dead" off stage, Stoppards deconstructs the binaray of illusion/reality as well, suggesting that levels of reality and fictionality are not separable. The same idea is exactly mentioned in the play by The Player, who does not differentiate between the two worlds of reality and fiction when Rosencrantz is irritated by being called a "fellow artist", objecting that, "I thought we were Gentlemen" (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 22). The player emphasizes that, "For some of us it is performance, for other patronage. They are two sides of the same coin" (ibid).

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Not only has the existence of binary operations within the text, but also, the text's theme made the play's text delogocentric.

> Tom Stoppard's play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* ... is a very funny play about death. Very funny, very brilliant, very chilling; it has the dust of thought about it and the particles glitter excitingly in the theatrical air. (Barens, 2001:231)

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* the "Dead" of the title as a key word acknowledges the audience or the reader that the protagonists will die. Since title characters died in their off-stage deaths in Shakespeare's tragedy, as victims of a literary determinism, they must die here in Stoppard's world. This dramatic irony and their progression towards their death as they approach the end of the play provide a context for both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's musings on the nature of death:

> **ROS:** We might as well be dead. Do you think death could possibly be a boat?
> **GUIL:** No, no, no . . - Death is . - - not. Death isn't. You take my meaning. Death is the ultimate negative. Not-being. You can't not-be on a boat.
> **ROS:** I've frequently not been on boats.
> **GUIL:** No, no, no-what you've been is not on boats.
> **ROS:** I wish I was dead. (*Considers the drop*.) I could jump over the side. That would put a spoke in their wheel.
> (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 108)

Stoppard's theme is probably best explained in Act II, when Rosencrantz makes speech about lying in a coffin. He says to Guildenstern:

> Do you ever think of yourself as actually dead, lying in a box with a lid on it?
> **GUIL:** No.
> **ROS:** Nor do I, really... It's silly to be depressed by it. I mean one thinks of it like being alive in a box, one keeps forgetting to take into account the fact that one is dead... which should make all the difference... shouldn't it? I mean, you'd never know you were in a box, would you? It would be just like being asleep in a box. Not that I'd like to sleep in a box, mind you, not without any air- --you'd wake up dead, for a start, and then where would you be? Apart from inside a box. That's the bit I don't like, frankly. That's why I don't think of it..
> ***GUIL** stirs restlessly, pulling his cloak round him*.
> Because you'd be helpless, wouldn't you? Stuffed in a box like that, I mean you'd be in there forever. Even taking into account the fact that you're dead, it isn't a pleasant thought. Especially if you're dead, really... ask yourself, if I asked you straight off--- I'm going to stuff you in this box now, would you rather be alive or dead? Naturally, you'd prefer to be alive. Life in a box is better than no life at all. I expect. You'd have a chance at least. You could lie there thinking well, at least I'm not dead! In a minute someone's going to bang on the lid and tell me to come out. (*Banging the floor with his fists*.) "Hey you, whatsyername! Come out of there

> **GUIL** (*jumps up savagely*): You don't have to flog it to death!
> (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 70-71)

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, the idea of discovering the nature of death and representing it stands for the demand to represent the unrepresentable. Although the same idea re-emerges several times throughout the play as a reminder that the demand has not to be forgotten, and although Stoppard's play gives the final answer at the very end to the question rises at the very beginning, that title characters as the same title announces have to die, there remains another question: *how?* Finding answer for such a question requires speculations on the different perspectives the characters represent regarding the representation of "death". But the larger question is: *when did they die?* Based on the play itself, the possible answers to that question are many. According to Vos (1977):

> (1) They die at the end of the play: "Now you see me, now you . . ." . . . and disappears (126); (2) They are already dead at the opening of the play: ". . . the fingernails grow after death . . ." as Rosencrantz cuts his nails (18); (3) They die at each performance of the play; (4) They never died; they exist only in Shakespeare's and Stoppard's imagination and thus they never lived.

Paradoxically, each of the four hypotheses is accurate. The idea of death, however, can be analyzed from other perspectives. The Player dies in one way:

> *The **PLAYER** stands with huge, terrible eyes, clutches at the wound as the blade withdraws: he makes small weeping sounds and falls to his knees, and then right down*. (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 90)

But this is what Guildenstern had previously named "the mechanics of cheap melodrama":

> **GUIL** (*tear, derision*): Actors! The mechanics of cheap melodrama! That isn't death! (*More quietly*.) You scream and choke and sink to your knees, but it doesn't bring ~ home to anyone---it doesn't catch them unawares and start the whisper in their skulls that says---"One day you are going to die." (*He straightens up*.) You die so many times; how can you expect them to believe in your death? (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 83)

However, Player comments that "it is what is expected":

> **PLAYER:** On the contrary, it's the only kind they do believe. They're conditioned to it. I had an actor once who was condemned to hang for stealing a sheep--- -or a lamb, I forget which---so I got permission to have him hanged in the middle of a play---had to change the plot a bit but I thought it would be effective, you know---and you wouldn't believe it, he just wasn't convincing! It was impossible to suspend one's disbelief---and what with the audience jeering and throwing peanuts, the whole thing was a disaster!---he did nothing but cry all the time---right out of character---just stood there and cried... Never again.

(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: 84)

For Guildenstern, however, this melodramatic dying of Player is not the genuine representation of death since it only represents, in a caricatural way, its external signs. For Guildenstern, on the other hand, representation of death is something else. It results to the death of representation:

> **GUIL:** No, no, no... you've got it all wrong... you can't act death. The fact of it is nothing to do with seeing it happen ---it's not gasps and blood and falling about---that isn't what makes it death. It's just a man failing to reappear, that's all ---now you see him, now you don't, that the only thing that's real: here one minute and gone the next and never coming back---an exit, unobtrusive and unannounced, a disappearance gathering weight as it goes on, until, finally, it is heavy with death. (ibid)

After that it was the time for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to die. They represent dying one's own death from the internal point of view because death is "nothingness", "the absence of presence". By disappearing from the stage they die without "the mechanics of cheap melodrama" and in this way they are no more. By the time they die they "disappear from view" and no presentation can be expected from them and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's genuine representation of death results in their death of representation. By presenting the unpresentable, then, the theme of the play acts as a coin with two sides with one side deconstructing the other one. By presenting "death of representation" and "representation of death" at the same time, the play never provides the text's reader and the spectator, as well, with not only a definite and logocentric text, but also a decidable meaning.

This lack of determinate meaning is made by the existence of difference rather than repetition within the play. In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* the meaning is deferred – as in Stoppard's "death of representation" and "representation of death" – and the world and characters are also different – from that of Shakespear's *Hamlet*.

The characters represented are not claimed to be real or even a representation of real; they are made of words based on a text without any context. Real character is therefore an illusion; all characters are the products of the imagination of an author. Deconstructionist views of "the subject as text" could be properly applicable to the analysis of Stoppard's characters. As Kvale (1992) maintains:

> The radical deconstructionist move is to constitute the subject as text (or the text as subject), making it impossible for that subject to refer to itself in any consistent way, independent of the world of signs it is enmeshed in. The text replaces the transcendental ego of Kant. In this scheme the subject is doomed to perpetual exile from itself. It is exposed to endless substitutions of meaning. "The absence of transcendental signifier … extends the domain and the play of signification infinitely" (Derrida, 1981:278). By letting the subject be swallowed up in the text, the transformation of "essential" rational man into "relative" postmodern man is fulfilled. (124-125)

Arcadia

First opened at the Royal National Theatre in London on 13 April 1993, Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, being reviewed by the *The Times* in "Ideas Meet their Comic Match", was praised for the "perfect marriage of ideas and high comedy". Vincent Canby of *The New York Times* described the play as "Tom Stoppard's richest, most ravishing comedy to date, a play of wit, intellect, language, brio and, new for him, emotion."

Arcadia is set in an airy room in a large, Derbyshire country house, in the years 1809-1812 and 1993, with the scenes alternating between the two time periods, juxtaposing the activities of two modern scholars – Hannah Jervis, the author of a popular best-seller on Byron's mistress Lady Caroline Lamb, and Bernard Nightingale, a don at a modern university – and the house's current residents – Valentine, 25-30, a postgraduate biologist and mathematician, who is also an expert at computers, Chlöe, who is 18 and, Gus, who is 15 and is the silent savant who stopped speaking at the age of five – with the lives of those who lived there 180 years earlier, major among them were Thomasina Coverly, the 13-year-old (later 16-year-old) daughter of Lord and Lady Croom, Septimus Hodge, Thomasina's tutor and the academic colleague and friend of Lord Byron (an unseen but important character in the play) and, Ezra Chater, an unsuccessful poet stayed at Sidley Park, who married to a promiscuous wife. In the final scene, however, characters from both periods share the stage.

In the 1800s, in the course of the play, Thomasina, a precocious young genius with understandings of chaos theory and the principles of thermodynamics, her tutor, Septimus, working on the young girl's scientific theories until his own death, the guests and other members of the Croom household engaged in discussions about math, science, art, sex and landscape gardening. Meanwhile, in the present-day scenes, Hannah, busy with the history of the family and Bernard, investigating the possibility of his theory that Byron killed the cuckolded Chater in a duel and then fled the country, are investigating the events of the past.

Stoppard's *Arcadia* is a play shaped within a series of binary operations. Concerning a delicate balance between the past and the present *Arcadia,* deals with the contrasting ideas of order and disorder and the certainty of knowledge. As Haney II (2008) remarks, these opposing concepts and ideas are suggesting certain significance within the play. According to him:

> Stoppard's *Arcadia* juxtaposes the dimensions of time and timelessness, intuition and logic, heart and mind in a way that paradoxically induces in the characters and audience a transpersonal, transrational experience of freedom even from within the boundaries of time. (83)

Through Stoppard's discussion of Chaos Theory within the play, the most prominent of these opposing concepts is the idea of chaos versus order.

Simon Jenkins (1993) seems to suggest Stoppard's motivation in using chaos theory in the course of *Arcadia*. According to him, Stoppard has simply been attracted to the beauty of fractal surfaces when he states that *Arcadia* is "the authentic post-modern play, eclectic, picturesque, devoid of

morality, glittering with [the director] Trevor Nunn's surface dazzle", and that in it Stoppard 'brushes aside' the question of lost meanings (16). In a similar vein, Wardle's review in The Independent on Sunday (1993: 23) emphasises the play's form over its content in a series of expressions reminiscent of a firework display ('dazzlingly elaborate', 'irregular and unforeseen', 'strikes increasingly brilliant sparks'), and praises Stoppard for finally abandoning any attempt to write about social or ethical issues.

While such interpretations forge a connection between Stoppard's work and poststructuralist and postmodernist attitudes to epistemology and ethics by ignoring some of the major thematic elements in *Arcadia*, they do draw attention to the way chaos theory informs the structure of Stoppard's play. What must be added to them, however, is the way that chaos theory functions in *Arcadia* as not just a reflection of complex form and flashy style, but as justification for much more old-fashioned concepts, such as crafted and harmonious form and the value of literary meaning. Although everything disappears into the state of chaos and entropy – as it happens in the final scene – a sense of order can be found within this chaos. According to Valentine:

> **Valentine:** Lend me a finger. *(He takes her finger and presses one of the computer keys several times.)* See? In an ocean of ashes, islands of order. Patterns making themselves out of nothing. I can't show you how deep it goes. Each picture is a detail of the previous one, blown up. And so on. For ever. Pretty nice, eh? (Arcadia: 76)

The table which collects props from both time periods throughout the play is a strong example of the chaos/order dichotomy. Edwards (2001) explains this representation:

> At the end of the play, the table has accumulated a variety of objects that, if one saw them without having seen the play, would seem completely random and disordered. Entropy is high. But if one has seen the play, one has full information about the objects and the hidden 'order' of their arrangement, brought about by the performance itself. Entropy is low; this can be proved by reflecting that tomorrow night's performance of the play will finish with the table in a virtually identical 'disorder'—which therefore cannot really be disorder at all. (181)

By contrast, in *Arcadia* the presence of those windows of order, of form in life and art, is underlined. Stoppard's aim has been to give the play shape, and in accordance with chaos theory, that shape has symmetries and reflections which weave a complex, harmonious picture.

Lady Croom and Mr. Noaks arguments on the garden's style in different periods of time and discussing the before-and-after views of the place pictured by the architect exemplify the binary of Classicism versus Romanticism in the course of the play.

> **Lady Croom:** Where there is the familiar pastoral refinement of an Englishman's garden, here is an eruption of gloomy forest and towering crag, of ruins where there was never a house, of water dashing against rocks where there was neither spring nor

> a stone I could not throw the length of a cricket pitch. My hyacinth dell is become a haunt for hobgoblins, my Chinese bridge … is usurped by a fallen obelisk overgrown with briars … (Arcadia: 12)

Lady Croom's neo-classical way of looking at nature – her assumption that its orderliness conforms to an idea of perfection defined by God – is contrasted with the new architect Richard Noakes's romantic design, which strives to convey an impression of the drama of the individual's struggle against the overpowering forces of nature. Naturally, the new design follows not only a new vision of natural law, but also one of aesthetic value.

> **Lady Croom:** The trees are companionably grouped at intervals that show them to advantage. The rill is a serpentine ribbon unwound from the lake peaceably contained by meadows on which the right amount of sheep are tastefully arranged – in short, it is nature as God intended … (ibid)

In the past, Thomasina represents Romanticism in her scientific outlook and growing affection for her tutor Septimus. She challenges the traditional notion that Newton has sorted out the mystery of universe, by the time she asks "Is God Newtonian" (Arcadia: 6). Poking holes in Newtonian science, she discovers that once having stirred jam onto her pudding, "You cannot stir things apart" (ibid). According to Thomasina, the way Septimus teaches geometry limits it to simple forms which are predictable rather than something which like an apple leaf, "which alludes both to the Eros of Eden (Romanticism) and to Newton's discovery of gravity (Enlightenment)" (Haney II, 2008:85). Although Septimus provides her with some explanations and remarks that Newton "has mastery of equations which lead into infinities where we cannot follow" (Arcadia: 49), she does not agree with him.

> **Thomasina:** What a faint-heart! We must work outward from the middle of the maze. We will start with something simple. *(She picks up the apple leaf.)* I will plot this leaf and deduce its equation. You will be famous for being my tutor when Lord Byron is dead and forgotten. (ibid)

Therefore, throughout the play:

> Thomasina challenges the assumptions of the Enlightenment through Romanticism in her pursuit of nonrationality and the study of irregular landscapes of nature in the wild. (Haney II, 2008:85)

On the other hand, doing research on the Coverly estate in the present, Hannah represents a neoclassical attitude based on Newtonian physics and a denial of feelings. In the course of the play she attempts to deny emotions and rejects Romanticism.

> **Hannah:** The whole Romantic sham, Bernard! It's what happened to the Enlightenment, isn't it? A century of intellectual rigour turned in on itself. A mind in chaos suspected of genius. In a setting of cheap thrills and false emotion … The decline from thinking to feeling, you see. (Arcadia: 36-37)

The two scientific positions, Thomasina and Hannah, as the play progresses, lead other characters as well as the audience and the reader, suggested by Septimus, toward a condition of unity.

> **Septimus:** When we have found all the mysteries and lost all the meaning, we will be alone, on an empty shore. (Arcadia: 126)

This overview of the debate between classicism and romanticism in the play reveals the extent to which the two world-views dominate the play. Thematically, the debate brings out the positive and negative qualities in both, and shows how elements combined from each attitude can form a view of the world which allows for both structure and individual freedom, for both reality and representation. The solution to the contrast between the determined and the truly free is not made in the play by replacing the classical garden with the romantic version, since both are shown to be equally determined. Instead, it is found in the freedom with which the mind of the daughter of the house moves in its strictly determined surroundings.

Fleming notes that Stoppard constructs *Arcadia* through a "nonlinear bouncing between time periods [that] suggests disorder, yet lurking underneath is a tightly ordered dramatic structure" (2001:195). He also notes that the term fractal means "self-similar," as in the "Self-similarity of dialogue, situations, characters, props, costumes, and musical accompaniment" across the scenes covering two historical periods (ibid). As one shall see, in *Arcadia*;

> Stoppard dramatizes how the mind undergoes a transformation through which the discovery of the mystery of life does not lead to meaning or rationality, but rather toward the transcendence of meaning in the source of thought where we can taste the boundless unity of nonpluralistic consciousness. To be alone as Septimus says, therefore, suggests undergoing a transformation beyond the Romanticism vs. Enlightenment, reason vs. emotion duality toward the unified experience of pure consciousness as opposed to the multiplicity of the mind's conscious content—the qualia or qualities of phenomenal experience. (Haney II, 2008:86)

Stoppard's *Arcadia* is also shaped in a world trapped not only in present, but also in past. The opposing insights in the fields of art and science are also traceable within the play's text. In her book, *The Politics of Postmodernism* (1989), Hutcheon proposes that:

> There are other kinds of border tension in the postmodern too: the ones created by the transgression of the boundaries between genres, between disciplines or discourses, between high and mass culture, most problematically, perhaps, between practice and theory. (18)

Infact, the binary of art/science is evident from the very beginning. In fact, *Arcadia* is characterized by its emphasis on the coexistence of literary theories and science notions, which seem to be contradictory and exclusive to each other. The following argument between Valentine and Bernard remarks their conflicting ideas on scientific progress and artistic personalities:

> **Valentine:** The questions you're asking don't matter, you see. It's like arguing who got there first with the calculus. The English say Newton, the Germans say Leibnitz. But it doesn't matter . What matters is the calculus. Scientific progress. Knowledge.
> **Bernard:** Really? Why? Why does scientific progress matter more than personalities?
> Valentine: Is he serious?
> **Hannah:** No, he's trivial. Bernard –
> **Valentine:** (*Interrputing, to Bernard*) Do yourself a favour, you're on a loser.
> **Bernard:** Oh, you're going to zap me with penicillin and pesticides. Spare me that and I'll spare you the bomb and aerosols. But don't confuse progress with perfectibility. A great poet is always timely. A great philosopher is an urgent need. There's no rush for Isaac Newton. We were quite happy with Aristotle's cosmos. Personally, I preferred it. Fifty-five crystal spheres geared to God's crankshaft is my idea of a satisfying universe. I can't think of anything more trivial than the speed of light. Quarks, Quasars – big bangs, black holes – who gives a shit? How did you people con us out of all that status? All that money? And why are you so pleased with yourselves? (Arcadia: 61)

This above discourse is an example of heated arguments between Enlightenment and Romanticism in the play. Valentine who embodies notions of enlightenment subscribes to the notion that progress and knowledge matter more than personalities. Yet Bernard, who attacks him in a Romanticist's violent reaction against the Enlightenment, refuses to be limited by Valentine's devotion to scientific progress. By depicting Bernard as cynical and radical in his attack on Valentine, Stoppard reveals his opinion that the Romantic objection to the Enlightenment may be too extreme. With the conversation between Valentine and Hannah, the dissolution between art and science is finally reached upon.

> **Hannah**: Is it the grouse?
> **Valentine**: Oh, the grouse. The damned grouse.
> **Hannah**: You mustn't give up.
> **Valentine**: Why? Didn't you agree with Bernard?
> **Hannah**: Oh, that. It's *all* trivial--your grouse, my hermit, Bernard's Byron. Comparing what we're looking for misses the point. It's wanting to know that makes us matter. Otherwise we're going out the way we came in. That's why you can't believe in the afterlife, Valentine. Believe in the after, by all means, but not the life. Believe in God, the soul, the spirit, the infinite, believe in angels if you like, but not in the great celestial get-together for an exchange of views. If the answers are in the back of the book I can wait, but what a drag. Better to struggle on knowing that failure is final. Oh! but how beautiful! (Arcadia: 75)

It is apparent that, in the course of the play, there is a clash between emotion emphasized in the free will and rationality embodied in Newton's law of motion. In Newton's theory, a general, accurate and simple analysis and prediction is featured, as Septimus reveals "everything from the furthest planet to the smallest atom of our brain acts according to Newton's law of motion" (Arcadia: 5). However, Thomasina has started to intuit that the world-view projected in Newton's theory is incomplete as she tells Septimus: "When you stir your rice pudding, Septimus, the

spoonful of jam spreads itself round making red trails like the picture of a meteror in my astronomical atlas. But if you stir backward, the jam will not come together again. Indeed, the pudding does not notice and continues to turn pink just as before" (ibid). Septimus, indeed, inspired by his student, Thomasina's innovative discovery of the nature, seems to be informed of the incompleteness of Newton's law of motion.

> **Septimus:** A prize essay of the Scientific Academy in Paris. The author deserves your indulgence, my lady, for you are his prophet.
> **Thomasina:** I? What does he write about? The waltz?
> **Septimus:** Yes. He demonstrates the equation of the propagation of heat in a solid body. But in doing so he has discovered heresy – a natural contradiction of Sir Issac Newton.
> **Thomasina:** Oh! – he contradicts determinism?
> **Septimus:** No! … (Arcadia: 81)

As stated by John Fleming:

> Since comprehending scientific concepts can sometimes be difficult, Stoppard aids his audience's understanding by paralleling the shift in the scientific paradigm to the analogous transition from classicism to romanticism – that is, classicism metaphorically corresponds to Newtonian science and Romanticism to deterministic chaos. (2001:197)

In the following monologue, it seems that Valentine has experienced both determinism and unpredictability, both fate and free will. As he explains to Hannah, "The unpredictable and predetermined unfold together to make everything the way it is. It's how nature creates itself, on every scale, the snowflake and the snowstorm." (Arcadia: 47).

> **Valentine:** If you knew the algorithm and fed it back say ten thousand times, each time there'd be a dot somewhere on the screen. You'd never know where to expect the next dot. But gradually you'd start to see this shape, because every dot will be inside the shape of this leaf. It wouldn't be a leaf, it would be a mathematical object. But yes. The unpredictable and the predetermined unfold together to make everything the way it is. It's how nature creates itself, on every scale, the snowflake and the snowstorm. It makes me so happy. People were talking about the end of physics. Relativity and quantum looked as if they were going to clean out the whole problem between them. A theory of everything. But they only explained the very big and the very small. The universe, the elementary particles. The ordinary-sized stuff which is our lives, the things people write poetry about – clouds –daffodils – waterfalls – and what happens in a cup of coffee when the cream goes in – these things are full of mystery, as mysterious to us as the heavens were to the Greeks. (Arcadia: 48)

Indeed, *Arcadia* is a play full of different theories ranging from literature, mathematics, physics, chaos theory and, landscape gardening in its structure and the play's plot. In the end, however, Thomasina is burnt to her death and she can never be brought back due to the irreversibility

notion implied in the second law of thermodynamics. In this light "it is not nonsense" (Arcadia: 36), far from which the play is an exemplifier of the employment of science theory to restore, re-costruct and re-present the past in a story-telling manner. Hence, the dichotomies between art and science, emotion and ration, heart and mind are eliminated, and a world of multiple disciplines can be reshaped through scraps of memory.

As Stoppard contrasts free will and determinism, science and humanism, romantic and classical, female intuition with male dogmatism, these kinds of oppositions become numerous in the course of the play; in the same way, the play takes on a number of different meanings when looked at from different perspectives. And the existence of all these dual operations leads the play's text towards both difference and deference and meaning uncertainty.

> In *Arcadia*, since the action of the play goes nowhere, the reader/audience comes to a dead end or "aporia" in Derridian terms. There are indefinite contradictory meanings or significations in the play and the reader cannot decide which one to choose or refer to as the final signified. Consequently, it can be concluded that in *Arcadia*, there is not a sufficient ground for the reader to choose among the numerous signifier or signified. Thus, attaining an accurate and exact meaning is, approximately, impossible. (Hooti and Shooshtarian, 2010: 22)

CONCLUSION

The exploration of Tom Stoppard's two selected plays: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and *Arcadia* in a post-structuralist framework with regard to the relevant deconstructive theories and concepts was the main concern of the study. In order to detect these elements, the definition of important key terms and the theoretical framework introduced by the school's prominent critic, Jacques Derrida, wre presented first. The next step was to apply the related discussed elements to the context of Stoppard's selected plays and the present part wishes to bring the findings and conclusions of the study.

According to post-structuralism, the writer had no final authority over the text, a text was no longer thought to be a clear display of the writer's worldview, but was seen as a boundlessly perplexing subversion of the authors' prime intentions. It was a text that made a start by questioning the foundations on which texts themselves were constructed, a text which gave particular importance to the fact that it was written; and a text that did not end with a straight and definite conclusion. Therefore, while reading a text one must stop trying to discover the undiscoverable which is the absolute truth and openly affirm that what may be right for one person may not be right for another.

When such principles are applied to literary interpretation, the postmodernist realizes that no such a thing as the meaning of an aesthetic text exists. Therefore, since each reader's view of truth is different from that of other readers, for each text, then, there exist an almost infinite number of interpretations as there are readers, all possible and therefore, the final reality is undecidable – text's moves towards the notion called delogocentrism.

Regarding Stoppard's drama, the same situation that deconstruction declare about the text exists. Almost at the end of each play by Stoppard, readers become confused and perplexed. Since the text does not indicate its meaning and it is up to the reader to interpret it, the number of interpretations will not be limited and deciadable.

In *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* Stoppard paints a picture of a real deconstructionist condition. The existence of binary oppositions in the play reflects the text's delogocentrism. Though they are present in Stoppard's text, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are absent as a matter of their previous death in Shakespeare's text. The present/absent model of personal identity leads to their level of reality/fictionality that cannot be separated. The lack of final meaning, completely evident in the play leads to the lack of closure and which is another characteristic of deconstruction. Since there are numerous contradictory meanings or significations in the play, the responsibility of interpretation and getting the meaning depends on the reader, not on the writer who has, in fact, no authority over the text which leads to relativity of the play's text.

Consisting of two plots, one happens in the past and the other in the present, Stoppard's *Arcadia* moves around a theory on Lord Byron, however, Byron is not a major character in the play. Stoppard, then, repeats in *Arcadia* what he did in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, where he assigned minor roles to Hamlet, while moving Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to centre stage.

Stoppard's *Arcadia*, the second play which is discussed in the study, is composed of two plots, is not only a play of ideas but also a play about ideas. It resembles his *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* in a way he introduces Byron as a minor character as he assigned a minor role to Hamlet by bringing two previously dead characters, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to stage.

Antor (1998) describes *Arcadia*'s thematic pattern:

> We intend to show here that Stoppard presents various modes of approaching reality and making it meaningful, both from the arts and from the sciences, and that he depicts a general development from a pre-modern or, one might even say, a classical belief in regularity, order, finite linear teleology and the existence of well-structured patterns to a postmodern and post-structuralist scepticism about these things and an awareness of irregularity, chaos, non-linearity, infinity and unstructured patternlessness or complexity. The play, in order to discuss these concepts, uses the theory of gardening and the conflict between classicism and romanticism as well as recent developments in chaos theory and thermodynamics and thereby becomes an example of isomorphisms of thought in the two cultures. (326-354)

As post-structrulist theorists are highly doubtful about endeavors to either establish or comprehend the society on the basis of fixed and universal values, binary oppositions and their blurring distinctions are of significant importance in the deconstructive age. *Arcadia* is a play shaped in a series of such dichotomies such as distinctions between thinking and feeling (binary

of reason/emotion), order and disorder (binary of order/chaos), and the Classical and the Romantic (binary of Classicism/Romanticism).

In the closing scene of *Arcadia*, there are times when the past and present characters mingle on the stage. To cite an instance, Hannah, the present-day novelist, fills Septimus's glass from the same decanter and sips from it. This visual image creates a theatrical effect bringing together the past and present, and hence, blurring their boundaries. Likewise, the closing scene of *Arcadia* is fascinating in a way that the past and present characters: Septimus and Thomasina, Hannah and Gus, are dancing together simultaneously onstage. In a way, their co-existence and simultaneity may blur the boundary between present and the past.

Thus in "Romantic vs. Postmodern Reality: An Examination of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*", Guy Stern writes that:

> In *Arcadia* Stoppard outdistances even all his previous deconstructions of reality [....]. [T]hree recondite researchers prove before our eyes that the past is unreconstructable, reading its records, intuiting its spirit, or trying to quantify it via modern mathematics inevitably leads to major distortions. (1996:155)

To solve the problems by the classical science, Stoppard introduces chaos theory. Chaos theory is only a tool to reflect the insufficiency of a single perception within the play. The abandonment of a single perspective is post-structuralism. Since deconstructist thinkers reject the idea that there could exist an integrated world view and there are no basic principles or foundations on which to build an encompassing picture of the universe, abandoning the classical science as the basic principles and introducing chaos theory to destroy an integrated world view makes *Arcadia* as an exemplifier of post-structuralism.

In *Arcadia*, as in most of Stoppard's plays, there is no final meaning, no real authority and no transcendental signified. This feature leads to a sense of non-ending in the play. Everything is unreliable and ambiguous. The lack of final meaning results in lack of the closure force the text's meaning to be undecidable and moves the play towards an insight called delogocentrism.

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AUTHENTIC LANGUAGE INPUT FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING IN EFL/ESL CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT
Various teaching materials are considered to be essential components in language learning/learning at all levels. In the same line, various textbooks accompanied with audiovisual materials which have been prepared for language learning serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. However, various sources of audiovisual programs from different technologies also have the potential to provide the necessary language input for language learning in-and-outside the classroom setting. Various audiovisual programs are considered as sources of authentic language input if they contain genuine instances of language use as opposed to exemplars devised specifically for language teaching purposes. In view of this, the present paper was set to shed more light on the concept of authenticity of language input by considering the potential sources of authentic language input currently available in English as a foreign language (EFL) context and English as a second language (ESL) context. Moreover, it underscores the benefits of utilizing authentic language input in language learning classrooms.

KEY WORDS: Authentic language input, Sources of authentic language input, Audiovisual programs

SOURCES OF LANGUAGE INPUT IN EFL/ESL CONTEXTS

Various sources of language input particularly authentic language input are available in EFL and ESL contexts. However, before the discussion on the sources of language input is started, the concepts of EFL and ESL contexts need to be considered.

An EFL context refers to an environment where English language is not the primary or secondary language spoken. According to Freed (1995), English is considered as a foreign language rather than a second language. Moreover, English language has no major role in society and is learnt in the classroom setting (Ellis, 2008). In contrast, an ESL context is an environment where English language is spoken in society as the official language or the medium of communication among people from different countries. In fact, English language plays an institutional and social role in the community in ESL context (Ellis, 2008).

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Considering the sources of language input in EFL/ESL contexts, it should be mentioned that in ESL contexts, people can have interaction with other people from different countries using the English language. English is then considered as a source of language input which can facilitate and pave the way for SLA (Gass, 1997). The social interaction in ESL contexts is one of the authentic sources of language input which can help language learners acquire the language in informal setting. In contrast, in an EFL context social interaction as a source of language input in an informal language learning setting is lacking. English is not used as a medium of communication or for other purposes in society in the EFL contexts. As a matter of fact, the use of English language is mainly limited to formal setting at universities, language institutes or language classrooms. However, various audiovisual technologies have proved effective in providing the language learners with authentic language input to learn the language in-and-outside the classroom.

AUTHENTIC LANGUAGE INPUT

The employment of authentic language input through authentic materials in foreign/second language learning has a long history. Henry Sweet (1899, cited in Gilmore, 2007) was one of the pioneers who utilized authentic texts in his books because he was aware of their potential advantages over contrived materials.

In order to determine the definition of authentic language input as precisely as possible, the term authenticity should be considered first. In this regard, there are a variety of definitions of this concept which relate to the foreign/second language (Gilmore, 2007; Taylor, 1994; Nunan, 1999; just to name a few). These varieties of definitions originate from the debate as to whether authentic materials in the foreign/second language are in fact authentic or not.

Considering to the concept of authentic language input, Gilmore (2007) defined authentic language input as the language carrying a real message which is created by a real speaker or writer for a real audience. Taylor's (1994) also considered authentic language input as any material in English which has not been specifically produced for the purpose of language teaching. In fact, authentic language materials are spoken or written language materials that have been produced in the course of real communication and not specifically produced for the very purpose of language teaching (Nunan, 1999).

According to Nunan (1999), authentic language input can be drawn from various sources of audio-visual mass media technologies including TV. Linguistically, authentic language input refers to the use of authentic materials from the target culture which is presented in the target language such as different programs, for example, news, movies, songs, soap opera, and comedy as audio-visual mass media materials provided by various technologies. The important point to be considered is that these materials are not initially made for language teaching purposes.

SOURCES OF AUTHENTIC LANGUAGE INPUT

There are varieties of authentic teaching sources and materials available to EFL/ESL teachers to employ for different needs for various teaching situations. While social interaction as a source of

authentic language input is not available in EFL context, many other sources of authentic language input are available in both EFL and ESL contexts through various audiovisual technologies. The sources of authentic language input which are available in both EFL and ESL contexts can originally be extracted from different desktop technologies such as computers and non-desktop technologies such as TV. Accordingly, various audiovisual mass media materials can include different print materials followed by related video and audio, audiotapes and CDs with accompanying textbooks, and videotapes with textbooks.
Considering the integration of various audiovisual programs that provide authentic language input into language learning, many studies have been conducted (Martinez, 2002; Gilmore, 2007; Nunan, 1999; Gebhard, 1996; Brinton, 1991; Miché, 2002; Schön et al., 2008; among others). These studies all underscore the point that audiovisual materials are pedagogically valuable to be utilized for language teaching. According to Gebhard (1996), there are unlimited sources for authentic language materials from TV programs such as TV that language teachers and learners can utilize for the very purpose of language learning.

BENEFITS OF UTILIZING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

There is an agreement among foreign/second language instructors that authentic language input can be utilized as an essential part of second language learning. According to many scholars (Martinez, 2002; Gilmore, 2007; Nunan, 1999; Gebhard, 1996; Brinton, 1991; just to name a few), there are many advantages associated to authentic language materials which make these materials pedagogically valuable to expose language learners to the target language. In this regard, Martinez (2002) provided a number of sound advantages for using authentic language materials for language teaching. An important advantage is that authentic language materials provide a wide range of language change of the target language. For example, by listening to songs and stories in the target language, language learner will be able to hear dialectal differences of various countries that speak the target language (Martinez, 2002). This can be used for a class discussion.

According to Brinton (1991), authentic materials and media can strengthen the direct relationship between the language classroom and the outside world for students. Gebhard (1996) considered authentic materials as a way to contextualize language learning. When lessons are focused on comprehending, language learners tend to concentrate more on content and meaning rather than the language itself. This offers the language learners a valuable source of authentic language input, so that they are not exposed only to the language presented by the text and the teacher.

In the same line, Brosnan et al. (1984) put forth that by simplifying the language or changing it for teaching purposes, the task may become more difficult. According to Brosnan et al. (1984), authentic language offers language learners the opportunity to deal with a small amount language input which contains complete and meaningful messages. Moreover, authentic language materials help language learners to notice the immediate relevance of what they do in the classroom to what they need to do in the real world communication. It is essential for language learners to listen to and read different kinds of authentic language material because it helps motivate the language learners by bringing the content and the subject matter to life for them, and enable them

make the important connections between the classroom world and the real world outside the classroom setting.
Another advantage of using authentic materials is the comfortable environment that these materials create for young children. Authentic language materials are more appealing to the language learners than non-authentic language materials because of their objective to communicate a message rather than emphasize particular aspects of the target language (Gilmore, 2007). Another advantage of using authentic language material is the focus on every feature of the language (Gilmore, 2007). In contrast, the artificial language materials tend to cause continual repetition of certain grammatical constructions, certain elements of the vocabulary, or certain combinations of words.

Regarding the use of authentic language materials, some researchers have focused on the use of songs as authentic language input and language learning (Miché, 2002 & Schön et al. 2007). According to Miché (2002), songs are multipurpose resources of authentic language material for different foreign language lessons. Both communication and entertainment are combined as songs provide communication skills entangled with hobby. In addition, pronunciation skills can be strengthened through listening to different songs. Pronunciation variations are provided through authentic language input from songs as well as various dialects of the target language (Miché, 2002). Accordingly, authentic language input from songs is a great way to make language learners aware of the dialectal variations from one target language speaking country to the next. Authentic language input from different songs can provide repetition in conjunction with rhythm which leads learners to remember not only the pronunciation, but also the vocabulary (Miché, 2002).

DRAWBACKS OF USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

In relation to the drawbacks of utilizing authentic materials, Martinez (2002) underlined the problem associated with the use of authentic language materials in the classrooms with different language proficiency levels. According to Martinez (2002) authentic language materials which are used may be too culturally biased and the vocabulary may be irrelevant to the language learners' needs. More importantly, low level language proficiency or beginner level language learners may have a hard time interpreting what they hear or read because of the mixed structures that are used. Accordingly, much of the difficulty language learners experience is related to their lack of familiarity with authentic language input and the processing strategies required for comprehending it.

In short, the majority of researchers agree on the pedagogical value of authentic language materials and the integration of such materials in language learning.

WHAT TYPE OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO SELECT?

Access to a wide range of audiovisual mass media programs is getting very easy for all the people around the world with everlasting technological developments. In the same line, many researchers have highlighted the pedagogical values of various audiovisual mass media programs to be incorporated into language learning. Among various programs, films, cartoons, news, songs, and documentaries turn out to be effective teaching devices to develop the language

learners' language skills and stimulate their imagination simultaneously. Their capacity to arouse the learners' motivation and their potential to engage the learners in a variety of fruitful activities related to aural perception in the target language can scarcely be denied.

One of the essential factors to be considered in utilizing various audiovisual mass media programs as sources of authentic language input is the choice of the programs that should be based on some criteria that can serve the purposes of the teacher. Accordingly, some important criteria for selecting the appropriate segments of various programs can be:

1. The students' language proficiency should be considered.
2. Choose stories that are relevant to students' lives.
3. Ask the students about their preferences regarding different types of audiovisual programs.
4. Choose stories that motivate the students.
5. Use various broadcasts that provide exposure to various accents and cultures.
6. Choose stories that are proficiency-level appropriate; political and science related stories are often too difficult for many students to understand.
7. Use stories that lend themselves to many learning activities and the integration of the four skills.

HELPFUL TEACHING TIPS

After outlining some of the criteria for selecting and preparing various audiovisual programs, the following several teaching tips that will help make teaching with various authentic materials easier and more enjoyable for both the teachers and the language learners should be taken into consideration:

1. Offer students a choice in the content of the materials you show in class. Take an inventory of their interest.
2. Prepare extension activities to fill the space between the first and last students' finishing an activity.
3. Get feedback from the students. It is important for teachers to get feedback from students regarding their comfort level on the various four skills assignments, processes, and procedures used in conjunction with the stories.
4. Ask your students regularly about their feelings about activities in class. You could give them a formal feedback form to fill out or ask them informally to give you a thumb up or a thumb down.
5. All four skills activities should include opportunities for students to play an active role in their own learning. When preparing for a task, help students become aware of any relevant strategy, from their own language, that might help them to perform the task successfully.

CONCLUSION

Authentic materials refer to the use various materials including video and audio and other resources that are not specifically prepared for pedagogical purposes. Authentic materials may

have positive effect on learner motivation because they are intrinsically more interesting and motivating than created materials.

There are various reasons why authenticity may be regarded as important. One is that it presents learners with language exposure similar to that enjoyed by native speakers, including all the characteristics of natural language which may be necessary for the learner properly to interpret texts. In addition, there is motivational attraction for insisting on authentic texts, created as a means of communicating content and not for some pedagogic purposes.

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Assessing ESP Learners' Beliefs about Language Learning: A Survey in an Iranian Local Context

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ABSTRACT
Following cognitive views towards language pedagogy, this preliminary report illustrates the beliefs of a community of non-English-major university students (N=139) about learning English as-a-foreign-language (EFL) in a dominantly bilingual Kurdish-Persian academic context in Ilam, in western Iran. To recognize the beliefs, BALLI (Horwitz, 1988) as a popular survey instrument was slightly modified and administered to the participants. Adopting a descriptive approach, the findings were generally classified and discussed in terms of five components: (a) language aptitude; (b) language learning difficulty; (c) nature of language learning; (d) learning and communication strategies; and, (e) motivation and expectations. The results also revealed these ethnic learners have a broad but consistent range of conceptions about EFL similar to and different from studies reported in the current literature. Finally, as a pedagogical implication, it was suggested that EFL teachers should consider the susceptibility of learners' beliefs to change during time and develop useful strategies to relieve clashing beliefs among language learners.

KEYWORDS: Bilingualism, Beliefs, EFL, ESP, Language learning, Language learners, Local

INTRODUCTION
In the domain of cognitive views, beliefs are "dynamic and situated constructs" (Ellis, 2008) which have been generally characterized as "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true" (Richardson, 1999, p. 103). During the last two decades, research interest in second or foreign language learning has been inclined to the examination of student-centered learning and learners' individual characteristics (Bernat and Gvozdenko, 2005) and growing studies in this line have led to a particular focus on learners' beliefs (Altan, 2006; Bernat and Lloyd, 2007). Therefore, in the context of language pedagogy, beliefs as metacognitive knowledge (Oz, 2007) have been defined as common assumptions that learners hold about themselves as learners, about the nature of language learning, the learning process, and the variables influencing their learning (Wenden, 1999).

Evidence from a growing number of published research and scholarship in the last two decades in this stream from the learners' perspective demonstrates that the belief system of language learners plays a decisive role in their success and failure in language learning (Bernat,

& Gvozdenko, 2005; Berant, 2008). As well, such studies reveal that learners' beliefs about own capacity and personal models of their own processes are much more important than universally accepted theories of learning, and some psychometric measures or individual difference factors such intelligence or aptitude (Ellis, 2008; Bernat, 2008) and it is argued that belief systems are influential because they raise learners' consciousness and shape their attitudes towards language learning, learning strategies and policies (Buyukyazi, 2010). Therefore, understanding learner beliefs is essential, since they can have a facilitative or detrimental effect on learning and the way learners feel about, approach, and act upon a language (Bernat and Gvozdenko, 2005).

For example, learners' beliefs about the importance of grammatical accuracy or native-like pronunciation, or even the amount of time it takes to learn a language might be as a hindrance or as an incentive. Therefore, it can be concluded that an awareness of learners' beliefs is central to language pedagogy because according to Ellis (2008), beliefs shape the way learners set about language and language learning process and product. In addition, knowledge of learners' multidimensional beliefs about language and language learning that are under the influence of many variables including past positive or negative learning experiences, cultural background and context, and numerous individual differences as well as personal factors (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005; Oz, 2007) may provide language teachers and educators as well as curriculum designers with a better understanding and awareness of differing types of learners, their strategies, orientations, and expectations that will have an impact on their learning practices (Horwitz, 1988, p.283). Consequently, it is argued that teachers can make more informed choices about teaching and learning processes (Bernat, & Gvozdenko, 2005), plan appropriate language instruction (Horwitz, 1999), and adopt the best approaches and techniques for teaching English based on the belief system of learners.

Over the past two decades, many researchers have explored language learning beliefs in various studies (e.g. Altan, 2006; Bernat, 2006; Buyukyazi, 2010; Oz, 2007; Man-fat, 2008; Tanaka and Ellis, 2003; Yazici and Tan, 2010), covering varying groups of learners in different learning settings (e.g. in Turkey, China, Hungary, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, and ….). Iran, among other English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) contexts, provides an interesting sociolinguistic setting for a study on language learning beliefs. There has still been scarcity of empirical research both internationally and locally that investigate foreign language learners' beliefs in unique contexts. Yet only a few of studies have explored Iranian non-English-major university students' beliefs (except a few recently published studies limited in scope to monolingual Persian-speaking EFL learners e.g Abedinia, Rahimi, Zare-ee, 2011; Ghabanchi and Meidani, 2012; Ghavamnia, Kassaian and Dabaghi, 2011; Mohebi and Khodadady, Khonamri, 2009; Zare-ee, 2010).

Therefore, due to the paucity of studies on EFL learners belief system in Iran it would be interesting to explore the language learning beliefs of these Iranian students learning EFL and provide a preliminary description of commonly held learner beliefs in a predominantly ethnic bilingual region outside the circle of English world in order to complement the lines of research and studies in this regard. Accordingly, the current study is to address the following research question:

What beliefs do Iranian ethnic non-English-major university students hold about EFL in their bilingual academic context?

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METHODOLOGY

Participants

To conduct this report, 139 non-English-major undergraduate university students, enrolled in various specific English courses at Bakhtar Institute of Higher Education in Ilam, were recruited on voluntary basis. The participants represented both genders with the mean age of 20.2. By ethnicity and linguistic background, all the respondents screened out for the history of bilingualism were early bilingual Kurdish-Persian speakers living in Ilam in western Iran.

Instrument

The survey instrument employed was the modified version of Horwitz's (1988) BALLI (Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory), a popular self-administered 34-item Likert-type questionnaire translated for the ease of responding into Persian (the second but the formal academic language of bilingual learners in the present context) in order not to cause lack of understanding or misinterpretation. Before conducting the main study, a pilot test of the questionnaire was also administered among 10 ESP learners chosen from the same population in which the internal reliability of the Persian version of the questionnaire was found to have an alpha coefficient of 0.83.

Procedure

Data were collected from participants during the last class of the second semester of the academic year. Before the inventory was passed out, the researcher guaranteed the anonymity of the participants and provided a brief overview of the nature and aim of the study. After completing the questions the students returned. As part of the procedure, data gathered were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 17). Descriptive analysis in the form of percentages was computed and the data were put into principal components and discussed in detail.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were discussed under Horwitz's (1988) themes (i.e. language learning aptitude, language learning difficulty, the nature of language learning, learning and communicaton strategies, and motivations and expectations) below.

(a) Language learning aptitude

Table 1. Participants' beliefs about language learning aptitude

Items	BALLI Statements	SA/A* %	N %	SDA/DA %
1	It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.	92	6	2
2	Some people have a special ability for learning foreign	73	18	9

	languages.			
6	People from my country are good at learning foreign languages.	50	36	14
10	It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.	38	30	32
11	People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign language.	9	22	69
16	I have a special ability for learning a foreign language.	52	29	19
19	Women are better than men at learning languages.	21	32	57
30	People who speak more than one language are very intelligent	72	17	11
33	Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.	87	8	5

*SA/A=Strongly Agree/Agree, N=Neutral, SDA/DA=Strongly Disagree/Disagree

The bilingual respondents endorsed the concepts of the positive effects of early language learning, the existence of special abilities for language learning, the belief that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language, the influence of intelligence on language learning; in contrast, they were in disagreement with the effect of gender on language learning, and they did not make a distinction between an aptitude for the sciences versus an aptitude for the humanities-type subjects such as language. Half the respondents also believed that people from their country at good at learning languages. All in all, the findings suggested the perceived existence of language aptitude by the bilingual respondents and the belief that while learning a language is not impossible for anyone, the ability to master more than one foreign language indicates intelligence.

(b) Language learning difficulty

Table 2: Participants' beliefs about language learning difficulty

Items	BALLI Statements	SA/A* %	N %	SDA/DA %
3	Some languages are easier to learn than others.	74	18	8
4	English is a language that is . . .	26	50	24
15	If someone spent 1 hour a day learning a language, how long would it take then to speak the language very well?	75	15	10
25	It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.	49	29	22
34	It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.	77	15	8

*SA/A=Strongly Agree/Agree, N=Neutral, SDA/DA=Strongly Disagree/Disagree

The bilingual students believed that some languages are easier than others; however, they regarded English as a language of medium difficulty which would optimistically take one to three years to learn. The respondents also believed that it is easier to speak than to understand a foreign language, and they agreed that it is easier to read than write in a foreign language. In all, the findings suggested that the population of respondents as a whole feel that their target language is of medium difficulty, and do not perceive a difference between the difficulties of various language skills.

(c) The nature of language learning

Table 3: Participants' beliefs about the nature of language learning

Items	BALLI Statements	SA/A* %	N %	SDA/DA %
8	It is necessary to know about English speaking cultures to speak English.	85	10	5
12	It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country	16	15	69
17	The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning new words.	83	13	4
23	The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning grammar.	55	27	18
27	Learning a foreign language is different than learning other academic subjects.	68	22	10
28	The most important part of learning English is learning how to translate from my own language.	74	19	7

*SA/A=Strongly Agree/Agree, N=Neutral, SDA/DA=Strongly Disagree/Disagree

The respondents believed that it is necessary to know the culture of the foreign language in order to speak the language but not in an English-speaking country. The respondents believed that learning new words, grammar and translation are the most important parts of language learning. They also agreed that people who are good at academic subjects are good at foreign languages. The elicited beliefs in this stream imply that respondents lean towards believing that there are certain approaches, such as focus on learning vocabulary or grammar and translation strategies that make language learning successful.

(d) Learning and communication strategies

Table 4: Participants' beliefs about learning and communication strategies

Items	BALLI Statements	SA/A* %	N %	SDA/DA %
7	It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.	89	8	3
9	You should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly.	2	34	64
13	I enjoy practicing English with the foreigners I meet.	78	15	7
14	It is OK to guess if you don't know a word in English.	57	26	17
18	It is important to repeat and practice a lot.	96	2	2
21	I feel shy speaking English with other people.	19	12	69
22	If beginning students are allowed to make mistakes in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on	83	15	2
26	It's important to practice with cassettes/tapes or CD ROMs.	87	12	1

*SA/A=Strongly Agree/Agree, N=Neutral, SDA/DA=Strongly Disagree/Disagree

The learners endorsed repetition and practice with cassettes/tapes or CD ROMs. They admitted that they will enjoy practicing English with an English-speaking individual they meet without any shyness. They favored having excellent pronunciation, guessing unknown words and saying anything grammatically incorrect just for the sake of communication, but not for beginning students. This reflects the fact that in foreign language learning contexts, the role of authentic materials is viewed as a crucial aspect of successful language learning, and learners adopt different strategies in various contexts.

(e) Motivation and expectations

Table 5: Participants' beliefs about motivation and expectations

Items	BALLI Statements	SA/A* %	N %	SDA/DA %
5	I believe I will learn to speak English very well.	74	20	6
20	People in my country feel that it is important to speak English.	76	14	10
24	I would like to learn English so that I can get to know the native speakers better.	78	15	7
29	If I learn English very well, I will have better job opportunities.	79	12	9
31	I want to learn to speak English well.	91	7	2
32	I would like to have foreigners as friends.	74	15	11

*SA/A=Strongly Agree/Agree, N=Neutral, SDA/DA=Strongly Disagree/Disagree

The respondents agreed that they want to learn to speak English very well, and they believed they will eventually speak English very well to get better job opportunities and have better communications. They believed that their countrymen valued the ability to speak English highly. Respondents felt instrumentally motivated. In this category, the vast majority of responses seem to reflect the learners' desire for and optimism in achieving their language learning goals.

As a whole, the research findings elicited by BALLI in such a newly-explored bilingual context in Iran revealed that Horwitz's BALLI instrument can be considered as a suitable tool for conducting research on language learning beliefs in different sociolinguistic settings. The findings also revealed that Iranian university students in this ethnic region hold a range of beliefs, some of which would be an impediment to successful language learning and some can facilitate it.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to examine Iranian ethnic non-English-major university students' overall belief system in an unexplored academic context in light of current literature in order to fill a gap in learner belief research. Analysis of the established principal belief themes shows that there are significant results that can be linked to the specificity of the participants' context. In addition, beliefs may vary based on individual learners' differences, learners' age, learning stage, language proficiency, professional status, cultural and educational background, context diversity, and several personal factors among others (Horwitz, 1999; Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005). It is argued, that it is rather the individuals' complex metacognitive structure, as affected by a number of social, cultural, contextual, cognitive, affective, and personal factors that is responsible for the shaping nature and strength of these beliefs (Bernat, 2006). Investigating the relationship of

beliefs to other factors sheds light on their stability and malleability and thus bears consequences for possible instructional intervention methods in the classroom attempting to change those beliefs, which may hinder the learning process (Bernat, 2006) and upgrade those beliefs which may facilitate the learning process.
There were several limitations in conducting the present study including the small-scale sample size, the limited survey instrument (BALLI), the ethnicity bias (bilingual Kurdish-Persian non-English-major undergraduate students living and studying in Ilam in western Iran), and the imbalance of gender among respondents.

The findings of this study can have several important pedagogical implications for both learning and teaching. The analysis of the BALLI items revealed that different students had different beliefs towards learning English as a foreign language. Iranian bilingual students in this study showed their great eagerness to learn this internationally accepted language very well and this is surely a very helpful belief that can facilitate language learning. But, maybe these good and correct beliefs cannot guarantee their learning because of the other harmful beliefs that they hold such as placing a great deal of emphasis on grammar and excellent pronunciation and believing that less than two years for learning English is enough. In this case, the students are faced with mismatching beliefs clashing with the reality of language learning and consequently frustrations and disappointments might emerge. In such cases it is required to confront erroneous beliefs with new information (Horwitz, 1988). There are some strategies that might help reduce these misbeliefs. Sometimes the source of such wrong beliefs goes back to what is known as culture or background. Therefore, culture and background of the students should also be taken into account by teachers. It seems that there is a need for teachers to devote sessions to talk with students about the real and helpful beliefs about language learning. This will help both students to become familiar with correct and realistic beliefs and teachers to get most from their classes.

Finally, although it is stated that learners' beliefs might be context-bound, learners' beliefs are also susceptible to change during time and this change may decrease or increase the level of learning. Therefore, as it is pointed out by Horwitz (1988) "it is essential to determine how student beliefs change over the course of language instruction" (p. 291).

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The Evaluation of 'Curriculum Planning and Development ESP Textbook' in Higher Education, Hamedan and Kermanshah Universities, Iran: The College Professors' Perception

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ABSTRACT
This paper makes an attempt to review the book entitled "Curriculum Planning and Development". The book was evaluated and scrutinized both internally and externally. In other words, the researchers investigated the book in two dimensions: *content and design*. To do this, 20 questionnaires were submitted to all specialized teachers and professors of Hamadan and Kermanshah universities in Iran. The research tool was questionnaire included both selecting and

open-ended questions, while most of the questions were based on a Likert Scale of questions with 5 choices. The reliability of the research tool was examined by making the best use of SPSS software and Cronbach's alpha test. Reliability Coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated 0.90 that indicated that the questionnaire for data analysis was ideal. Finally, the results were analyzed by making the best use of factorial analysis; and, the data were depicted in the form of tables and graphs in the rest of this study.

KEY WORDS: SP (English for Specific Purposes), evaluation, curriculum, textbook, book review

INTRODUCTION

On a daily basis, the materials that we teach must be evaluated, but this type of evaluation is not enough. We must conduct and perform systematic evaluations if our purpose is to maximize learning (Brown, 1995; Ellis, 1997; Richards, 2001). There are large ranges of textbooks to choose from, but the process of selecting an appropriate textbook can be both time-consuming and expensive (McDonough & Shaw, 2001; Karimi, 2006). Evaluation is a 'matching process that matched the needs to available solutions' (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987 cited in Sheldon 1988: 237). SAMT organization aims at publishing ESP books in different fields and majors in Iran. This paper aims to evaluate one of the ESP books in the field of 'Curriculum Planning and Development'.

The emergence and spread and distribution of English as the language of international relationship, asserting of knowledge ideas, and culture is well attested. It is a fact that English language teaching is obviously subject to developmental trends, and of the main prominent trends of recent years has been that of English for Specific Purposes. English is by far the most important and acceptable language of scientific and scholarly conferences, workshops and debates. As a matter of fact, no one can deny the fact that for the past few decades there has been a growing need to use the English language for the expression of information within specific professional fields. In response to this need, the teaching of ESP has become a major concern mainly in the countries that English is taught as a foreign language (Gatehouse, 2001).

Definitions of ESP are numerous but they all reflect the emphasis on how ESP teaching develops appropriate procedures to learners whose main goal is learning English for a purpose other than just language learning. That purpose may be educational, or professional, and ESP seeks to justify how well it prepares learners to achieve the required goals.

In defining ESP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p.19) posit "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning."

Accordingly, ESP can be defined as English instruction based on actual and immediate needs of learners who have to successfully perform real-life tasks unrelated to merely passing an English course or exam (Smoak, 1996). So, the issue of focusing on learners' needs becomes equally

paramount as the methods utilized to spread linguistic knowledge. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) believe that any language must be included as a defining feature of ESP but the main concerns of ESP are needs analysis, text analysis, and preparing learners to communicate in an effective way in any required situations.

Another thing which is of utmost importance is that the experts of curriculum design believe that the breaking down of curriculum into components and sub-processes is a vital issue, since it simplifies and organizes such a complex process as the curriculum design is (Hutchinson & Waters, 1984, Nunan, 1991).

The organization for researching and composing university textbooks in the humanities (SAMT), whose aim is Cultural Revolution, tries to develop a fundamental change in the procedure and content of university textbooks, particularly in humanities. So, the organization for researching and composing university textbooks in the humanities, SAMT, were established to consider the issue (Merhmohammadi, 2006).

SAMT has published a variety of ESP books in various scientific fields. The main objective of these publications is to teach English in a specialized familiar context in order to motivate the students to use specialized English sources and texts in target situation. Thus, it will help the students strengthen their ability to use particular sources and improve their exploitation skills. Since gaining such skills is necessary to develop one's own knowledge in a specialized field, it should be esteemed and appreciated as a key professional accomplishment (Merhmohammadi, 2006).

This organization tries to codify educational English textbooks relevant to the students' needs in public, semi-professional and professional situation (Koosha, 2002). The book has been compiled for the students Curriculum Development in B.A. level.

Although, curriculum development been around for a while, it is generating some problems due to the lack of a proper course book. Nowadays, the course "Curriculum Development" is concerned too much as an academic course than before.

Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, Gholam Reza Kiany and Maryam KhezriNejad (see Appendix C) have tried to fulfill the educational needs of the students of this course. Since the students' needs regarding this course must be satisfied, such an English course for the college students is of utmost importance. This opportunity opens new gates of modern "Curriculum Development and Planning" for the students to do more research in this field.

The authors of the book have also designed other English books associated with this one. Some of these books are: "English for the students of Tourism and Hotel Management", "Curriculum Theories", "Scientific Fundamentals for the Art of Teaching", "Curriculum: attitudes, outlooks and perspectives", "Rethinking of teaching - learning process and teacher training", "Research queries in education and training", "Comparative analysis of the fundamental aspects of the German education system and comparing it with the Islamic Republic of Iran", "Art education:

whatness, whyness and howness", and the present book, and "10 effective principles", and "Effectiveness Strategies" (See Appendix C).

The syllabus of this course, which has been published in Ministry of Culture and Higher education, has not mentioned the source that must make the learners familiar with the purpose of the students' development in order to make the best use of specific and technical courses of this academic course. These educational goals would not have been come true just by introducing this specialized ESP book.

This course book, by itself, cannot cover the students' needs for studying the English sources like papers, articles, e-books and etc. The syllabus of this course as translated in Appendix A shows that in order to obtain the amount of needed English knowledge for students to make them enough capable to read the English papers of these English and foreign sources, a stronger and heavier course book is required. Therefore, it can be concluded that, book size is not sufficient for this purpose.

To provide a comprehensive book review it is needed to answer the following questions about the book "English for the students of Curriculum Development" (See Appendix C).

1. What is this book?
This is an English book which is written for the students of 'curriculum development' focusing on their reading comprehension.

2. For what purpose is this book designed?
This book is designed for the students of 'Curriculum Development' to improve their reading ability for comprehending the English sources and textbooks, and also the texts which are written in foreign countries, in 'Curriculum Development' field of study. This book is useful for those who are interested in curriculum and the ways of developing and planning it.

This book tries to reflect the realities which are happening in the world concerning this field of study. This book aims, mainly, to increase the students' knowledge in curriculum development course. And finally, the secondary purpose of this book is to train some curriculum developers.

3. In what situation is this book compiled?
This 1st edition of this book is compiled in the fall of 2004 / 1382; and, the 2nd edition was presented in 2006 / 1385. Since then, this book had never been published again.

4. Who are the authors of this book? How are they qualified to write this book?

- Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, Associate Professor in Curriculum Development, TarbiatModarres University, Tehran, Iran

- Gholam Reza Kiany, Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics / TEFL, TarbiatModarres University, Tehran, Iran

- Maryam KhezriNejad, Lecturer in TEFL, Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr Branch

5. To what extent is this book implemented for certain and reliable scientific facts?
Since 'Curriculum Development' is originally an American course, the passages which are used in this book are adopted from the U.S. authors. In order to judge about its scientific basis, a very brief overview of the origin of 'Curriculum Development' is needed.

Curriculum planning as a strategic educational process for the improvement of learning first appeared in the educational literature of the post-World War I era (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988). Since that time, curriculum planners have utilized several different approaches in designing curricula to improve teaching and learning in light of changing societal factors (Hyman, 1973; Brandt, 2000).

Research conducted at Niagara University and Buffalo State College, New York, commencing in 1992, with a sample of two hundred and seventy- nine (279) educators, reconfirmed the significance of the five personal needs and the significance of the six professional needs (Polka, 1994). However, change in education is a process, not an event, and it is accomplished first by individuals (Hord, et al., 1987).

6. To what extent are writing principles and linguistic rules observed?
The passages are chosen from the books of authentic sources. Therefore, I can consider these passages highly reliable; because, the authors are all native speakers of English. The writers and authors are the experts of 'Curriculum Development'. These experts are Kilebard, H. M. (1975), Klein, M. F. (1980), Eisner, E. W. (1983), Ackerman, D. B. (1989) and Postlewaite, N. and T. Husen (1999), whom are knowledgeable enough to present scientific opinions about the mentioned field.

7. How much is this book acceptable among students?
Answer of this question is to some extent informal and optional. Students are not qualified enough to judge about the quality of the book. But, the feedback that I personally received from the students of Hamedan Jahad Daneshgahi University, Bu Ali University, Alvand University, shows that, in comparison to the other books, somehow acceptable.

8. Are novel and new features included in the book?
Yes, this book has four novel features: **a)** all the vocabularies, at the beginning of each unit are explained by English definition, while some examples and sentences are included in each definition; **b)** the other novel feature is about grammar. In this book, at least, one exercise of grammar is mentioned in which word formations are included; while, word formations are an essential part of promoting reading comprehension; **c)** the other novel feature is the variety of the exercises. Many various exercises are in each unit that the other books of the same publication exclude such features. The book includes the following exercises: Comprehension Questions, Multiple Choice Items of Vocabulary, Oral Questions, Fill in the Blanks, Matching Items, Grammar, Word Order, and Sentence Writing. But this book lacks the translation exercises; and,

d) it has a phonetic guide at the beginning of the book; while most of the other books of the same publication lack such a feature. And all the new vocabularies are presented with the phonetic signs.

9. To what extent are the book materials and contents compatible?

It is a little difficult to judge about this question. The content and materials of the book are exactly copied from the following books: "Intellectual and Practical Criteria for Successful Curriculum Integration", "The Kind of School We Need", "Curriculum Design", "Reappraisal: The Tyler Rationale", and "The International Encyclopedia of Education" (see appendix C). This can be regarded both as a positive and negative point. It can be positive, because the authors are native speakers of English, and it can make the text to a reliable one. It can be negative, because the book writers fail to add anything to the texts and content as long as the texts are copied from the original books which are mentioned above.

10. To what extent the book title and headlines are related to the content and material?

The passages of the book are chosen from some parts and chapters of the book. So, the titles and headlines of each chapter and unit are highly interrelated with the content and materials of each chapter.

Before starting the technical book review, it must be mentioned that there are some very important criteria in the scope of criticism. Here, I decided to mention some of these criteria about criticism. The following criteria must be considered about this Book Review:

The 1st Criteria: The issues of the book:

The authors of this book compiled some materials that are not researchable. These materials are mostly theoretical and they cannot be discussed from practical point of view. The book mentioned some very general ideas about this course and the content usually is driven from personal ideas of the experts.

The 2nd Criteria: The chosen method of the authors:

Since this book is a reading comprehension one, it includes both passages and comprehension exercises. To me, the authors do not add anything by their knowledge to the book except the exercises. The authors just copied the exact sentences of the "Intellectual and Practical Criteria for Successful Curriculum Integration", "The Kind of School We Need", "Curriculum Design", "Reappraisal: The Tyler Rationale", and "The International Encyclopedia of Education" books in the present book, while they had just controlled the arrangement of the materials. And, the authors haven't checked the transposition of the materials; because, in all units earlier units were started with lower pages and later units were started with higher units. For example, first passage was chosen from page 1163 till 1164; and, the next passage is chosen from 1164 till 1166; and, third passage is chosen from 1166 till 1167. So, transposition, or which passage comes first and which one comes next, is not observed; because the materials were used in a single file.

The3rd Criteria: Writing Style

Since this is a native-speaker-written book, the expressions and words are clear. This book lacks any kind of vague idiom and expression. Punctuation, lack of unnecessary repetition, and rhetoric language are considered as some strong points of the book.

The 4th Criteria: Codification of Book Content
Since the materials and book content are copied from the source books, the logical relevance and its transposition is observed. But each unit lacks a proper introduction and appropriate conclusion. Moreover, the order of easiness of the units is not observed. 2nd unit of the book include more new vocabulary items than that of unit 6. Additionally, fifteen units do not support the students to become a fluent reader. Additionally, it seems that 20 units fail the students to be able to read the relevant passages comprehensively. In this case, I do believe that for such a purpose at least 20 units would be more appropriate.

The 5th Criteria: References
Hunter (2003) believes that citation is important because it is the basis of academics, that is, the pursuit of knowledge. In the academic endeavor, individuals look at evidence and reason about that evidence in their own individual ways. That is, taking what is already known, established, or thought, they use their reasoning power to create new knowledge. In assessing a book, considering its references is of utmost importance. The author mentioned the references at page 143 - at the end of the book. These references are primary sources and the authors used them directly. But, there are numerous secondary sources that the authors used them indirectly, while they are not included in the references of the book. It must be noted that the authors had applied reliable and valid sources, and the book references are interrelated with the materials and content and passages.

Variety of used reference in this book is rather low. It has five references written at the end of the book. Since, 'Curriculum Development' is a modern course in universities, and it needed to be updated evermore, the used references are already too old, and they must be updated right away. The newest reference of the book is for 13 years ago, while the others are for 23, 29, 31, and 36 years ago. Moreover, during this very long period of time, 'Curriculum Development' was affected by lots of considerable changes for sure.

The 6th Criteria: authors' understanding and interpretation of the facts and evidences
The authors don't follow a researchable principle which is based on a theory. They even don't state an issue based on logical and reasonable comments. These theoretical view points and judgments pictures the authors' intellectual power and work. Since, in this book there are no author-made theoretical points, it fails to reflect the authors' critical and theoretical points.

Formally, this technical book review is split into two different parts of, a) formal criticism and evaluation, and, b) content criticism and evaluation.

A) Formal Criticism and Evaluation

Generally, the anatomy of all books is made of three parts:

1- The Pretext

- The first element which must be taken into consideration in analyzing pretext is about the page title. It is made of two subparts of (I) publishing features, and (II) book profile. **(I)**The page title is totally standard and it has all the necessity information including: full name of the main author (Mahmud MehrMohammadi), his/her date of birth (1958), the English and Persian title of the book (English for the Students of the Curriculum Development), the address of the publication (SAMT Publication – Tehran – Iran), ISBN or the International Standard Book Number which is a unique numeric commercial book identifier based upon the 9-digit Standard Book Numbering (SBN) code (ISBN: 964-459-763), price (10500 Rials), the number of the pages (143), date of publications (first publication on 2004 and third publication on 2006), full name and date of birth of the other authors if any existed, and the title of the book.

- **(II)** the book profile includes the following factors:

The logo of SAMT publication, (see Appendix D), Authors, Edition team (The editorial Staff of SAMT), Print Run (5000 Rls.), Price (10500 Rls.), Typesetting and Lithography (SAMT), Text Printing (Printing and Publishing Organization, Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance), address and phone number.

In the case of interpretation of SAMT Publication logo, it must be noted that, based on an interview with Mohammad Reza Yaghoubi (see Appendix C), there is a logo at the top of the first page of the book which is the symbol of publication relating to book and publishing affairs. There are 12 tulips around the book for two reasons: first, tulip flower is the symbol of flourishing of science; second, they are 12, and it is a holy figure standing for 12 Imams whom are considered as religious beliefs in Islamic countries. The next point in this logo is that, there are tips of the pens between the tulips. These pen tips show that SAMT organization is doing cultural works.

- The other element in pretext analysis is table of content. This table is arranged base on FIPA (The Foundation for Intelligent Physical Agents). There are six parts in this book, and these 15 lessons and 4 extra texts are embedded inside these parts. Part one has four lessons; part two has 3 lessons; part three has 4 lessons; each of part four and part five have 2 lessons; and part six has 4 lessons, while the last part includes just 4 passages without any exercises in them.
- The next element is foreword and preface in which the authors have introduced the SAMT publication and the present book, and they mentioned their main aim of compiling such a book. But, this book lacks an introduction part.

2- Main Text

a) The logic and method of book editing:

- Parts and subparts: There are 6 parts and 19 subparts.
- Subject unity: The passages were chosen from 5 books. These passages were presented one after another, and they follow one topic and it discusses about the curriculum field of study.
- Text paragraph: In this book the paragraphs of the passages were arranged standard.
- Punctuation of the main passages: Since the passages were copied from valid and reliable curriculum textbooks, the punctuation standards of the main passages were perfectly observed.

b) Correctness of prose and syntax:

- The passages were highly authentic and it lacks any sort of self-made and non-standard expressions and grammatical rules and vocabularies. As a matter of fact, these features make the passages more reliable.

3- Post main Text

a) Appendices and enclosures

- It seems that the book lacks such features.

b) Indexing

- None of the index types were used at the end of the book. Neither alphabetical nor numerical indices were applied.

The following factors are categorized in Formal Criticism and Evaluation:

a) Print accuracy:

- In some pages of the book there are some shadows behind and around the printed words.
- The quality of the printing is not the same. Some pages are pale, while some other is chromatic.
- The size of the letters match the book format and passage. There is no irrelevant font size in the book. The font size of the passages is 12. The font size of the titles is 14, and the font size for the title of the whole chapter is 22. They are all printed in black color.
- I hardly found any kind of printing mistakes.
- Totally, the paper quality is acceptable. But, it is a little thin.

b) Binding Problems:

- It sounds that the book headband was, already, in a good quality.
- No binding problems were found in binding of the book, and this feature among SAMT publication books is universal.
- There were no binding mistakes, and all the pages were ordered numerically from the first page to the last one.

c) Referral system and footnotes:

- It seems that there are no footnotes in the book.

- There is no extra information which is driven from translated books, especially complementary materials which is related to the present book.

d) Book format:

- Length and width of the book is 160 × 240 millimeters.
-

B) Content Criticism and Evaluation

It is aimed at a "systematic introduction" to the issues and practices dealing with "developing, managing, and evaluating" an effective program. The authors emphasize that curriculum development" as used in this book refers to "the range of planning and implementation processes involved in developing or renewing a curriculum. These processes focus on needs analysis, situational analysis, planning learning outcomes, course organization, selecting and preparing teaching materials, providing for effective teaching, and evaluation. Moreover, the book also concentrates on methodological issues that most likely to have a significant impact on language curriculum practices.

This book consists of 6 parts and 20 lessons, each of which provides essential elements of curriculum development that experts need to have a clear understanding. Nunan (1984) has justified a curriculum development as "a set of process and procedures which are both systematic and interrelated" (p.18). This set had been "professional-oriented" and comprises these elements: "need analysis, [materials], and objectives setting [to address the learners need], content, methodology and evaluation" (Nunan, 1984, p.18). **Part one** deals with the origin of curriculum development relating to historical background. The term 'Curriculum Design', 'subject matter' and some reforms are discussed in part one. The role of learners and teachers and, also, types of activities use in learning and the role of community and some curriculum approaches are discussed in part one. **Part two** considers a model of curriculum, and this part talks about curriculum improvement and the conception of curriculum in the experts' point of view. **Part three** provides a basic assumption of curriculum development based on an analysis of Reappraisal of Tyler Rationale. In this part subject matter are considered as a source of objectives. And then, the learners' needs and studies of contemporary life were introduced as the source of objectives. **Part four**, which seems the shortest part of the book, relates to intellectual criteria for curriculum interaction. Ackerman (1989) considers the role of validity within curriculum development as an essential element and states some requirements for the validity within and for the disciplines. **Part five** focuses on the procedures for using the information collected from previous stages for developing program that result in learning objectives. It considers the prerequisite knowledge in curriculum. **Part six** includes some sole units that concentrate on intellectual independence, problem formulation and critical thinking methods.

Methodology

Research Method

This research is a functional one which is carried out by making the use of a survey method.

Participants

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This research includes 20 participants who are all English experts. The researchers have chosen them among the university professors of Jahad Daneshgahi, Azad University of Hamedan, Azad university of Kermanshah, Bu Ali University and Non-governmental Educational Institution of Alvand. The research tool was the questionnaire including open and close questions, while most of the questions were based on a Likert Scale of questions with 5 choices.

Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire is presented at Appendix B. The data collection methods are library studies and standard questionnaire. The reliability of the research tool was examined by making the best use of SPSS software and Cronbach's alpha test. Regarding utilization of standardized questionnaire, the Reliability Coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated 0.90 that indicates the ideal situation of the questionnaire for data analysis.

Data Collection Method

The data collection method was carried out by utilizing *semi-structured interviews*. This type of interview, first, investigates the conceptual background of the subject, and based on this, it defines some main points as research questions, and then, interview questions guide would be clarified. Data collection and face to face interviews with individual interviews was carried out after clarification of *interview questions guide*. At the beginning, the number of the participants was not clear; but, as soon as the interview started, the method of *Snow Ball Sampling* was used and the rest of the important samples were clarified; and the process of data collection continued until the *Theoretical Saturation* of the samples. Then, when 20 people were interviewed, the Theoretical Saturation was obtained and interview process stopped right here.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, two statistical methods of descriptive and analytic were used. In this research, also, qualitative method was utilized as well which was carried out by case study approach. A criterion was considered in order to choose the participants: familiarity with the topic; and, the participants were all among the English experts of universities. Experience (Polkinghorne, 1989) and familiarity with the phenomenon (Wrets & van Zuuren, 1987) are considered the most important criteria in qualitative researches.

Analysis of qualitative data from interviews was conducted using content analysis. For this purpose, first, the data were written, then, the topics and subjects were coded individually in the form of concepts, then, they were summarized and finally, they were reported in the form of shared topics and subjects. The number of samples is 20, regarding this and according to research (DIIA, 2007), the shared topics and subjects can be expressed as frequency and percentage. Therefore, in this study, the shared topics and subjects were reported as frequency and percentage.

CONCLUSION

I. Prioritizing the respondents' ideas on book review

In Table 1, the status of each of the related items of respondents' ideas on book review is prioritized based on the coefficient of variation (CV).

According to table 1, the amount of book correspondence to the society needs and realities (average rate = 4.20, and SD = 0.69), the amount of book correspondence to the students mood (average rate = 3.35, and SD = 0.58), and the amount of book relatedness of examples with the content of the book (average rate = 4.00, and SD = 0.72), are the most important priorities. The above items, from the respondents' point of view, are the strengths of the book.

Some poor or weak points of the book, in respondents' pint of view are: non-understandability of book concepts (average rate = 2.85 and SD = 1.34), not having an updated content (average rate = 2.70 and SD = 1.34), and releasing low levels of opportunity for students to discover the facts (average rate = 2.80 and SD = 1.43).

TABLE (1): Prioritizing the respondents' ideas on book review

Priority	Index	Average rate	SD (Standard Deviation)	CV(Coefficient of variation)
1	The correspondence of the book content with the community needs and realities	4.20	0.69	0.16
2	The book correspondence with the students' mood	3.35	0.58	0.17
3	Relevance of the examples with the book content and concept	4.00	0.72	0.18
4	The quality of the book materials	4.00	0.72	0.18
5	The appropriateness of book language, editing method, and words difficulty regarded to students knowledge	3.35	0.74	0.22
6	The amount of book unity and coherence in book content	3.30	0.80	0.24
7	Agreement with universal changes in the book	3.45	0.99	0.28
8	Effectiveness of workbook in teaching process	3.10	1.16	0.37
9	The suitability of the material based on educational goals	2.90	1.11	0.38
10	Appropriateness of teaching time for covering the book content	3.30	1.34	0.40
11	Relatedness of the book tables, figures and charts to the book content	3.15	1.30	0.41
12	The attractiveness of the book content for the students	2.90	1.20	0.41
13	Tediousness of the book for the students	2.60	1.09	0.41
14	The variety of exercises and questions	2.60	1.09	0.41
15	Appropriateness of the book content for the students	2.65	1.13	0.42
16	The book effectiveness in increasing students' academic knowledge	2.95	1.31	0.44
17	The systematic nature of the book questions	3.05	1.39	0.45
18	Understandability of the book content	2.85	1.34	0.47
19	The up-datedness of the book content	2.70	1.34	0.49
20	Amount of opportunities for students to discover the facts by the book	2.80	1.43	0.51
_	Average	3.16	_	_

Scales: at all (1), little (2), somehow (3), very (4), extremely (5)

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II. The open questions of the questionnaire

The participants were asked to mention their ideas about 12 questions of the book review which were asked openly. The questions were generally analyzed through *content analysis*. Totally, various opinions were collected. During the analysis, some items were obtained which is shown in table 2. The respondents were asked to answer to the questions which are shown in the appendix B.

Positive points	Negative Points
Knowledgeable authors	Poor syllabus of the course
Relevant texts	Authentic texts
Authentic texts	Copy- paste content
Vocabulary explanation	Non-researchable issues
Grammar exercises	Low number of units
Various exercises	Low number of sources
Phonetic guide	Lack of incite references at the end
Interrelated content	Theoretical (not practical) views
Native speaker authors	Out of datedness
Valid sources	Unable to present new ideas
Good price	Unable to promote students' knowledge
Unit organizations	Non-understandability of the book questions
Subject unity	Lack of coordination between chapters
Text paragraphs	Unsystematic nature of questions
Punctuation	Boring content
Paper quality	Lack of book attractiveness
Prose & syntax correctness	Lack of workbook
Printing accuracy	Lack of charts and graphs
Binding quality	
Title appropriateness	
Standard letter size	
Book unity and coherence	

As shown in table 2, appropriateness of the size of the book letters and suitability of the book price are the main priorities in the respondents' point of view; and, monetary incentives and promoting students' knowledge are the least important priorities. Chart 1 illustrates the respondents' opinion on the book review.

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TABLE (2): Prioritizing the respondents' ideas on book review

Priority	Shared subjects and topics	Frequency	Percent of the each of the items separately	Percent of the each of the items related to the others
1	Appropriateness of the size of book letters	20	100	11.2
2	Appropriateness of the book price	20	100	11.2
3	Non-understandability of the book questions	19	95	10.7
4	Out of datedness of the content	19	95	10.7
5	The title appropriateness	19	95	10.7
6	Usability in new courses	18	90	10.1
7	Quick understanding of the content	17	85	9.6
8	Lack of coordination between the book chapters	14	70	7.9
9	Presenting new ideas and comments	12	60	6.7
10	Book price and monetary incentives	11	55	6.2
11	Promoting students' knowledge	9	45	5.1

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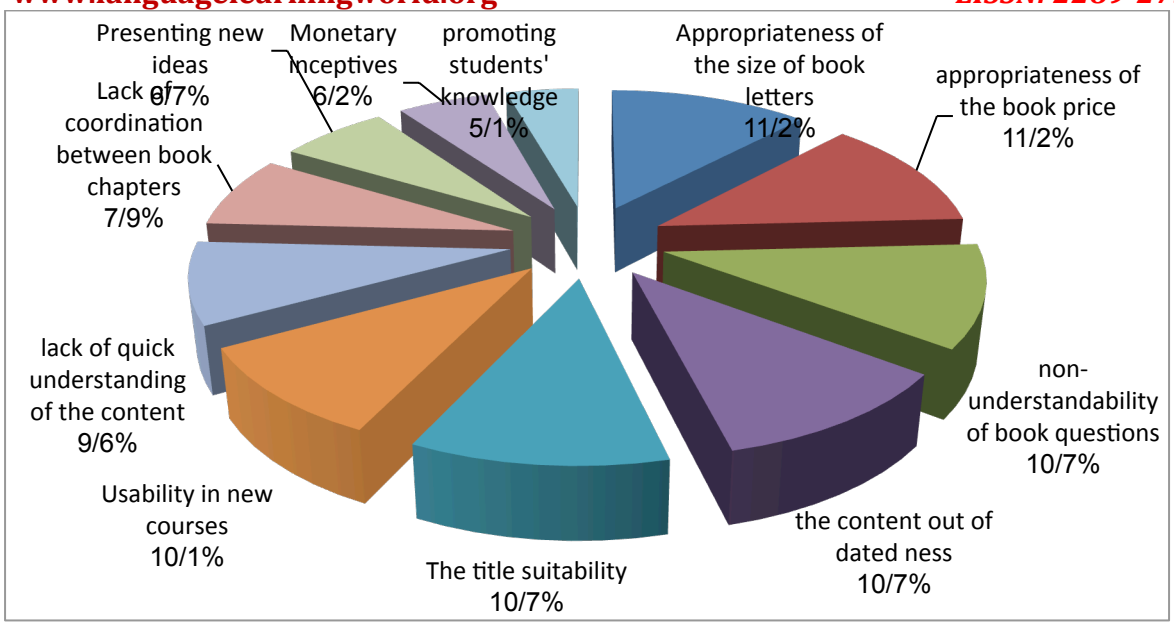

CHART 1: Respondents' ideas and opinions on the book review

Book Review in one Look

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

More research and study on this book review is definitely needed. The researchers had tried to provide their critical ideas on this book review; but, this book review could be more comprehensive by the work of the other scholars as well.

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Appendix A

(The Syllabus of Curriculum Planning and Development in Ministry of Culture and Higher Education)

The syllabus of "English in Curriculum Planning and Development" according to the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education is presented here.

Type of the course: Theoretical

Number of Credits: 2

Prerequisite: _

Course Number: 58

This course aims to:

Present the vocabulary, expressions and texts which are driven from current sources of curriculum development and planning which aims to improve the students' knowledge who want to study the English sources in their mentioned field.

The syllabus course:

It includes the expressions and vocabulary by making the use of the passages which are related to "Curriculum Development".

Appendix B

(Questionnaire of Book Review)

Number	Questions	Extremely	Very	Somehow	Little	At all
1	Are the books effective in promoting the students knowledge?					
2	Is the book content up to date?					
3	To what extent are the book materials attractive for students?					
4	Are the curriculum hours enough for covering the book content?					
5	Are the graphs, tables, charts, if there are any, related to the book content?					
6	To what extent the examples are related to book concept?					
7	To what extent are the book concepts understandable for students?					
8	To what extent cohesion and unity is observed in book content?					
9	To what extent the book content meets the society needs and realities?					
10	To what extent high-quality materials are used for book printing?					
11	To what extent the book exercises meet the students' mental circumstances?					
12	Do you agree with the universal changes in the present book?					
13	Is the order of the material based on the educational aims?					
1	Are the book language, editing procedure and the used words proper to					

4	basic understandings and the students' prior knowledge and experience?					
15	Are the book questions systematic and proper for students' technical needs?					
16	Does the book provide an opportunity for students to discover the facts?					
17	Are there various kinds of questions included in the book?					
18	To what extent workbook helps your teaching?					
19	To what extent are the materials useful for the students?					
20	To what extent are the materials boring for the students?					

(Open Questions)

1. What is your opinion about the letter size?
2. What is your opinion about the amount of content?
3. What is your opinion about the book price?
4. What is your opinion about the difficulty level of the book questions?
5. Do you use this book in the next courses? If no, what books you would introduce?
6. What are the problems of the book? If you were the author, how would you solve them?
7. What was the author's purpose or purposes in writing this book?
8. What did the title have to do with the book?
9. Did this book give you any new ideas about this course?
10. What do you think the author was trying to accomplish with this book?
11. Did you find this book a quick read? Why or why not?
12. What are your concerns about this book?

If there is any point that is excluded from the above questionnaire, you can mention it here. Thanks in advance.

Appendix C

1) Mahmud Mehrmohammadi: Associate Professor in Curriculum Development, TarbiatModarres University
2) Gholam Reza Kiany: Assistant Professor in Applied Linguistics / TEFL, TarbiatModarres University
3) Maryam KhezriNejad: Lecturer in TEFL, Islamshahr Azad University
4) Curriculum Theories: Maryam KhezriNejad, 2003
5) Scientific Fundamentals for the Art of Teaching: Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 2000
6) Curriculum: attitudes, outlooks and perspectives: Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 1989
7) Research queries in education and training: Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 2002
8) Rethinking of teaching - learning process and teacher training: Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 2000
9) English for the students of Tourism and Hotel Management: Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 1999

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10) Effectiveness Strategies Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 1996
11) 10 effective principles Mahmud Mehrmohammadi, 2004
12) Art education: whatness, whyness and howness: Gholam Reza Kiani, 2000
13) Comparative analysis of the fundamental aspects of the German education system and comparing it with the Islamic Republic of Iran: Gholam Reza Kiani, 2002
14) This format is taken from book review work shop of Dr. Mahdi Afzali.
15) Intellectual and Practical Criteria for Successful Curriculum Integration:Ackerman, D. B. (1989)
16) The Kind of School We Need: Eisner, E. W. (1983)
17) Curriculum Design:Klein, M. F. (1980)
18) Reappraisal: The Tyler Rationale:Kilebard, H. M. (1975)
19) The publication manager of SAMT. E-mail: info @samt .ac .ir

Appendix D

The logo of SAMT Publication

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LOCAL EFL TEACHERS' BELIEFS: A PRELIMINARY REPORT IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT
The study of teachers' beliefs is a contemporary inclination in language pedagogy and teacher education research with an outstanding outcome highlighting the influential role of teachers' beliefs in determining their professional behavior. Given the paucity of studies on language teachers' beliefs in unexplored EFL contexts particularly in Iran, this preliminary study examines the impacts of English and TEFL invoking the elicited real-life beliefs of 25 Kurdish EFL teachers of private language institutes in Ilam, in western Iran. A self-designed open-ended questionnaire along with an interview was administered to encourage teachers to spell out their beliefs and to obtain the required data. In light of qualitative-interpretative data analysis, the EFL teachers' beliefs boiled down to six main groupings including (1) "My ways of communication" (2) "My personality" (3) "My native language, culture and identity" (4) "My worldview beliefs" (5) "My lifestyle" and (6) "Other". These categories were illustrated and discussed to form a general agenda of Kurdish EFL teachers' belief system. There were also recommendations for further studies exclusively for the design and development of EFL teacher education programs and courses in the region, in Iran and in a globalized context.

KEYWORDS: beliefs; language teacher; EFL; TEFL; Iran; Kurdish

BACKGROUND
Teaching a language is a multifaceted endeavor that involves educational, linguistic, personal, as well as social and cognitive dimensions (Moini, 2009). Due to a rise in the cognitive and social views towards teaching languages in recent years (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 56; Moini, 2009) and the highlighted complex relationships between what teachers do and what they know and believe (Borg, 2009), Pajares (1992) among others proposes that "teachers' beliefs can and should become an important focus of educational inquiry" (p. 307). The main reason behind such a suggestion is that "teachers are highly influenced by their beliefs" (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 56) and also teachers are no longer viewed as "mechanical implementers of external prescriptions, but as active, thinking decision-makers" (Borg, 2009, p. 2). The definition, operationalization, and study of teachers' beliefs are not easy to do (Moini, 2009); nevertheless, beliefs have been considered by many scholars, among them Borg (2001), as conscious or

unconscious, in other terms; implicit or explicit (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 57) understandings and propositions held and endorsed by individuals to be true or false (Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Since the 1990s (Borg, 2003, 2009; Zheng, 2009), research on language pedagogy and language teacher education has put an emphasis on the significance of language teachers' beliefs. From this decade onwards, as Borg (2009) points out, there has been a rapid and steady increase in the volume of research examining various aspects of what language teachers know, believe and think and of the relationships of these constructs to what teachers do i.e. teachers' beliefs about the subject matter i.e. the language, teaching, learning, learners, role of teachers, various approaches and methods of teaching a language, and the impact they might have on teaching practices, activities, and learning outcomes, classroom behaviors and practices, relationship between language teachers' beliefs and teacher education programs or vice versa, relationship between language teachers' prior language learning experience and their beliefs, comparison of teachers' beliefs and their learners' beliefs; and the likely factors or sources leading to teachers' belief system (see e.g. Tercanlioglu, 2005; Zeng & Murphy, 2007; Al-Alawi, 2008; Cabaroglu & Denicolo, 2008; Song, 2009; Al-Musallam, 2009; Buyukyazi, 2010; Kuzborska, 2011).

There are several reasons why such studies on language teachers' theoretical and pedagogic beliefs, particularly here EFL (English-as-a-Foreign-Language) teachers, as the invisible dimensions of teaching (Borg, 2001; 2009) have been of paramount importance in local and global contexts. To elaborate, beliefs are of use in understanding language teachers' personal attitudes, thought processes, pedagogic concerns, professional development (Pajares, 1992; Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 62; Agnes, 2006), language teachers' definitions of the world and themselves as well as their instructional practices, choices, planning, decision-making and teaching behavior in the classroom (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 63) and the language institute or school they work for, and more significantly addressing teaching objectives, designing lessons, selecting tasks and activities, and assessing language learners performance (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 57; Borg, 2001; Zheng, 2009; Kuzborska, 2011). Moreover, due to the unobservable features of EFL teachers' beliefs (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 57), teachers may not be aware of the dynamic nature of their ideas, behavior, and instructional practices (Borg, 2009; Farrell & Kun, 2007; Erkmene, 2010). In this case, it is important to make the dominant beliefs influencing their profession clear so as to give them awareness, to help them weigh up their ideas and their fellow teachers' stand, to think and practice better, to find answers to their questions and concerns, to assess their professional development, and to reconstruct some aspects if necessary (Freeman, 1991; Agnes, 2006; Zheng, 2009; Kuzborska, 2011).

Additionally, encouraging teachers to reflect on their existing beliefs and behaviors could help them become more receptive to alternative perspectives, reflect if their current beliefs and teaching practices are worth maintaining and be prepared to modify or adjust their knowledge and work in ways that are consistent with their developing views and research-based standards throughout the world (Kuzborska, 2011; Qbeita, 2011). In all, if teachers' beliefs can be elicited, there is a better chance for teacher education programs and courses to suit teachers' needs (Cheng, Yi &Tsai, 2009; Bigelow & Walker, 2003).
Although such studies are into favor in the line of research in many English and non-English-speaking countries, they are open to be conducted in more unexplored contexts especially EFL

ones. Despite such an emphasis on language teachers' beliefs, there are a few studies in pertinent research on EFL environments and nonnative-speaking EFL teachers, who teach in these unique and particular contexts. There are for example not many studies focusing on limited number of EFL teachers such as Greek, Chinese, Saudi Arabian, Hungarian, Turkish, Omani, as well as Taiwanese EFL teachers (see recent studies e.g. Mattheoudakis, 2007; Chan, 2008; Al-Alawi, 2008; Nishino, 2008; Cabaroglu & Denicolo, 2008; Al-Musallam, 2009; Song, 2009; Lihua, 2010; Caner, Subasi & Kara, 2010; Qbeita, 2011). In the same way, when the available literature was reviewed, it was observed that there was not sufficient number of empirical studies on this subject in Iran as well, with several recently published exceptions reduced to EFL teachers' beliefs in Farsi-speaking regions; for instance, studies on Iranian EFL teachers' beliefs about the role of a language teacher (Torghabeh, Elahi & Khanalipour, 2009); the role of grammar in TEFL (Baleghizadeh & Farshchi, 2009); grammar and teaching grammar (Moini, 2009); EFL methodologies and materials as well as instructional experience (Atai & Gheitanchian, 2009); relationship between teachers' beliefs and gender (Estalkhi, Mohammadi, Bashiri & Kamali, 2011), reading strategies and several practical teaching activities (Khonamri & Salimi, 2010); and language learning (Ganjabi, 2011). No reported study to date, to our best knowledge, has been focused and published on Kurdish-speaking EFL teachers' beliefs in the related literature across the world and in Iran and sources are nonexistent in this regard. Additionally, Kurdish EFL teachers in Iran who speak the Kurdish language as their mother tongue, Farsi as their second formal language and English as a foreign language are interesting cases to voice their beliefs on the English language and TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) in a particular context. Thus, this study complements other studies and adds to the body of knowledge of beliefs in general, but more specifically, beliefs of that particular ethnic group which to date have remained unexplored, i.e. Kurdish EFL teachers beliefs.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Bearing in mind what Williams and Burden (1997) propose as "beliefs tend to be culturally bound" (p. 56) and given the need for the improvement of teacher education programs, the importance of language teachers' beliefs in teacher education, and largely the growing increase of the globalization of English across the world and the role of teachers as the driving force of this international language, the purpose of conducting this preliminary case study, as the first tentative attempt in this area, is to explore the impacts of English and TEFL on a group of EFL teachers in Ilam, a dominantly Kurdish-speaking city, in western Iran in order to help to specify the mainstream belief system and the main themes emerging from these beliefs of these EFL teachers and the likely role of these beliefs in promoting EFL teacher education courses and programs in this region, in Iran, and even in a globalized context in the future.

Accordingly, the study was to address the following research question based on a qualitative-interpretative approach:

- What are Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs about the English language and TEFL under their particular context?

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METHODOLOGY

The context of study

The context of the present study is Ilam, a city located in western Iran, where the Kurdish language is predominantly spoken as the first language. Like all other non-Farsi cities in Iran, Ilam has a situation wherein two distinct codes which function separately are spoken, the official and national language is Farsi which is used in academic and formal interactions but the spoken first language is Kurdish, in better terms Southern Kurdish or Ilami Kurdish (viz. a Western Indo-Iranian language subgroup of the Proto-Indo-European language family) which is used in some local media and newspapers and also as a vernacular for interactions (Haig & Matras, 2002). In addition to the Kurdish-Farsi situation in Ilam, many Kurdish individuals like other Iranians are learning EFL at schools, universities and private language institutes. Aside from typical Kurdish EFL learners, there are Kurdish EFL teachers who do not get enough exposure to English like many other people around the world but at schools, private language institutes, media, or occasional tourists.

With their different cultural and trilingual background, Kurdish EFL teachers have to cope with more challenges in language learning and teaching as well as language use in a unique context. They tend to teach English to Kurdish English learners in Farsi or in little English or even in Kurdish. In this sense, Kurdish EFL teachers, influenced by their own culture and languages, bring to their local contexts; particular beliefs, norms and expectations concerning the English language and TEFL. As a result, given the need for the improvement of teacher education programs in the region and in Iran, the importance of language teachers' beliefs in teacher education programs and courses, and largely the growing increase of the globalization of English across the world and the role of teachers as the driving force of this international language (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 56), in line with the aim of the present study, Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs were an interesting case to study.

Participants

To unravel the beliefs as the main concern of the present study, 25 Kurdish EFL teachers from private language institutes in Ilam, Iran, were randomly selected using convenience sampling (Bryman, 2004) and were asked to participate with their consent in the study. They were told that their participation was entirely voluntary and that their responses would remain anonymous and that confidentiality would be maintained. Versions of the questionnaire were handed out to 30 teachers; 25 were returned after one week, a response rate of about 84 percent. Of the 25 EFL teachers, 16 teachers (64 percent) were female and 9 teachers (36 percent) were male with the mean age of 25. All the teachers' second languages were Farsi. All the teachers had been teaching EFL to different levels and age groups of Kurdish learners for about three years at the time of the data collection (25th October, 2011) and they held Bachelor's in English language and literature. None of the teachers, however, possessed specific language teaching qualifications.

Instruments and Procedure

Using a natural qualitative-interpretative inquiry, a self-designed open-ended questionnaire was administered to elicit data on Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs about the English language and TEFL following Caner *et al*. (2010) and Kuzborska (2011) in an unexplored setting where

English is taught as the only foreign language. The questionnaire (see the Appendix) composed of two parts.

The first part focused on background personal information about teachers (such as gender, age, languages, educational background, major, and English teaching experience, teacher training programs or courses).

The second part was an open-ended question eliciting teachers' beliefs towards English and TEFL. The main reason behind using the type of question was giving opportunities to the participants to develop their responses and beliefs in ways which the researchers might not foresee (Phipps & Borg, 2009). The questionnaire was piloted with four randomly selected Kurdish EFL teachers from this region one week prior to its administration.

In addition to the questionnaire, one-on-one semi-structured interviews (Peacock,1998) were conducted with each participant teacher because they were essential in facilitating validation, providing qualitative information about the Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs, gaining more in-depth responses from the participants, and learning about the participants' underlying reasons for their beliefs they offered in written self-report questionnaires (Peacock, 1998; Erkmene, 2010). Audio-recorded interviews started with questions about biographical information and led to the main open-ended question of the study. This type of open-ended question and one-on-one interviews gave EFL teachers a different context in which to make their beliefs explicit and reconstruct them (Cheng *et al.,* 2009) about English and TEFL in a Kurdish context and also maintain their own personal voice. 25 Kurdish EFL teachers (84 percent) provided the required answers, returned the questionnaire, participated in the interviews and completed the study. 5 participants (16 percent) out of the randomly selected teachers left the study during the research process.

To probe into the collected data, EFL teachers' beliefs in light of their responses and reflections to the open-ended questions and the transcribed individual interviews were analyzed and organized qualitatively into categories in terms of their content i.e. the main themes and important shared concepts posed by Kurdish EFL teachers for further discussions. Analysis and review then involved focusing on each individual case using the sentence as the unit of analysis and coding (following Zeng & Murphy, 2007; Cheng *et al.,* 2009; Phipps & Borg, 2009).

Elicited Teachers' Beliefs

The findings presented a diversity of beliefs. In spite of the diversity, common concepts were evident both within each individual case as well as across cases. Based on the qualitative-interpretative content analysis of the data elicited by the open-ended questionnaire and individual interviews, several coherent themes were identified both across cases, despite their diversity, to illustrate the Kurdish EFL teachers' belief system under an untouched unique context.

In the following discussion of the categories, direct quotes were mainly from Kurdish EFL teachers, since we had their written text to work from and also their transcribed interviews. We attempted, as far as possible, to use the words of the participants in the discussion as well as to interpret underlying intentions. In other words, our aim was to let the Kurdish EFL teachers speak for themselves and have a voice. The six categories are presented in order of salience based on the number of mentions in the data or other indications of priority for the category as follows:

Table 1: A general agenda of Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs system

RESULTS AND PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

"What are Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs about the English language and TEFL under their particular context?" was the main research question that led to the present preliminary report. This case study in a newly explored setting, i.e. Ilam, as a dominantly Kurdish-speaking city in Iran, shed light on our understanding of a diversity of beliefs and

Categories	Beliefs	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	My ways of communication	18	72%
B	My personality	14	56%
C	My native language, culture and identity	10	40%
D	My worldview beliefs	7	28%
E	My lifestyle	4	16%
F	Other	2	8%

reflections by Kurdish EFL teachers in terms of the impact of English and TEFL on different aspects of their professional and personal lives. In spite of this diversity or even complexity, common concepts were evident across all the participants. Among the outstanding common concepts posed by Kurdish EFL teachers were the headings as follows:

(A) "My ways of communication"

The first category of responses that was of pragmatic nature was "My ways of communication". Of the 25 participant Kurdish EFL teachers, 18 teachers (72 percent) voiced their beliefs in this respect. These participant teachers unanimously confirmed in their beliefs that learning English as a valuable means of communication across the world beside TEFL gave them a hand to become directly aware of a great deal of information and knowledge and have access to up-to-date everyday data. For instance, a female Kurdish EFL teacher stated:

> *English helped me to change the means of communication I used to stick to. I think more logically and I believe that my communication habits have improved thanks to the English language and TEFL.* (Teacher No. 12)

A similar response was by a male Kurdish EFL teacher who said:

> *More and more communications with different individuals from different social classes and age groups in my hometown as well as in Iran and even throughout*

the world were the main impacts of learning and teaching English. (Teacher No. 8)

Of the key words highlighted in this category were "communication", "interaction", "familiar", "awareness" and "knowledge". These words point out that the EFL Kurdish teachers believed that the English language and TEFL have given a better chance to communicate and interact with different individuals and characters in local and global contexts. They felt their way of communicating in their first and second languages have become logical because of the fact that they have learned and taught English. It is argued that the position of English as the world's prestigious language seems to place demands on Kurdish EFL teachers to be able to communicate with people from different parts of the world. Explicitly stated in Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs, it was argued that learning and teaching English helped them to meet people with different tastes and personality traits, increased their communication skills locally and globally, aided in mutual interactions with others not only in the outside English world, but also in their local closed settings. As a whole, English learning and teaching were taken into account as a positive factor which led to finding out some weaknesses in the ways of communication of Kurdish EFL teachers, and were valued as integral parts of interaction in the globalized world of today. This was according to Norton and Toohey (2002, p. 113) that learning and practicing a language is learning and practicing a diverse set of sociocultural practices including interaction-related ones.

(B) "My personality"

The second category out of the six categories derived was a psychology-related category entitled here "My personality" with 56 percent of the total participant beliefs (14 teachers). In this category, learning English and TEFL were considered as a personality enhancer, i.e. learning English and TEFL were considered helpful in positive changes in the personality-related aspects of Kurdish EFL teachers in this context. A comment made by a female Kurdish EFL teacher is typical of the responses elicited from participants:

English as an international language and practicing TEFL helped me to be more and more talkative, positive, and outgoing. I feel happy now. (Teacher No. 11)

Shyness, impatience, lack of confidence, lack of motivation and even concentration were described as the major personality traits of Kurdish EFL teachers which were set aside by learning English and TEFL. Another Kurdish EFL teacher recounted:

Learning this language like leaning other skills made positive changes in me and it could help me to think better and have a prestigious social class. I am more self-confident, and I feel free and comfortable. (Teacher No. 3)

The noticeable keywords in this category involved the words "positive", "sociable", "open-minded" and "self-confidence". Many of the teachers have become less shy and much more positive thanks to English and particularly TEFL. Additionally, what some teachers described here was a case of a personality shift. Kurdish EFL teachers considered communication in English easier and more comfortable, because they could overcome their shyness and become more positive and self-confident in comparison to the time when they speak in Kurdish or Farsi. They approved the positive changes noticeable in their personality by highlighting the importance of learning English and TEFL in giving them positive personality traits such as flexibility, patience, broad-mindedness, punctuality and even commitment. This was in line with such

an idea that learning and knowing a foreign language leads to lots of positive changes and makes the person open-minded and tolerant (Caner et al., 2010). It should be mentioned that this category was somehow related to the first one "My ways of communication". Because it is argued that those individuals who try to communicate with others have more positive personality traits. And this was in agreement with Gardner's comment (2002, p. 160) that learning and practicing a language involves taking on patterns of behaviors, personality traits, personal conduct and so on.

(C) "My native language, culture and identity"

The next popular category ranking the third was "My native language, culture and identity" and included the responses that mentioned the relationships between English and TEFL and the native language, culture, and identity of Kurdish EFL teachers in this unexplored context. About 10 teachers (40 percent) of Kurdish EFL teachers recounted and believed that English and ELT did not have any effects on their mother tongues (Kurdish) and their second languages (Farsi). They confirmed that they have enjoyed positive impacts due to learning and teaching EFL. For example, a female Kurdish EFL teacher wrote:

> *Learning English and practicing TEFL helped me to think better. They pushed me to evaluate my mother tongue, my second language, my culture and identity. Because of reading in English, I tried to have a weblog in English and explain my native language, my country and hometown, lots of customs and practices, all in English, to the world. I think English paved the way.* (Teacher No. 18)

In a similar fashion, a male Kurdish EFL teacher noted:

> *English and TEFL gave me directions on comparing my own culture and all the things related with other cultures especially the Western or English culture. Not only I learned a lot about other cultures and tried to make others particularly EFL learners and many people worldwide aware of them, I found out lots of values and forgotten points in my own culture.* (Teacher No. 5)

The most important key words in this category were the words "positive", "improve" and "explain". It is argued that according to the themes under this category, learning English and TEFL were both positive factors which play important roles in forming Kurdish EFL teachers' views towards their native languages, culture and even identity. This positive change triggered by the English language and TEFL that pushed Kurdish EFL teachers to looking at their own native languages, culture and identity in an objective or critical manner, to know them better by themselves and even explain them in English to the rest of the world or to convey and use them in teaching procedures and their lives.

It could be argued that this category of analytically interpreting native languages, culture and identity in English is the side effect of the first category. This might be due to the contact and interactions with others that usually leads to a reevaluation of ourselves and our possessions, here i.e. our languages, culture and identity. Additionally, several teachers pointed out the impact of English and TEFL on their literacy in their own native language or formal language. So, learning English and practicing TEFL provides opportunities for Kurdish EFL teachers to come into contact with native and non-native English speakers and often have great times explaining things Kurdish or Farsi to them in English. This might force Kurdish EFL teachers to view their culture and their own languages objectively. In addition, they not only do not

assume English and TEFL as threats to their languages, culture and identity, but also they usually know it as a facilitator or improver. In all, according to this category, languages, cultures and identities are inseparable and even they have lots of interrelationships particularly, in this study, positive ones. There might be other reasons behind looking at learning and practicing EFL very positively, in this regard a male Kurdish EFL teacher believed that:

> *I think due to the traditional context of this region such an effect is not too predominant. However, sometimes I use English words instead of some words and combinations in my L1 or L2 just because they are more fashionable.* (Teacher No. 12)

As a whole, it is maintained that language learning and practicing engage many aspects of an individual's world such as their identity, culture and their possessions. This is because of the fact that language is a complex social practice (Norton & Toohey, 2002, p. 113).

(D) "My worldview beliefs"

Another category, "My worldview beliefs", included the Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs about the effect of English and TEFL on their own worldviews, as well as the world they live in. They generally stated that the English language and TEFL have broadened their worldviews and that have led them to become more interested in the outside world. This was the category where 7 Kurdish EFL teachers (28 percent) pointed to the impact of the English language and TEFL on their worldviews. Considering the importance of communications nowadays, Kurdish EFL teachers in their limited context believed that learning and practicing English or any other languages opens a window to the outside world and surroundings, to more contacts with different cultures and thoughts, and more mutual understanding and acceptance and as a result a better life. To illustrate this category, a typical example is a comment by a female Kurdish EFL teacher. She wrote:

> *Learning English and TEFL are helping me to broaden my knowledge, change my outlook and see the world better. It is just because I have learned a global language for communication.* (Teacher No. 1)

Similarly, to illustrate this change of outlook, a male Kurdish EFL teacher gave such an account:

> *Through learning English as an international language, I could expand my worldview and become familiar with a wide variety of ideas, beliefs, and viewpoints.* (Teacher No. 7)

The outstanding key terms which were so apparent in this category of beliefs, were "world", "broaden", and "international" as well as the remark that "Learning and teaching the English language was like entering a new world with lots of benefits" which might represent the beliefs of the Kurdish EFL teachers classified in this category. This gives the impression somewhat related to some type of convergence among those who learn English. These beliefs that have been attributed to English and TEFL are probably a result of some images and terms which are of dimensions of global and cultural flows.

It should be noted that although a person who lives in a country or even a city far from the world of English such as an EFL context, here Ilam in Iran, would not be able to imagine such a change or have such a worldview, the "My worldview beliefs" category is of interest in this preliminary report. Therefore, the results are in agreement with such a comment that learning and knowing a foreign language, here the English language as an international language for communication, bring new insights into an individual's worldview (Caner *et al*., 2010). This category also proved Wardhaugh's comment (1990, p. 214) that languages can control your worldviews.

(E) "My lifestyle"

The penultimate derived category of significance was entitled "My lifestyle". Just 4 Kurdish EFL teachers (16 percent) were classified in this category. Several key words in this category such as "lifestyle", "life", "motivation", and "change" were highlighted among a diversity of beliefs and reflections. One belief that fell into this category was a comment made by a female Kurdish EFL teacher:

> *Learning and teaching English was of great help. I am more disciplined and I got used to planning for my life at present and in the future. I schedule my life routines better than the past. I act better and feel happy.* (Teacher No. 24)

In such beliefs, English and TEFL are considered as significant factors that have led to positive changes in the participant teachers' lives. They are free from running a monotonous and dull life, they feel cheerful and energetic, they have gained the best motivating sources i.e. English and TEFL, and more importantly a trace of determinism and feeling of life destiny is highlighted in their beliefs. For example, a female Kurdish EFL teacher mentioned:

> *Via English and TEFL, I became familiar with the lifestyle of many other individuals all over the world, and such a familiarity directed me to the best.* (Teacher No.20)

Additionally, a western lifestyle as the impact of English and TEFL is of importance. For example, a comment was made by a Kurdish EFL teacher as follows:

> *I think, making some changes in the way of dressing, decorating the house, cooking some foods especially English desserts, and taking care of pets were the impacts of learning and teaching English.* (Teacher No. 11)

In general, it is argued that learning English and TEFL are the most significant encouragements for the Kurdish EFL teachers, and like other categories, they look up to English and TEFL. This category was in line with the belief that language is influential in predisposing speakers towards adopting a particular view to everything including their lives and get through the task of daily living (Wardhaugh, 1990, p. 212).

(F) "Other"

Among the other sparingly detected categories were "My benefits" which included responses related to some type of advantages such as job, money and ability as a result of learning and using English and TEFL. For example, a female Kurdish EFL teacher gave such a comment:

> *I have gained more job opportunities just due to learning English and gaining experience in TEFL. I teach English in many language schools and I am bale to translate different articles and everything in English.* (Teacher No.3)

Similarly, a belief spelt out by a Kurdish EFL teacher was:

> *English and TEFL have improved my performance generally and also my skills and abilities to tackle the problems, to earn money and to be known as a capable person.*

Such a category was in agreement with Caner *et al*. (2010) who believe that it is a global fact that learning and knowing a foreign language fulfill a person's personal and occupational needs.

Or "My interests in English" which was composed of the interests of Kurdish EFL teachers in English culture and media just because of learning English and TEFL or thanks to globalization. One comment from this category that represented this belief was aired by a male Kurdish EFL teacher:

> *Watching English movies and series, listening to original clips and music tracks in English as well as reading novels and stories and all the stuff in English were my favorites which became more and more by improving my English.* (Teacher No. 10)

A key word in this category of responses was "enjoy", as demonstrated by a female Kurdish EFL teacher:

> *Learning English has helped me to make the best use of English media and enjoy time better than those who are not familiar with this international language. Using a computer and some software is easy these days just due to learning English. I enjoy reading some masterpieces and literary works in English as well as watching some original movies. I enjoy surfing the Net.* (Teacher No. 14)

This inclination towards English culture and media that is music, movies, books, magazines, websites, blogs, chat rooms, an the like can be though as a result of images created by the media power and the capability to disseminate these images as well as the capabilities gained via learning the English language and TEFL.

There were also other categories which could not be classified into any of the categories described above.

In all, the consistent general agenda of Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs reveals that their reflections and beliefs about the positive impacts of English and TEFL have much in common. Kurdish EFL teachers in this newly explored setting, i.e. Ilam, as a dominantly Kurdish-speaking city in Iran, helped us to shed light on our understanding of a diversity of beliefs and reflections by Kurdish

EFL teachers in terms of the impact of English and TEFL on different aspects of their professional and personal lives. In spite of this diversity or even complexity, common concepts were evident across all the participants. They have positive viewpoints towards English and TEFL as advantageous and valuable means in improving their ways of communications; personality traits; native languages, culture and identity; worldviews; lifestyles; and even their benefits and interests. However, given the paucity of studies on Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs in Iran, there is a dire need to conduct such studies and know how much the elicited beliefs in this region are culturally bound. More studies will help language education programs and courses in the region and in Iran, because the limited present study was just a preliminary report and tried to open a window to the world of research on ethnic EFL teachers in one of the Unexplored contexts i.e. Ilam in Iran.

CONCLUSIONS

Although the current study helped in presenting a particular image of Kurdish EFL teachers, further studies may provide better understandings by examining other aspects of teachers' beliefs in larger-scale studies from qualitative or even quantitative perspectives. All the findings of this study have to be understood within the limitations of participant size and the research context. For this reason, we cannot assume or infer that the experiences or beliefs of a limited group of Kurdish EFL teachers are typical of the beliefs of other EFL teachers in Kurdish regions in Iran. Additionally, the self-designed questionnaire and interviews did not generate as much data as we had expected. Consequently, the information we collected about Kurdish EFL teachers' beliefs was not detailed and could not give a complete picture of Kurdish EFL teachers. The study also does not account for the interplay of age, gender, educational background, university degree, life and professional experience, personality traits and socio-economic status and teachers' beliefs which are of paramount importance according to Tercanlioglu (2005). Although no generalizations could be made from this single case study as a preliminary report and there is a need to conduct longitudinal studies with well-designed elicitation procedures, it does reveal the variety of teachers' beliefs about the impacts of English and TEFL in a newly explored context. However, further studies are required to complement the present preliminary report as the first tentative attempt in the literature of EFL teachers' belief system in the region, in Iran and in a global setting.

The main clear implications of this study, like other studies on language teachers' belief system, concern EFL teachers and particularly here Kurdish EFL teachers as well as language pedagogy and teacher education (Phipps & Borg, 2009). It is concluded that EFL Kurdish teachers should be trained to acknowledge their beliefs and become familiar with some likely context-specific factors that contribute to their streams of beliefs according to Phipps and Borg (2009). In fact, perhaps by making Kurdish EFL teachers aware of their implicit or explicit beliefs, we can take a step towards helping them to address how to improve their practices and become more effective teachers. In addition to conducting studies on language teacher's beliefs, there are other ways to do to empower teachers in this regard such as allowing them to establish their own professional development agenda of beliefs by holding workshops at a regular basis wherein they voice their ideas and beliefs as well as setting teacher education courses and programs which are endowed with teachers' beliefs components, designing websites and blogs and communication groups

wherein they feel free to spell out and share their beliefs or establish a coherent system of beliefs, and the like (Zheng, 2009; Kuzborska, 2011). Of course, it should be mentioned here that these strategies might not result in developing more efficient teachers, but at least they may help reduce discrepancy and unawareness. By working with an awareness of their own beliefs, teachers have an effective means to help them gain insights into their own teaching, into how they give meaning to what they do and the reasons that underlie their practice. As a whole, these orientations, i.e. the belief system as presented here, can offer a useful tool in teacher education programs and courses in this region, Ilam, or even nationally in other parts of Iran, and positively all over the world.

However, it should be argued that it is not enough for studies on EFL teachers' beliefs to explore just a general agenda of beliefs; rather we need to consider the list of possible sources for teachers' beliefs like age, gender, educational background, university degree, life and professional experience, personality traits and socio-economic status and so on (Tercanlioglu, 2005); try out different elicitation strategies such as classroom observations and diaries beside open-ended questionnaires and interviews to identify the probable relationships between teachers' beliefs and their practices; to explore, acknowledge and understand the underlying reasons behind such beliefs (Phipps & Borg, 2009); to explore the stability of beliefs over time; as well as weigh up the matches between EFL teachers' beliefs and EFL learners' tendencies in the same context, in order to enable researchers, teacher educators and curriculum developers to better understand the process of teaching, recognize teachers' needs, identify problem areas, and design and develop one-of-the-kind teacher education courses and programs and publish guidelines for would-be and practicing EFL teachers on teaching sufficiently, effectively and systematically (Farrell & Kun, 2007; Erkmene, 2010; Al-Nofaei, 2010; Agnes, 2006). All things considered, we should take two pieces of advice in the stream of language teachers' belief system. Firstly, according to Borg (2009), there is uniqueness of different educational contexts and particularly the uniqueness of teachers and learners as human beings, therefore what teachers believe in is associated with the educational context they are involved in; and secondly, "beliefs tend to be culturally bound" (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 56) although the influence of English as the global language of today is something tangible in any part of the world.

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APPENDIX

Dear Teacher,
This is a questionnaire for academic study about Kurdish-speaking English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) teachers in Ilam, Iran. The purpose of this study is to understand your beliefs about the impacts of English and English Language Teaching (ELT). Your answers to this questionnaire are very valuable and important. They will be used exclusively for the academic study. The information you provide will be confidential and anonymous.
The questionnaire is composed of two parts. Part I requires appropriate answer based on your own personal situations. Part II is an open-ended question as the leading question of the present study. You are free to write your answer in this part without any limitations and cover all the topics and concepts you like.
Thank you for your cooperation and assistance
Mohsen Akbari
Bakhtar Institute of Higher Education
Ilam, Iran

Part I. Background Information *(Please mark your answer in the appropriate box.)*

1. Gender: Male □ Female □
2. Age: …….years old
3. Languages: First language: …… Second language: …… Other languages: ……
4. Educational background (Please indicate the highest education level completed)
Junior college □ Undergraduate □ Master's degree □ Doctorate □
5. Major: …….
6. English teaching experience: less than 1 year □ 1–2 years □ 3–5 years □ 6–10 years □
7. Have you ever taken a teacher training program or course? Yes □ No □

Part II. Your beliefs (An Open-ended Question) (Please write your responses on the blank sheets attached)

What have been the impacts of learning English and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) on you?

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THE COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF ACCOUNTABILITY STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS IN GILAN PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT
This study emphasized the value of teacher accountability as the means to help them to be aware of accountability standards in education and also it is conducted in an effort to investigate the role of gender, age, degree and teaching experience, average working hours, in teachers' perception of accountability in language teaching career in an Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) context. In the process of empirical research, 71 male/female EFL teachers teaching in English language institutes and schools in Gilan province with different academic degrees and different experience were provided with questionnaires of teacher accountability designed and administered to tap their perception toward the mentioned constructs. The collected data was then fed into SPSS to find the relationship between accountability and teachers' gender, age, degree, experience, average working hours. It was revealed that there is no significant difference between teacher accountability and the variables under the study.

KEYWORDS: Accountability, teacher education.

INTRODUCTION
Research on teacher education especially teacher accountability has become the most-recent watchword in education. The quality of teacher development practices has become a major concern in recent educational discourse, with a growing emphasis on a teacher accountability suggesting that quality should be assessed with reference to students' achievement. Whether and to what extent practices meet this goal is, however, often unclear. Although the quality of teacher development practices cannot be defined in absolute terms, provisional definitions are worth pursuing as long as both teachers and teacher educators acknowledge their usefulness in the regulation of professional empowerment processes. They should serve both to provide a direction to practices and to establish a framework for the assessment of those practices.

Accountability is an important dimension of professionalism. This dimension highlights that the teacher is morally responsive to the student's and parents' needs, as well as responsive to the

public through the mechanism of the state. In moral terms accountability can be seen as keeping to ethical standards held by teachers as a group and as individuals. There is no doubt that organizational commitment is an important characteristic of a good and effective teacher which results from very deep faith and loyalty to the institution. Moreover, it's also important for student academic achievement.

Teaching in general, includes teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) or teaching English as a second language (TESOL) depending primarily on three major elements: the curriculum, the student, the teacher, and on many secondary issues.

It is believed that the learner is the most important element in the educational process. Celep (2001) stated that in any educational institution, a human being is the most important element because s/he participates in any position of the input-output process circle of the educational institutions.

According to Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp (1991), effective teachers need high level of organizational commitment. This suggests that high level of student's achievement requires dedicated teachers who contribute effectively. There is no doubt that high level of student's achievement is strongly related to high level of organizational commitment.

According to McNeil et al (1986), commitment has been defined as "The tendency to be involved in positive activities rather than feeling purposeless .In addition, those who are characterized as being committed usually have the ability to set goals for themselves and recognize their own personal value system.

Singh and Billinnsgley (1989) stated that low level of teacher's commitment reduces students' achievement, increases teacher absenteeism and increases teacher turnover, too (move from teaching to another job).

The success of any organization depends primarily on the staff's level of commitment (Oberholster &Taylor, 1999). They added that teachers with low levels of commitment are less faithful to the organization, see themselves as outsiders, do only what enables them to get by, and seem to be more concerned with personal success than with the success of the organization as a whole. In contrast, teachers with high levels of commitment see themselves as an integral part of the organization, what threatens the organization endangers them as well, do their best to perform their duties better, and work for the organization as if it belonged to them. So, there is no doubt that students' level of achievement will be influenced by the teachers' level of commitment. "In order to achieve its goals, any organization needs knowledgeable and experienced people, facilities and financial instruments as well as other factor including trust, commitment and accountability" (Chalbi, 1996, P.147).

In educational institutions, a number of institutional factors have been found to correspond with faculty commitment. For example, Harshbarger (1989) concluded that the congruence of faculty university value was one of the principal factors affecting faculty commitment. Allen (1992), Armon (1995), Graham (1996), and Kawakubo (1988) stated that communication satisfaction,

sense of autonomy, and internal locus of control seem to take part in the organizational commitment, while external locus of control apparently plays a negative role. In other educational institutions, positive factors include reduced role ambiguity (Campisano, 1992; Cintavey, 1995), teacher empowerment (Homung, 1995; Wu, 1994), clear organizational mission Varona (1991), and encouragement of innovation, continual professional development, and shared decision making (Veitenheimer, 1993).

On the other hand, some personal factors have been found to influence negatively the organizational commitment of teachers. These include nonalignment of personal and organizational goals and values Menzies (1995), lack of communication and trust Varona (1991), high levels of interpersonal conflict Booker (1990), and imposing or withdrawing conflict resolution style on the part of principals (Hajzus, 1990). So the level of organizational commitment can be enhanced by maximizing the positive factors such as, administrative support, empowerment, collegiality, and a collaborative climate, and minimizing the negative factors such as nonalignment of personal and school goals and values, lack of communication and trust, high level of interpersonal conflict.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study seeks answers to these questions:

RQ: Are there any statistically significant relationships between the measures of teacher accountability and participants' age, university degree, work experience, average working hours and gender?

In order to investigate the above-mentioned research question empirically, the following null hypothesis was put forth:

N0: There are no statistically significant relationships between the measures of teacher accountability and participants' age, university degree, work experience, working hours and gender.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the target population for this study consisted of 71 male and female EFL teachers with different work experience teaching in 11 English institutes and 3 high schools in Gilan province.23 of the participants were male and the rest 48 were female with different age, working experience, working hours and employment type. According to the teachers' responses to the questionnaires, of the total subjects having participated in the research study, there were 21 MA holders, 27 MA student, and 23 BA holders.

Instrumentation

Considering the subjects of the study, the following instrumentation was developed: Teacher accountability measuring scale developed by researcher herself and was arranged according to

the specifications of related factors. This instrument has a six-point from 1 (agree) to 6 (completely don't agree) that has been devised based on eleven factors (elements): self-acceptance, self-actualization, self-transcendence, job performance, affective teacher commitment, continuance teacher commitment, normative teacher commitment, autonomy, fairness, organizational support and general questions.

This measure is the only instrument developed for measuring the construct of teacher accountability, and in order to examine the psychometric characteristics of teacher accountability questionnaire, the data gathered from the participants was analyzed using SPSS software. The analyses included first running corrected item-total correlation as a measure of item discrimination. Corrected item-total correlation is actually an equivalent measure of point-biserial correlation or classical item discrimination measures; however, corrected item-total correlation is specifically used for Likert-scale type items scored on several categories rather than dichotomously scored items.

The SPSS software provides the effect of removing items with particular discrimination values on the internal consistency of the scale. In the data analysis here, these values were checked, and those items with low discrimination index were removed. Following the removal of malfunctioning items, Pearson correlation coefficient was computed between the subscales of the questionnaire to see if there are any statistically significant relationships between eleven measures of teacher accountability as a measure of teacher quality. Since these subscales were added to the questionnaire by the researcher herself, high correlation between the subscales would be indicative of the fact that these subscales together are correctly chosen to be considered as different facets of the construct teacher accountability.

All the subscales of teacher accountability questionnaire were analyzed at the item level and scale level and some items were removed. The reliability of questionnaires was computed through Cronbach's Aalpha (= .79) which indicates a high reliability.

Procedure

To ensure full demographic and grade-level representation, 11 English institutes in different cities in Gilan province and 3 high schools were selected for data collection. Each teacher answered the questionnaire. There are a total of 5 variables in the research which are the independent variables of gender, age, teaching experience, degree and average working hours.
The answers to the questionnaire provided by teachers were compared with each other with regards to the independent variables of gender, degree, average working hours, experience.

Research Design

In the present study, because of the nature and necessities of the work, 'survey method' was considered best to capture the proposed objectives. Based on the literature, a "survey" can be any kind of instrument from a short paper-and-pencil feedback form to a comprehensive and detailed one-on-one in depth interview (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989; Ary, Jacobs, & Rezavieh, 1996; Howitt & Cramer, 2000). In this paper, the survey used is a questionnaire.

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RESULTS

In order to investigate whether there is any statistically significant relationship between the measure of teacher accountability and participants' demographic information, some statistical analyses were employed as reported under the following headings.

Age

Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics on participants' teacher accountability score, obtained by administering 11 measures of teacher accountability in the form of one questionnaire, across different age categories.

Table 1: Study population by age

	AGE		Statistic
Teacher accountability	20-30	Mean	284.0732
		N	41
		Std. Deviation	31.77530
		Minimum	229.00
		Maximum	383.00
		Range	154.00
		Skewness	1.019
	31-40	Mean	281.2105
		N	19
		Std. Deviation	20.02936
		Minimum	224.00
		Maximum	327.00
		Range	103.00
		Skewness	-.649
	41-50	Mean	3
		N	3
		Std. Deviation	39.52636
		Minimum	208.00
		Maximum	287.00
		Range	79.00
		Skewness	-.189

In order to see whether participants from different age categories have statistically different levels of teacher accountability, Kruskal Wallis test as a non-parametric mean comparison statistic was employed. The reason for choosing this statistic rather than one-way ANOVA was that not all the skewness values provided in Table 1 are within the acceptable range (i.e. between -1 and 1) to meet the normality assumption for parametric tests like one-way ANOVA.

Tables 2 and 3 present the mean ranks and the main Kruskal Wallis test results, respectively. Evidently, only two age categories (i.e. 20-30 and 31-40) have been compared since the other age category is too small in sample size to be included in the analysis. As Table 3 demonstrates,

there is no significant difference between the two age categories in terms of their mean teacher accountability scores; Chi-Square = .006, p = .936

Table 2: Ranks

	AGE		Mean Rank
Teacher accountability	20-30	4	32.63
	31-40	0	32.23
	Total	4	

Table 3: Chi-square Test Statistics (a,b)

	Teacher accountability
Chi-Square	.006
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.936

a Kruskal Wallis Testb Grouping Variable: AGE

University degree

Table 4 provides the descriptive statistics on participants' teacher accountability score, obtained by administering 11 measures of teacher accountability in the form of one questionnaire, across different education degree categories.

Table 4: Study population by university degree

	EDUCATION		Statistic
Teacher accountability	BA	Mean	271.6957
		N	23
		Std. Deviation	25.46376
		Minimum	208.00
		Maximum	327.00
		Range	119.00
		Skewness	-.704
	MA student	Mean	290.6250
		N	24
		Std. Deviation	35.74890
		Minimum	230.00
		Maximum	383.00
		Range	153.00
		Skewness	.956
	MA	Mean	281.4706
		N	17
		Std. Deviation	20.14670
		Minimum	247.00
		Maximum	320.00
		Range	73.00
		Skewness	-.274

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In order to see whether participants from different age categories have statistically different levels of teacher accountability, one-way ANOVA test as a parametric mean comparison statistic was employed.

The reason for choosing this statistic rather than Kruskal-Wallis test was that all the skewness values provided in Table 4 are within the acceptable range (i.e. between -1 and 1) to meet the normality assumption for parametric tests like one-way ANOVA.

Table 5 presents the main ANOVA results. Evidently, there is no significant difference between the education degree categories in terms of their mean teacher accountability scores; F (3-65) = .541, p > .05.

Table 5: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2562.899		854.300	541	656
Within Groups	102601.536	5	1578.485		
Total	105164.435	8			

Gender

Table 6 provides the descriptive statistics on participants' teacher accountability score, obtained by administering 11 measures of teacher accountability in the form of one questionnaire, across the two genders.

Table 6: Study population by gender

	GENDER		Statistic
Teacher accountability	Male	Mean	283.8696
		N	23
		Std. Deviation	34.95101
		Minimum	224.00
		Maximum	383.00
		Range	159.00
		Skewness	1.058
	Female	Mean	280.0000
		N	41
		Std. Deviation	26.10843
		Minimum	208.00
		Maximum	352.00
		Range	144.00
		Skewness	.090

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In order to see whether participants from different age categories have statistically different levels of teacher accountability, Mann Whitney test as a non-parametric mean comparison statistic was employed. The reason for choosing this statistic rather than one-way ANOVA or independent samples t test was that not all the skewness values provided in Table 6 are within the acceptable range (i.e. between -1 and 1) to meet the normality assumption for parametric tests.

Tables 7 and 8 present the mean ranks and the main Mann Whitney test results, respectively.
As Table 8 demonstrates, there is no significant difference between the two genders in terms of their mean teacher accountability scores; Mann Whitney = 491.00, $p > .05$.

Table 7: Ranks

	GENDER	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Teacher accountability	Male	23	37.65	866.00
	Female	47	34.45	1619.00
	Total	70		

Table 8: Mann –whitney test Statistics (a)

	Teacher accountability
Mann-Whitney U	491.000
Wilcoxon W	1619.000
Z	-.619
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.536

a Grouping Variable: GENDER

Work experience

Table 9 provides the descriptive statistics on participants' teacher accountability score, obtained by administering 11 measures of teacher accountability in the form of one questionnaire, across different experience categories.

Table 9: Study population by work experience

	EXPERIENCE		Statistic
Teacher accountability	0-10	Mean	282.3148
		N	54
		Std. Deviation	31.41735
		Minimum	208.00
		Maximum	383.00
		Range	175.00
		Interquartile Range	32.5000
		Skewness	.598
	11-20	Mean	279.0000
		N	7
		Std. Deviation	12.17922
		Minimum	264.00
		Maximum	298.00
		Range	34.00
		Interquartile Range	21.0000
		Skewness	.143
	over 20	Mean	270.3333
		N	3
		Std. Deviation	18.77054
		Minimum	250.00
		Maximum	287.00
		Range	37.00
		Interquartile Range	.
		Skewness	.845

In order to see whether participants from different experience categories have statistically different levels of teacher accountability, one-way ANOVA test as a parametric mean comparison statistic was employed.

The reason for choosing this statistic rather than Kruskal-Wallis test was that all the skewness values provided in Table 9 are within the acceptable range (i.e. between -1 and 1) to meet the normality assumption for parametric tests like one-way ANOVA.

Table 10 presents the main ANOVA results. Evidently, there is no significant difference between the experience categories in terms of their mean teacher accountability scores; $F (2\text{-}65) = .243$, $p > .05$.

Table 10: ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	413.811		206.905	243	785
Within Groups	55280.822	5	850.474		
Total	55694.632	7			

Average working hours

Table 11 provides the descriptive statistics on participants' teacher accountability score, obtained by administering 11 measures of teacher accountability in the form of one questionnaire, across different work hour's categories.

Table 11: Study population by working hours

	HOURS		Statistic
Teacher accountability	0-10	Mean	284.8000
		N	20
		Std. Deviation	26.62725
		Minimum	229.00
		Maximum	351.00
		Range	122.00
		Skewness	.250
	11-20	Mean	287.1176
		N	17
		Std. Deviation	32.12064
		Minimum	224.00
		Maximum	352.00
		Range	128.00
		Skewness	.311
	21-30	Mean	272.6316
		N	19
		Std. Deviation	20.76378
		Minimum	208.00
		Maximum	297.00
		Range	89.00
		Skewness	-1.732
	over 30	Mean	281.5000
		N	8
		Std. Deviation	45.31477
		Minimum	230.00
		Maximum	383.00
		Range	153.00
		Skewness	1.771

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In order to see whether participants from different work hour's categories have statistically different levels of teacher accountability, Kruskal Wallis test as a non-parametric mean comparison statistic was employed. The reason for choosing this statistic rather than one-way ANOVA was that not all the skewness values provided in Table 11 are within the acceptable range (i.e. between -1 and 1) to meet the normality assumption for parametric tests like one-way ANOVA.

Tables 12 and 13 present the mean ranks and the main Kruskal Wallis test results, respectively. As Table 13 demonstrates, there is no significant difference between the work hours categories in terms of their mean teacher accountability scores; Chi-Square = 2.580, $p > .05$.

Table 12: Ranks

	HOURS		Mean Rank
Teacher accountability	0-10	0	38.03
	11-20	8	36.00
	21-30	0	28.65
	over 30		32.94
	Total	7	

Table 13: Chi-square test Statistics (a,b)

	Teacher accountability
Chi-Square	2.580
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.461

a Kruskal Wallis Test
b Grouping Variable: HOURS

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are in agreement with those previously mentioned in the review of literature. For example, as to first research questions involving the relationships between the measure of teacher accountability and participants' gender. The findings of this study contradicted those concluded by Spencer and others (1989); Reyes (1992); Pennington (1995). The later studies suggested that female teachers were more committed than male ones. They attributed their findings to the differences in teachers' motivation, efficacy and satisfaction. They argued that female teachers were more motivated, effective, and satisfied than male teachers. As to second research question involving the relationships between the measure of teacher accountability and participants 'age, the trend of our result agreed with that of Oberholster and Taylor V (1999) who found a positive relationship between commitment and age in favor of those who were 50 years old and more. This may be explained by the fact that older teachers tend

to be stable in their jobs all over the world and to love their job, thus to commit themselves to it. As to third research question involving the relationships, this study agreed with Reyes (1992) who indicated that years of experience correlate negatively with organizational commitment. But it disagreed with those of Cheng (1990) and Oberholster and Taylor-V (1999) who found that the length of teaching experience relates to organizational commitment. As to forth research questions the relationships between the measure of teacher accountability and participants' university degree. These findings contradicted with those of Oberholster and TaylorV (1999) who reported that doctoral degree holders were more committed than lower degree holders (M.A, B.A, or less) because doctoral degree holders were more aware of their work and they felt more satisfied than lower degree holders.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Teaching is complex and demanding work and there is a daily need for teachers to fully engage in that work with not only their heads, but also their hearts (Day, 2004; Elliott & Crosswell, 2001; Fried, 1995; Nias, 1996). It appears to be a professional necessity for teachers to be emotionally committed to their work, for without this emotional connection teachers face the constant danger of burn-out in an increasingly intensified work environment (Nias, 1996).

In so doing, the present study was conducted to explore the likely effect of teachers' experience, gender, age, degree, average working hours, on the way they are disposed toward accountability.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that teachers' commitment were not affected by the respondents' gender, age, degree, average working hours, experience. The findings show that EFL teachers' degree, teaching experience, gender, age, working hours, does not have any significant effect on their accountability. This implies that teachers' perception of accountability generalizes across degree and teaching experience, gender, age, degree, average working hours. As a result, the researcher believes that EFL institutions and schools authorities can implement their educational programs regardless of, teaching experience, gender, age, degree, average working hours, of their teachers as far as they are concerned with the teachers' accountability. Associated to this are immediate calls for the inclusion of this factor in any teacher preparation program. These programs should become more devoted to fostering this constructs in the academic contexts.

Because of profound differences in participants, context of the study, research design, and instructional methods, it is far from possible to strongly support any generalizations. As always, further research is needed to give more comprehensive answers to questions about teacher accountability in language teaching. The following suggestions may be provocative for interested readers and research

The first suggestion for further research calls for considering teachers with different English language backgrounds. The participants in this study were all except one EFL speakers while there is a possibility to conduct this study with ESL speakers as teachers of English and also with native speakers of English.

The present study was conducted in the private EFL institutes, and high school contexts. Future studies can focus on just one of the mentioned contexts or other academic contexts. It is also suggested that further study is conducted based on the relativity of teachers' majors to the EFL i.e. the independent variable of degree can be categorized based on English and non-English majors.

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Appendix A

Accountability Questionnaire (English)

Dear fellow Thanks for taking time to give us. The following comments about teacher accountability have been, please carefully read each of the sentences. Then what you do and you believe it and, not as you think but everything you believe to the job of choosing one of the options completely agree, agree, approximately agree, approximately disagree, disagree, and completely disagree expression.

Name Age Education Gender

Teaching experience Average working hours

NOTE: CA=completely agree, A=agree, AA=approximately agree, AD=approximately disagree, A=disagree CD=completely disagree

Self-acceptance	CA	A	AA	AD	A	CD
1 Often I cannot feel my impact on others.						
2 I accept myself as very low.						
3 I often find myself involved in some activities being precious to show to others.						
4 Issues are meaningful to me when I asked to be in order.						

5 The problem comes, I get confused easily.
6 Comprehensive cover of my dreams has priority over everything.
7 Often do not recognize that I have a lot of choices in any situation.
8 I'm living in dull conditions.
9 There are many things I have to do it, which have been doing a bit of attention.
10 I do a lot of things that prefer do not them.

Self-actualization
1 I feel completely free .
2 I feel inner peace, even at busy time.
3 I do things that I have accepted it and I accept them.
4 I open myself to the unpleasant decisions without having to think about them too much.
5 I get distracted easily, even when I am doing something that I enjoy.
6 I have many good ways to deal with my own.
7 I'm not in any position to make the right decision./
8 I do most of the work that I have to do them.
9 I do not have to decide when to rely on feelings.
10 It is difficult to start anything because I do not know the consequences.
11 I have the feeling of freedom.
12 Feel free to have a problem when I have no choice.
13 Usually, I do not know what is important in various situations.

Self-transcendence
1 I believe that there is a reason to live.
2 Personally, I feel that I have benefited from the work that I do.
3 There is nothing good in my life.
4 There is nothing in my life that I really committed myself to it.
5 My life is a good life for no reason.
6 I can barely understand it, what are the things that concerns me is my life.
7 Always eager to know what the future will bring for me.
8 Life has betrayed me because of my desire not to be feasible.
9 It is very hard for me to imagine myself anywhere else.
10 I wish I did not exist.
11 I cannot establish connection with the things I need to do.
12 When I'm sick, I do not know what I do.
13 I think that my life has meaning premier of my personal interests.
14 I know there are things in the world that is beyond my understanding.

Job Performance Questionnaire
1 I accepted the job, responsibility, and I know the consequences for their.
2 Unsupervised superior (manager) would work honestly.
3 I would be respectful with students and try to fix their problems.
4 I've been working on for the achievement of results and confident I follow.
5 I am in earnest, it is worth keeping, and I try to work on problems.
6 I am sympathetic towards my job and I try to give it the desired quality.
7 Emergency arises, or when human issues are discussed, from the point of sacrifice.
8 I strive to increase my professional knowledge.
9 Accept my mistakes.
10 I respect my colleagues and to respect their rights and to have a sense of cooperation.
11 I'm trying to pass on information on my career.
12 I refrain useless waste of time and tasks in the classroom
13 Means of work and care in their use would save.
14 I follow orders, and administrative regulations.

Affective Teacher Commitment

1 I do not feel like part of a family at school.
2 I feel emotionally attached to school.
3 Working at school has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
4 I feel a strong sense of belonging to school.
5 School does not deserve my loyalty.
6 I am proud to tell others that I work at school.
7 I would be happy to work at school until I retire.
8 I really feel that any problems faced by school are also my problems.
9 I enjoy discussing school with people outside of it.

Continuance Teacher Commitment

1 I am not concerned about what might happen if I left (name of school) without having another position lined up.
2 It would be very hard for me to leave (name of school) right now, even if I wanted to.
3 Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave (name of school) now.
4 It wouldn't be too costly for me to leave (name of school) now.
5 Right now, staying with (name of school) is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
6 One of the few, serious consequences of leaving (name of school) would be the scarcity of available alternatives.
7 One of the reasons I continue to work for (name of school) is that leaving would require considerable sacrifice–another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here.

Normative Teacher Commitment

1 I do not feel any obligation to remain with (name of school).
2 Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave (name of school) now.
3 I would feel guilty if I left (name of school) now.
4 (Name of school) deserves my loyalty.
5 It would be wrong to leave (name of school) right now because of my obligation to the people in it.
6 I owe a great deal to (name of school).

Autonomy

1 Within the bounds of any applicable school board policy and applicable laws, I have freedom to act on student issues.
2 I have reasonable freedom to make decisions about instructional issues in the school in which I am employed.
3 I have reasonable freedom to manage the fiscal affairs of my school.
4 I have freedom to direct student activities in the school in which I am employed.

Fairness

1 I believe that rules and procedures are administered fairly by school district leaders.
2 District resources are allocated without favoritism.
3 I trust my school district to make decisions on my behalf.

Organizational Support

1 I receive support from my school district when I have to make tough, unpopular decisions.
2 My school district shows concern for the needs which I express regarding the school at which I work.
3 My school district appreciates any extra time and effort that I spend to do efficient and effective work
4 School / institution values my contributions to its well-being
5 School / institution really trying to improve my life.
6 School / Institute notice to my satisfaction in the work environment.
7 School / institution admire my achievements.

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General question

1 Usually do not think too deeply about things.
2 I often don't feel satisfaction, even after a lot of work to do.
3 I always controlled by the expectations of others.
4 I do not have enough time for the things that are important.
5 Rarely do I have to do I prioritize.
6 I rarely think about the consequences before doing my job.
7 I haven't ever known my main tasks.
8 There are times when I feel completely helpless.
9 I do a lot of things without knowing enough about them.
10 Sense of fragmentation (pressure) because I'm getting a lot of work to do in that department.
11 Even when important work I do, I do not have the perseverance to finish it.
12 I do not want to do a lot of things actually.

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CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS' SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT
The paper describes the processes used to examine the effectiveness of less experienced teachers' participation in experienced teachers' classes on English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' skills and strategies. For this purpose, 21 EFL teachers teaching Elementary and Pre-intermediate courses were selected according to available sampling in KISH Language School in Bojnurd, a city in the Northeast of Iran. Data analysis and statistical calculations through Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test revealed that less-experienced teachers' participation in experienced teachers' classes had a significant effect on EFL teachers' skills and strategies used in their classroom and made them reflect on their own teaching.

INTRODUCTION
It is believed that teaching can be considered as the most rewarding profession there is – and it can be. We can all give examples of the pleasure of helping a child grow in knowledge and understanding, and achieve their potential, but what about the teacher? They shouldn't be excluded from the benefits of lifelong learning because of their workload and desire to give. Growth and change are part of all our personal and professional lives, and teachers need to embrace them; not just to do a better job, but to enjoy doing it. Supporting teachers in their development – trainees, newly or recently qualified, in their first three, ten or twenty years, and whether they're wonderful or struggling – is vital in improving the quality of teaching and learning in our schools (Bubb, 2005). Teachers need to have wider professional effectiveness to cross the threshold, taking 'responsibility for their professional development and use the outcomes to improve their teaching and pupils' learning, and make an active contribution to the policies and aspirations of the school' (DfES, 2004). In recent times there has been call for change in teacher education in ways that will promote teachers being much more reflective in their practice (Jones, 1998; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Ball, 2000; Wise & Leibbrand, 2001). Korthagen and Kessels (1999, p. 4) argue that teacher education programs need to link theory and practice and "to integrate the two in such a way that it leads to integration within the teacher". Similarly, Ball (2000, p. 244) maintains "We must understand better the work that teachers do and analyze the role played by content knowledge in that work" (Townsend, Raton & Bates, 2007). The best way for teachers to improve what they do is for them to reflect on their practice

and work with other teachers to help them understand what is needed for high achievement." (Townsend, Raton & Bates, 2007).

Pachier and Field (1997) suggest that being a successful foreign language teacher involves a commitment to stay beside the developments in the field and an enthusiasm to engage in constant professional development. Moreover, English language teachers should be able to gratify the expectations of regularly increasing number of students by using up-to-date teaching methodologies performed expertly with commitment and enthusiasm (Coskuner, 2001). The increasing awareness of the new approaches in teaching training has made the researchers interested in the notion of classroom observation which is one of the professional development activities as a tool which less-experienced teachers can use to develop as effective teachers. Therefore this study will investigate how observation can influence professional configuration and teacher development and whether it makes teachers rethink any of their own teaching methods and strategies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Generally in EFL, as in other areas of education, it is common to talk about training new teachers. According to Borg (2009), helping teachers become more successful, teacher education courses can be arranged and structured in certain ways. For instance, they can include awareness-raising activities and opportunities for the participating teachers to put ideas into practice, set their own goals, and assess their own development. Additionally, with adequate space and time, participating teachers may more easily develop their ideas. The research on training of teachers shows that it is an integrated activity in the process of which language teachers are taught to teach (Freeman, 1989; Kagan, 1992; Kennedy, 1993; Strevens, 1974; Swan, 1993; Wallace, 1991). This, of course, is not a new idea. The process has long been viewed as *"a highly complex activity which requires knowledge, understanding, practice and experience before it can be carried out in a fully professional and effective manner"* (Strevens, 1974, p.26). Teacher development has been differently termed and differentiated from teacher training, teacher education, and personal development in the ELT over the last three decades. Within ELT the term 'development' has been applied to a broad range of activities including skills training, curriculum development, materials development, classroom research, management training, job switching, and continuing professional development (CPD). It has also been applied to the kind of personal development viewpoints that follow from the view that the way you are and how you go about things influences your teaching as much as any training, embodied for example in the well-known saying 'You teach who you are' (Postman and Weingartner, 1969).

Throughout the past ten years several articles published in Teaching and Teacher Education have reported on research and involvements designed for teachers, with teachers and by teachers tried at their professional learning, with an eye on their impact on teacher and student changes. They cover different geographical districts and different research and development methods. Professional development is basically '*a solitary journey*'; but, almost all teachers need help and support during that journey from colleagues or supervisors to improve their own development, by which they can achieve an inside view on other teachers' experiences and increase their awareness by the use of reflecting on their own situation (As cited in Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992,

p.81). According to Edge (Cited in Bailey et.al., 2001) working alone doesn't help teachers to improve and subjective experience that is not shared with anyone cannot contribute to their progress, however ,through the quality collaboration, teachers have an opportunity to escape from subjectivity and draw some conclusions regarding their experiences and opinions. Bowman and McCormick (2000, p. 256) mentioned that collaboration among teachers is a valued and often necessary factor for effective schooling because it fosters expert instruction (As cited inVo and Nguyen 2011).

A professional development (PD) model is defined as a pattern or plan used to conduct the designing of a program (Joyce & Weil, 1972).

Drago-Severson (2002), Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) and Marczely (1996) in their broad reviews of the research have found out that seven different PD models are used for teachers: (1) in-service training, (2) observation/assessment, (3) development/improvement process, (4) study groups, (5) inquiry/action research, (6) individually guided activities, and (7) mentoring and coaching.

People often only think of professional development as referring to courses, yet the range of on-the-job, off-the-job, and close-to-the-job professional development opportunities is huge. Fault at being away from the classroom, a lack of information about course quality and supporting shortages are stopping many teachers from updating their subject knowledge and skills in the job (Gray, 2005). More recently, Harris and Sass (2007) recognized what they call the" *lagged effect of professional development*" that is, the larger effect of teachers' professional development on student outcomes not becoming noticeable until three years after the teachers had completed their course.

Integral to the idea of teacher development is the process whereby teachers are encouraged to question and analyze their own practice. However, teacher development is not a concept that one comes across in the state sector of education. In-service training is largely based on the transmission model of education and consists of the diffusion of new teaching techniques. The same is true of the very large continuing education sector.

Observation/assessment is one of model of PD that involves colleagues who give feedback based on observations about the performance of colleague educators. It is a powerful tool for assessing and monitoring a teacher's progress. Used well, it can also be a way to support teachers, because observation gives such a detailed picture and enables very specific objectives to be set. Observing someone teach gives a really detailed picture and is an opportunity to stimulate some really useful reflection on teaching and learning.

Both the observers and the observed learn from the process of observation. The most common form of teacher evaluation is classroom observation and differs broadly in how they are performed and what they evaluate. They can be conducted by a school administrator or another assessor. They can evaluate general teaching practices or subject specific techniques. They can be formally planned or unannounced and can occur once or several times per year or term. The type of observation method adopted, its focus, and its frequency should depend on what the

administration would like to learn from the process (Little, Goe & Abaell, 2009). Observation is regarded as the process of capturing the events of the classroom. It is an essential part of any teacher training program, whether pre-service or in-service (Maingay, 1988; Sheal, 1989; Wajnryb, 1992; Williams, 1989). As it is crucial to make sure the least interference in the classroom, a fundamental issue of observation concerns the requirement of non-involvement (Gebhard, 1999).

Roberson (As cited in Garcia, 2011), found that, classroom observation is one of the first data collection methods available to those interested in teaching behavior. The use of classroom observation instruments in evaluating teacher performance is a widely accepted practice in teacher education for evaluating instructional effectiveness (Chism, 1999; Griffee, 2005).

Additionally, according to a research done by Vo and Nguyen (2011), In addition to positive feelings about their experience they had for class observation, the participants held the same belief that through observation and discussion, they had learnt about and adopted some of the others' instructional techniques. The evidence also showed that they adjusted their own techniques to improve the teaching of a particular class.

When evaluating teacher success through classroom observations, valid and appropriate instruments are essential. If observations are used thoughtfully, they can offer important, useful, information about a teacher's practice but districts must take great care to control them in ways that decrease rater bias and other measurement concerns (Little,Goe & Abaell, 2009).

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Generally speaking, teachers play a key role in changes to teaching methodology and contribute to improvements in the quality of education, especially EFL teachers who have to meet the needs and standards of English as an international language. The newest wave of education reform is the transformation of teacher education programs into professional partnerships, such as professional development schools (PDSs) (Hammond, 1994; Levine, 1992). One issue related to professionalism of the teaching force refers to the necessity to bridge the gap between knowledge acquired during formal pre-service studies and further developments accruing while teachers are employed (Nir & Bogler, 2007). On-the-job professional development programs effort to bridge this gap by allowing teachers to develop new idea that will improve their teaching experience (Mtetwa & Thompson,2000), increase and renew their teaching skills and practices (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman,2002), change their thoughts, beliefs and perceptions (Guskey, 2002) and bring about improvements in their teaching (Blandford, 2000).

The important point motivating a work in this area is the position of teachers observation in many countries like Iran where teachers' observation has not occupied the place it merits, whether in second language class, in school or in different EFL institutes (Akbari & Ghafar Samar and Tajik, 2007). Also, as far as observation during the period of teaching practice is concerned, it can be seen as a method for current training and learning (Wajnryb, 1992).

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is required to be recognized that teachers are at the heart of any improvement within national education systems and, hence, that they and the sources of contexts in which they work need to be studied to notify the innovation behavior process (Hayes, 2011). Teacher education is currently facing a number of tensions as pressures have come from many quarters in the last decade, with perhaps the most intense focus being on the issue of teacher quality. This call for an improvement in the quality of teachers is welcomed by many, but there are inherent dangers too.(hand book) . Teacher education is presently facing a number of anxieties as pressures have come from many parts in the last decades, with perhaps the most powerful focus being on the issue of teacher quality (Tony & Richard, 2001). Researches show constantly that teacher quality is the crucial factor in student learning, the frequent problem is to identify the important characteristics of teacher quality and help teachers to develop these characteristics, though (Hammond, 1999; Wenglinsky, 2000).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following two research questions are posed for the purpose of this study:

1. Does experienced teachers' classroom observation foster the development of teaching skills?
2. Does experienced teachers' classroom observation make teachers rethink any of their own teaching methods?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the present research were 21 teachers including seven males and 14 females. To carry out the experiment, one group was selected as experienced teachers (5) teaching Elementary and Pre-intermediate levels in English having university education (Bachelor or Master degree) with minimum of 5 years of teaching. . Also a group of teachers was selected as less experienced, novice ones teaching at Elementary (8) and Pre intermediate (8) levels having educational degree in English, though.

Instruments

To investigate the effect of classroom observation on teachers' skills, three instruments were employed by the researchers.

A sample of TOEFL test was used to assess the teachers' proficiency in English. It was selected from Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL test book published by Addison-Wesley Longman, Inc (2001). The number of questions were 60 multiple items, divided into grammar (30 items), vocabulary (20 items) and reading (10 items) sections. The TOEFL sample was piloted on (n=22) EFL teachers to determine the reliability of the test. Analyzing the result of the study using SPSS (Ver.18), the reliability was estimated through Cronbach's Alpha as 0.732.

The second instrument used in this study was a Peer Observation of Teaching questionnaire containing several sections. The questionnaire included focus on a particular issue, for example use of visual aids, question techniques, pace and timing, interaction patterns with / between students.

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Before observation the questionnaire was administered to participants to assess their initial knowledge, attitudes and skills in teaching. A similar questionnaire was given to participants to evaluate the impact of the treatment. A sample of the questionnaire is provided in appendix 1, p. 11

Finally teachers were interviewed to find out more information on their responses about the process they were involved, which was not possible in observation questionnaire. A sample of the interview is provided in appendix 2, p. 15.

Procedure

Prior to the experiment, the participants were given a sample of TOEFL test to evaluate their language proficiency in English. Among teachers with higher scores some were considered as less-experienced and some were selected as experienced teachers based on the years they have taught English in language schools. A group of less-experienced EFL teachers who had targeted treatment (classroom observation) was chosen to determine the effect of treatment on less-experienced teachers' skills and methods. This study required at least 10 sessions with less-experienced teachers attendance in experienced teachers' classes. Teachers observed a class on an area particularly relevant to their own area of teaching. And they were supposed to fill the mentioned observation checklist at least twice during the observation sessions first before starting observation sessions and the second one after ending observation in order to choose the focused areas of observations according to teachers' needs and particular teaching situations. Also to check how effective classroom observation was teachers had to prepare a written report of whatever happened during the class. The participants discussed what they had learnt from experienced teachers' teaching performance, and what they thought should be improved, as well as how.

Data was collected through reports of each class observation. The purpose of this study was to help not only less-experienced and experienced teachers to improve their teaching methods and skills, but also students' performance as well.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study teachers were supposed to fill in a lesson observation criteria twice before and after treatment. The questionnaire includes different sections and each part includes various questions. The results estimated for lesson observation criteria 1 (before treatment) are observable in table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statics before Treatment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	variance
	statistic	statistic	statistic	statistic	Std.Error	statistic	statistic
Preparation and planning	16	1.00	1.80	1.3500	.06455	.25820	.067
Start of the session	16	1.00	1.75	1.2656	.06237	.24948	.062
Explanation of the	16	1.00	2.00	1.4167	.06804	.27217	.074
subject	16	1.00	1.50	1.2292	.04781	.19124	.037
Presentation of the	16	1.00	1.75	1.2969	.05337	.21348	.046
session	16	1.00	1.60	1.2000	.04830	.19322	.037
During the session	16	1.00	2.33	1.3542	.10305	.41220	.170
Finishing the session	16	1.00	2.40	1.4000	.09661	.38644	.149
Evaluating Learners' behavior							

According to this table sixteen teachers answered the questions that are related to different parts of questionnaire. According to this table Mean and Std Deviation for each part Preparation and planning, Start of the session, Explanation of the subject, Presentation of the session, During the session, Finishing the session and Evaluating Learners' behavior are (M: 1.3500/1.2656/1.4167/1.2292/1.2969/1.2000/1.3542/1.4000;SD:.06455/.06237/.06804/.04781/.05337/.04830/.10305/.09661) respectively which shows that teachers are not really satisfied with their performance during their classrooms. Table 2 illustrates the results estimated for lesson observation criteria 2 (after treatment).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics after Treatment

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	variance
	statistic	statistic	statistic	statistic	Std.Error	statistic	statistic
Preparation and planning	16	2.60	3.80	3.0625	.07004	.28018	.079
Start of the session	16	2.00	3.75	2.9687	.12474	.49896	.249
Explanation of the	16	2.17	4.00	2.9896	.10371	.41486	.172
subject	16	2.50	3.50	2.9479	.07564	.30257	.092
Presentation of the	16	2.13	3.50	2.8984	.08707	.34827	.121
session	16	2.20	3.60	2.9000	.11255	.45019	.203
During the session	16	2.00	3.67	3.0417	.14554	.58214	.339
Finishing the session	16	2.00	3.40	3.0125	.09741	.38966	.152
Evaluating Learners' behavior							

The evidence shows that overall, teachers reported high satisfaction with the processes in which they were involved since, Mean and Std Deviation for each part including: Preparation and planning, Start of the session, Explanation of the subject, Presentation of the session, During the session, Finishing the session, Evaluating, Learners' behavior are (M:3.0625/2.9687/2.9896/2.9479/2.8984/2.9000/3.0417, SD:.28018/.49896/.41486/.30257/.34827/.45019/.58214/.38966/3.0125) respectively. These findings indicate that less-experienced teachers who participated in experienced teachers classes reported greater satisfaction with the programs compared to their colleagues who didn't receive treatment.

Table 3: Descriptive Statics of all Questions

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	variance
	statistic	statistic	statistic	statistic	Std.Error	statistic	statistic
Lesson observation criteria1	16	1.17	1.43	1.3125	.02161	.08645	.007
Lesson observation criteria2	16	2.62	3.31	2.9688	.04521	.18085	.033

The findings show that Mean and Std Deviation of lesson observation criteria 2 (M: 2.9688, SD: .04521) is higher than Mean and Std Deviation of lesson observation criteria 1 (M: 1.3125, SD: .02161) which shows the great impact of class observation on Iranian EFL teachers' skills and strategies.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of observing experienced teachers' classes on less-experienced EFL teachers and how observing can help less experienced teachers to foster and develop their teaching skills and strategies. Data analysis through Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test revealed that less-experienced teachers' participation in experienced teachers' classes had a significant effect on their skills and strategies and helped them to rethink their own teaching methods.

Following in the study, teachers were interviewed to reveal their specific ideas regarding the effect of experienced teachers' class observation on their professional development. All teachers reported high satisfaction with their participation in experienced teachers' classes and processes in which they were involved. They had become more creative in enlarging their teaching in order to make their lessons more interesting. The participants said that they have become more motivated in teaching as a result of observation. The fact of observing teachers in many different settings will likely suggest variations they can try to improve their strategy. In other words, as they observe teachers implementing a strategy in different ways, they, too, can gain the ability to see and act more flexibly in their own teaching. The interview with experienced teachers showed that less experienced teachers' participation in their classes was beneficial for them too. They mentioned that it offered them an opportunity to exchange their ideas, learn from each other, and help each other to professionally develop, all in a relaxed manner. It also helped them to build up good work relationships and a sense of professional community. In response to the question whether they will want to participate in more professional activities in future, almost all participants gave a firm yes because they believe that it could lead to the improvement of teacher performance and students' outcomes as well as a good sense of professional community.

CONCLUSION

Professional development processes are aimed towards developing teachers' proficiency. On-the job training processes are intended to bridge the constantly expanding gap between teachers' previous studies and the developments taking place in the educational realm. For many teachers, these processes provide a major channel that enables them to keep their professional knowledge

and teaching techniques updated. Therefore, the greater teachers' willingness to participate in professional development activities and their satisfaction with these processes the, more likely they will acquire new knowledge and skills that will improve their professional. Based on the findings of the present study and studies that have already been done, we can conclude, experienced teachers' class observation is acceptable for EFL less experienced teaches and its introduction is beneficial for both teachers and students.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In addition to the small sample size and its short duration, several limitations were presented in this study. Variables such as gender, age and personal variables were not taken into account due to the limited number of the available participants. Another restriction in this study was related to experienced teachers since some did not have a positive attitude toward their classroom being observed by their colleagues. Also the number of the years teaching may not be a good measurement to recognize experienced from non-experienced teachers.

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Appendix

Lesson observation criteria

Level: Teacher: Observer: Date:

Preparation and planning

Did the teacher……..	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometimes	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all/ never
1. Identify key learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Place the session in context (e.g within the degree program or the module?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Clearly explain learning objectives to the class?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Pitch the content at an appropriate level?				
5. Hold attention and respect of students, practice effective classroom management?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Start of the session

Did the teacher…….	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometime	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all| never
1. Begin class promptly and in a well-organized way?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Secure attention of the students?				
3. Make the aims and learning outcomes of the Session clear to the students?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Link the subject to previous session?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Explanation of the subject

Did the teacher…….	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometime	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all never
1. Demonstrate a firm grasp of the subject area?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Adopt a logical, structured approach?				
3. Move clearly from stage to stage?	☐	☐	☐	☐

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4. Emphasize key points?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Provide alternative explanations of difficult points?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Make good use of audio-visual materials?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Presentation of the session

Did the teacher……	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometime	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all never
1. Show enthusiasm?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Control the pace of delivery?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Control the timing?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Speak clearly and concisely?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Maintain an appropriate level of class control and discipline?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Communicate at the level of all students in class?	☐	☐	☐	☐

During the session

Did the teacher……..	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometime	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all never
1. Use interactive and learning strategies?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Provide many concrete, real life, practical examples?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Effectively use teaching and learning activities in order to give all children access to the lesson?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Draw inferences from examples| models and use analogies?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Check students understanding regularly?	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Have effective use of praise, criticism and behavior management' strategies?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Teach at an appropriately fast pace, stopping to check students' understanding and engagement?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Use nonverbal behavior, such gestures, walking around, and eye contact to reinforce his| her comment?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Finishing the session

Did the teacher……	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometime	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all never
1. Identify how well the learning outcomes had been achieved?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Reiterate and summarize key point?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Identify links with following session?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. End the session positively and clearly?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Provide clear, specific expectation for assignments?	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Evaluating

Did the teacher…….	Entirely/ Always	Partly/ sometime	Rarely/ hardly ever	Not at all never
1.Make quick, accurate assessments of class progress?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Ask differentiated questions?				
3. Provide frequent feedback to students on their performance, praise students answers and use probing questions to clarify answers?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Learners' behavior

1. Arrive on time?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Pay proper attention?				
3. Respond to the teachers questions?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Fully understand the task and were enthusiastic to complete?				
5. Assess their own learning and tracking each group attainment during the lesson?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Sample of interview

I believe that it is necessary for novice teachers to observe experienced teachers' classes. I personally have learned a lot from the observation and have applied them in my teaching. It provides opportunities for teachers to build their knowledge and skills. It also helps teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment. Experienced teachers' classroom observation helped me to improve my teaching practice including those on capability procedure.

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THE EFFECT OF USING MODEL ESSAYS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING PROFICIENCY OF IRANIAN PRE-INTERMEDIATE EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT
The present study was conducted to investigate the effect of using model essays on the development of writing proficiency of Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL learners. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 55 pre- intermediate learners of Parsa Language institute were chosen by means of administering proficiency test. Based on the results of the pretest, two matched groups, one as the experimental group and the other as the control group were formed. These learners were pre tested through a writing task. Each participant was asked to write about a topic. Then, participants in the experimental group studied a model essay about the writing task and they underlined or took notes about those aspects of language that they noticed in the model essay written about the same topic. It means that, model essays were accompanied by the teacher's explanations. After seven sessions of treatment, the two groups were post tested through a writing task, the same as pretest. The scores of the participants demonstrated that the experimental group outperformed the control group. After running a t-test for comparing the mean score of two groups, it was concluded that using model essays has a significant effect on the development of writing proficiency.

KEY WORDS*:* Output, Noticing, and Model essays

INTRODUCTION
The necessity of linguistic communication has highlighted the importance of writing proficiency in today's ever more global community. Writing proficiency is considered as an important component of educational cycles, business endeavors and personal experiences. Writing is recognized as a key factor in students' academic development, and it is the primary means by which students transform from passive recipients of knowledge to active participants in their own education (Harvard's Expository Writing Program, 2003). Foreign language education has always been greatly dependent on English writing instruction as an important player in the learning process. Discussions in the realm of L2 writing research have been very much concerned with the role of output and noticing. Swain, in her output hypothesis, has discussed the role of output in second language learning (1985, 1993, 1995, 1998 & 2005). She claims that output has three

functions: noticing, hypothesis testing and metalinguistic awareness. According to Swain's hypothesis, the importance of noticing in writing can be investigated and underpinned (1985, 1993, 1995, 1998 & 2005). She firmly believes that through output procedures such as writing, L2 learners are familiarized with linguistic problems. Swain and Lapkin (1995) have used noticing coincidentally alongside the same notions used by Schmidt and Frota (1986), who state that by noticed; they all mean "the normal sense of the word, that is consciously" (p. 311). Swain (1995), while arguing the promotion of noticing via output, claims that "in producing the target language (TL), learners may encounter a linguistic problem leading them to notice what they do not know, or know only partially" (p. 129). This means that output provides L2 learners with the opportunity to notice a gap, prevalent between their inter-language (IL) and (TL), which will be helpful in learners' conscious recognition of their language problems.

Some more practical studies have proved that noticing is promoted by output. Within the framework of Noticing Hypothesis, model essays can be applied as one of the effective ways of improving learner's writing techniques. Qi and Lapkin (2002) conducted some studies in this regard and hence, suggested that 'the positive modeling of native-like writing may be more helpful to the learner than error correction' (p.286), even though the role of native speaker modeling has been investigated in a few other studies and has proven to be not contingent on learner output. Some L2 writing researchers argue that the implementation of model essays should be promoted among L2 learners for improvement of their writing skills in terms of the relationship between reading and writing. Echholz (1980) states that L2 learners reading experience directly affect their writing and thus, they can improve their L2 writing proficiency by reading. Furthermore, Smagorinsky (1992) argues that model essays would be the most effective tool provided that L2 writers possess adequate knowledge on the content. . In this research, the teacher's task is to comprehend how writing relates to the other language skills and how reading can be integrated with writing by using model essays. Model essays can provide enough input for EFL learners to improve their writing skill. Escholz (1980) points out, "what L2 learners write depends on what they read" (p.5). Some researchers emphasize the necessity of a model text illustrated in an academic writing textbook, which enables L2 writers to pay attention to the various aspects of TL (e.g., Hyland, 2003).

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

According to Swain (1995), three functions of output have been proposed that relate more to accuracy than to fluency in second language learning. They are noticing, testing hypothesis and metalinguistic function. Swain states that under certain circumstances, output promotes noticing (Swain, 1995). One important aspect of noticing research has concerned the role of output in promoting noticing. Swain (1995, 1998, and 2005) has proposed four functions of output, one of which is noticing/triggering function. It is claimed that, through output activities such as speaking and writing, L2 learners become aware that they cannot say what they want to say in the target language. Swain and Lapkin (1995) reported that their students consciously recognized linguistic problems through the act of writing and modified their output. However, Lapkinet al. (2002) argues that more L2 noticing studies are needed to provide direct empirical evidence that noticing leads to learning. Shehadeh (2002) also points out that while past research has focused on the occurrence of modified output; more research is needed to investigate how producing output can

lead to acquisition. While some studies (e.g. Izumi, 2002; Morgan- Short and Bowden, 2006) have addressed this issue and shown the positive effects of output, relatively few studies have been conducted in the context of L2 writing. Qi and Lapkin suggested that the positive modeling of native- like writing may be more helpful to the learner than error correction (p.286). However, few studies have explored in this context the role of native speaker modeling which is not contingent on learner output. The role of noticing in effecting inter-language development has been a central issue is SLA for about two decades. It has been claimed that noticing plays a key role in triggering learners' inter-language change (e.g., Ellis, 1995; Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1995, 2001; Schmidt & Frota, 1986; Skehan, 1998). The significance of investigating learner noticing in writing can be argued for on the basis of the output hypothesis by Swain (1985, 1993, 1998, and 2005). She has identified at least four functions of output, one of which is the noticing/ triggering function. She argued that L2 learners become aware of linguistic problems through output activities including writing. Swain & Lapkin (1995), for instance, reported that their students, through the act of writing, consciously recognized that linguistic problems and modified their output. How much noticing affects the learners' subsequent processing of input or feedback remains an important question to be investigated (Shehadeh, 2002; Izumi, 2003, for theoretical arguments for the output hypothesis).

Models and reformulations are may play qualitatively different roles in promoting learner's noticing. While, reformulation involves "having a native writer of the target language rewrite the learner's essay, preserving the entire learner's ideas, making it sound as native like as possible"(Cohen, 1983, P.4), the models used in this study are written by native speakers independently of learners' texts. One important advantage of reformulation may be that L2 writers can easily engage in a cognitive comparison of their text with reformulated writing because by definition reformulation is based on their texts. However, reformulation may fail to address some problematic elements that L2 writers wanted to include in their original texts, because of their limited linguistic resources. The role of output in second language learning has been discussed mainly by Swain (1985, 1993, 1995, 1998, and 2005) in her output hypothesis, which maintains that output has three major functions: Noticing, hypothesis_ testing and metalinguistic awareness. One of these, also known as the 'noticing/ triggering function', has been claimed to play an important role for SLA. Swain (1995) claims that output promotes noticing and "in producing the target language (TL), learners may encounter a linguistic problem leading them to notice what they do not know or know only partially" (p. 129). In other words, output allows L2 learners to notice a gap existing between their inter-language (IL) and TL, which may lead to learner's conscious recognition of their language problems. Some empirical studies have demonstrated that output promotes noticing. Izumi (2002) study, for instance, demonstrates that visual input enhancement is not enough for acquiring the form of L2 learner's IL; and that output facilitates noticing formal elements in the TL. Testing Hypothesis, in other words, trying out how the TL works is also an important function of output. In the recent SLA researches, much emphasis has been placed on the role of attention, awareness, and noticing, which have been viewed as key issues in L2 learning by many researchers (e.g. Eliss, 1993; Robinson, 1995; Schmidt, 1990, 1995, 2001; Schmidt & Frota, 1986; Swain, 1985, 1995; Swain & Lapkin, 1995). In his noticing hypothesis Schimidt (1990) claims that noticing plays an essential role is SLA and that L2 learners must become 'aware' of certain aspects of language, mainly the meaning. Some L2 writing researchers argue that L2 learners should be encouraged to use a model essay for

improving their writing skills in term of the relationship between reading and writing. Ferries and Hedgcock (1998) argue that L2 writers have to be exposed to various types of reading material since it is difficult to acquire L2 writing skills by only writing. Eschholz (1980) point that what L2 learners write depends on what they read and they can improve their L2 writing skills by reading. He also argues that given the opportunities to learn rhetorical modes, L2 learners can eventually apply their knowledge about those modes; L2 learners can eventually apply their knowledge about those modes to their writing. Based on (Cumming's (1995) empirical study, which demonstrates the significance of rhetorical aspects of texts in model essays, Smagorinsky (1992) discusses that model essays are the most helpful tool if L2 writers have a sufficient amount of current knowledge. Thus, some researchers emphasizes the necessity of a model text illustrated in an academic writing textbook, which enables L2 writers to pay attention to the various aspects of TL (e.g. Hyland, 2003).

However there are also several objections to using model essays in an L2 writing context. Murray (1980) points out that the process of making meaning in L2 cannot be achieved by referring to written texts. In addition, Gobby (1997) asserted that model essays prevent L2 learners from having creativity, which she believes in one of the important aspects of writing skills. Writing instruction with model essays has also been criticized by other researchers (Collins & Genter, 1982; Judy, 1980) for lying emphasize not on content but on form. They insist that language form and the content of composition are inseparable. Even among researchers who claim that model essays is important but not totally sufficient (Ferries and Hedgcock, 1998; Hyland, 2003). However, there has been little empirical research to explore the role of model essays in l2 writing pedagogy. The field of second language (L2) writing has come of age. Research on L2 writing has grown exponentially over the last 40 years and, during the late 1980s, and the early 1990s, second language writing began to evolve into an interdisciplinary field of inquiry with its own disciplinary infrastructure- replete with a journal monographs. Researchers in recent years have stressed the need for ESL writing instruction to move to a process approach that would teach students not only how to edit but also to develop strategies to generate ideas, compose multiple drafts, deal with feedback, and revise their written work on all levels (Chenowith, 1987; Raimes, 1985, 1987). Improvement in writing has been linked to reading development (Saddler, 2004). Reading supports writing across all the levels of instruction and can be used throughout the writing process. For example, students might read a text to help them generate ideas for their writing. They might do research to provide background information of writing. During the revision process, students read and give feedback on a partner's writing to help them the writer revise, and they may also do peer editing. During the editing process, students might read a form or style guide or instructions for publishing to help themselves and their peers. Process writing emphasizes the role of the reader as audience and, through development of multiple drafts, often creates a context for communication. Improved reading and writing skills are complementary instructional goals within the process writing framework.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Taking a look at the above - mentioned problems and requirements for writing instruction makes one ponder over the questions which probably arise as fallow:

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1. Does using model essays have any significant effect on the development of writing proficiency of Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL learners?
2. What aspects of language do EFL learners notice by comparing their own writing with the model essays (native speaker writing)?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

To test this null hypothesis, all pre-intermediate level male and female adult EFL learners in Parsa Language Institute in Shahrood participated in this study. The participants were 55 EFL learners consisting of, 15 males and 40 females, ranging from 18 to 30 years of age. All participants were enrolled in the Interchange Course at the pre-intermediate level. In order to have homogeneous classes the researcher administered a language proficiency test to 87 EFL learners. In the next stage, 55 out of 87 participants who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean were chosen.

Instruments

In order to have reliable and valid results in this research, these instruments were used:

1. Comprehensive English Language Test, an objective placement test, was used in order to determine the learner's level of proficiency in grammar. It included 75 grammar questions. The subjects' scores were out of 100. The test takers were selected and placed into two nearly homogenous groups, experimental and control group.
2. Student's first paragraph writing assignment, as a pre- test.
3. Writing tasks and models essays were chosen for this research project from the book 'Paragraph Development'.
4. Student's final paragraph writing assignment, as a post- test.

Procedure

In order to come up with reasonable answers to the research questions, the procedures below were followed:

The data collection was conducted in Parsa English Language Institute in Shahrood. The communication task developed for the purpose of this study was 'paragraph writing'. The selection of this task was motivated by the assumption that it encouraged learner output. The data collection procedure in both groups consisted of three stages. The researcher gave the "CELT" language proficiency test to 87 EFL learners. There were 75 multiple choice grammar tests with 60 minutes for the participants to complete the test. 55 out of 87 participants who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected.

In the first stage, a pre- test, consisting of a writing task, was administrated to both control and experimental groups. Each participant was asked to write about a topic within approximately 45 minutes. As time on task was not controlled in this study, the participants were allowed to spend

more than 45 minutes, if necessary, to complete the task. The pretests were corrected by two raters. Treatment was done during three stages:

In the second stage, every session, participants in the experimental group studied a model essay about the writing task and they underlined or took notes about those aspects of language that they noticed in the model essay written about the same topic. It means that, model essays were accompanied by the teacher's explanations. To prevent the possibility of the researcher's bias, two other raters scored the students' papers. The two raters scored each paper independently. The raters were required to score each paper individually and blind to the scores given by the other rater. The control group did not receive any model essay and during one session, they just wrote about the predetermined topic. The following rating scale (J. B. HEATON) was considered by two raters:

Content
30- 27 EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable- substantive- etc.
26- 22 GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject- adequate range.
21- 17 FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject- little substance- etc.
16-13 VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject- non- substantive.

Organization
20- 18 EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression- ideas clearly stated.
17- 14 GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy- loosely organized but main ideas stand out- etc.
13- 10 FAIR TO POOR: non- fluent- ideas confused or disconnected- etc.
VERY POOR: does not communicate- no organization- etc.

Vocabulary
20- 18 EXCELLENT TO VERY POOR: sophisticated range- effective word/ idiom choice and usage- etc.
17-14 GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range occasional errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured.
13- 10 FAIR TO POOR: limited range- frequent errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage- etc.
9-7 VERY POOR: essentially translation- little knowledge of English vocabulary.

Language use
25- 22 EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions- etc.
21-19 GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions- etc.
17- 11 FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/ complex constructions- etc.
10- 5 VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules- etc.

Mechanics
EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions- etc.
4 GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation- etc.
3 FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/ complex constructions- etc.

2 VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions- dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing- etc.

In the last stage, at the end of seven-week program, the participants in both groups were post tested. The post testing procedures were exactly the same as pretesting. However, the participants were not allowed to use dictionaries since one of the aims of the study was to investigate the effect of using model essay on learners' progress in writing proficiency, without any other aids.

RESULTS

A. Results of the Proficiency Test

To ensure the homogeneity of the participants, the CELT Placement Test was administered. The descriptive statistics of the participants' scores on this test are set forth in Table 1. As it is clear, 87 participants were selected as homogeneous participants for this study with the mean score of 63.61. The minimum score obtained by participants on CELT is 39 and the maximum score is 85. In order to figure out whether the data is normally distributed, we used Kolmlgrov-Smirnoff non-parametric test. The P-value is.181 based on the data, which indicates that the scores are normally distributed. Table 2 shows the results of the normality test.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of CELT Placement Test

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Oxford Placement Test	87	46	39	85	63.61	10.647	113.357
Valid N (listwise)	87						

To test the normality of the groups Shapiro-Wilkwas used. The null-hypothesis of the test of normality is that the distribution of the groups' scores is normal. Therefore, the distribution of the scores is not normal if the P-value (sig.) is less than .05. The results are depicted in the following table.

Table 2: Test of Normality of CELT

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
CELT	.979	87	.181

The distribution of the scores of the CELT is normal because P-value (sig.) which is .18, is higher than .05.

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Pretest-Content

The results of comparing pre-test content between control and experimental groups that are laid out in Table 3 reveals that P-value, which is .22, is more than .05. Therefore, it does not show a significant difference. Therefore, we can safely claim that there is no significant

Table 3: Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Pre-test Scores of Content in two Groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest (Content)	Equal variances assumed	.870	.355	1.231	53	.224	.987	.802	-.622	2.597
	Equal variances not assumed			1.229	52.062	.225	.987	.804	-.625	2.600

Post-test Content

The results of comparing post-test content between control and experimental groups that are laid out in Table 4 reveals that P-value, which is .020, is less than .05**.** It can be claimed that there is significant difference between the two mean content scores of two groups at post-test. Thus, the Null hypothesis of no significant effect of using model essays of the participants on the development of content of writing proficiency at posttest is rejected. In other words, model essays had a significant impact on the performance of the participants on the posttest. Therefore, we can claim that using model essays affects the development of content of writing proficiency of Iranian Pre- Intermediate EFL learners.

Table 4: Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Post-test Scores of Content in two Group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest (Content)	Equal variances assumed	1.043	.312	-2.398	53	.020	-1.634	.682	-3.001	-.267

Table 4: Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Post-test Scores of Content in two Group

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest (Content)	Equal variances assumed	1.043	.312	-2.398	53	.020	-1.634	.682	-3.001	-.267
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.392	51.509	.020	-1.634	.683	-3.006	-.263

Pre-test – Organization

The results of comparing pre-test organization between control and experimental groups that are laid out in Table 5 reveals that P-value which is .37, is more than .05. Therefore, we can safely claim that there is no significant difference between the means of the two groups' organization scores at pretest.

Table 5: Descriptive Data and Independent Sample Data for Pre-test Scores of Organization in two Groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest (Organization)	Equal variances assumed	.196	.660	-.901	53	.372	-.431	.478	-1.389	.528
	Equal variances not assumed			-.899	51.912	.373	-.431	.479	-1.392	.531

Post-test – Organization

The results of comparing post-test organization between control and experimental groups that are laid out in Table 6 reveals that P-value, which is .00, is less than .05.Thus, the Null hypothesis of no significant effect of using model essays on the development of organization of writing proficiency at posttest is rejected. In other words, model essays had a significant impact on the performance of the participants on the posttest. Therefore, we can claim that using model essays affects the development of organization of Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL learners'writing.

Table 6: Descriptive Data and Independent Sample Data for Post-test Scores of Organization in two Groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest (Organization)	Equal variances assumed	1.165	.285	-3.834	53	.000	-1.479	.386	-2.252	-.705
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.819	49.999	.000	-1.479	.387	-2.257	-.701

Pre-test -Vocabulary

The results of the two groups' vocabulary pre-test results that are laid out in Table 7 reveals that P-value, which is .21, is more than .05. Therefore, it does not show a significant difference. Therefore, we can safely claim that there is no significant difference between the two mean vocabulary scores of two groups at pretest.

Table 7: *Descriptive Data and Independent Sample Data for Pre-test Scores of Vocabulary in two Groups*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest (Vocabulary)	Equal variances assumed	.334	.566	1.258	53	.214	.617	.490	-.367	1.601
	Equal variances not assumed			1.262	52.159	.213	.617	.489	-.364	1.598

Post-test – Vocabulary

The results of comparing vocabulary post-test results between control and experimental that are laid out in Table 8 reveals that P-value, which is .01, is less than .05; therefore, it shows significant difference. Thus, the Null hypothesis of no significant effect of using model essays of the participants on the development of vocabulary of writing proficiency at posttest is rejected. Therefore, we can claim that using model essays affects the development of vocabulary of writing proficiency of Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL learners.

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Table 8: Descriptive Data and Independent Sample Data for Post-test Scores of Vocabulary in two Groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest (Vocabulary)	Equal variances assumed	1.280	.263	-2.562	53	.013	-1.028	.401	-1.834	-.223
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.551	49.075	.014	-1.028	.403	-1.839	-.218

Pre-test_ Language Use

The results of comparing language use pre-test between control and experimental that are laid out in Table 9 reveals that P-value, which is .75, is more than .05. Therefore, it does not show any significant difference. Therefore, we can safely claim that there is no significant difference between the two mean language use scores of two groups at pretest.

Table 9: *Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Pre-test Scores of Language Use in two Groups*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest (Language use)	Equal variances assumed	.190	.664	-.310	53	.758	-.228	.734	-1.699	1.244
	Equal variances not assumed			-.309	50.361	.759	-.228	.736	-1.706	1.251

Post-test – Language Use

The results of comparing post-test language use results between control and experimental that are laid out in Table 10 reveals that P-value, which is .02, is less than .05. Thus, the Null hypothesis of no significant effect of using model essays of the participants on the development of language use of writing proficiency at posttest is rejected. In other words, model essays had a significant impact on the performance of the participants on the posttest. Therefore, we can claim that using model essays affects the development of language use of writing proficiency of Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL learners.

Table 10: *Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Post-test Scores of Language Use in two Groups*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest (Language use)	Equal variances assumed	.498	.484	-2.384	53	.021	-1.786	.749	-3.289	-.284
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.377	51.184	.021	-1.786	.751	-3.295	-.278

Pre-test - Mechanics

The results of comparing pre-test mechanics between control and experimental that are laid out in Table 11 reveals that P-value, which is .60, is more than .05. Therefore, it does not show significant difference Therefore, we can safely claim that there is no significant difference between the two mean mechanics scores of two groups at pre-test**.**

Table 11: Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Pre-test Scores of Mechanics in two Groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest (Mechanics)	Equal variances assumed	.011	.918	-.518	53	.607	-.087	.167	-.422	.249
	Equal variances not assumed			-.518	52.972	.607	-.087	.167	-.422	.249

.

Post-test – Mechanics

The results of comparing post-test mechanics results between control and experimental that are laid out in Table 12 reveals that P-value, which is .003, is less than .05. Thus, the Null hypothesis as no significant effect of using model essays of the participants on the development of mechanics of writing proficiency at post-test is rejected. In other words, model essays had a significant impact on the performance of the participants on the post-test. Therefore, we can claim that using model essays affects the development of mechanics of writing proficiency of Iranian Pre-Intermediate EFL learners.

Table 12: Descriptive data and Independent Sample Data for Post-test Scores of Mechanics in two Groups

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Posttest (Mechanics)	Equal variances assumed	.000	.989	-3.139	53	.003	-.554	.177	-.908	-.200
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.139	52.888	.003	-.554	.177	-.908	-.200

Total Writing- Pretest

As it is shown in table 13 the hypothesis of equal of variances is proved because the P-value (sig) is .87 which is higher than α = 0.05. P-value which is .63, is more than .05. So it does not show significant difference. Therefore, we can safely claim that the control and experimental groups are not significantly different in pre-test.

Table 13: Descriptive Data and Independent Sample Data for Total Writing Scores in Pre-test in Two Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Total Writing in Pretest	.027	.871	.479	53	.634	.85979	1.79358	-2.73768	4.45726

Total Writing Post-test

As it is shown in table 14 the hypothesis of equal of variances is proved because the P-value is .52 which is higher than α = 0.05. Table 4.24 provides enough criteria for the rejection of the first null hypothesis of this study, because P-value which is .00 is less than .05. So it shows a

significant difference. Therefore, we can safely claim that the control and experimental groups are significantly different in posttest (after the treatment).

Table 14: Descriptive Data and Independent Sample Data for Total Writing in Post-test Scores in Two Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Total Writing in Posttest	.406	.527	-5.302	53	.000	-6.48214	1.22249	-8.93414	-4.03014

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of using model essays on the development of writing proficiency of the Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners and to explore if it is feasible to apply it in the teaching of writing in EFL educational settings in Iran. Considering the review of the literature and what happens in real language classes, contradictory findings and ideas were observed. In order to test the null hypothesis, the researcher gave the "CELT" language proficiency test to 87 EFL learners. Out of the 87 participants, 55 were selected.

In the first stage, a pre-test, consisting of a writing task, was administrated to both control and experimental groups.

In the second stage, every session, participants in the experimental group studied a model essay about the writing task and they underlined sections or took notes about those aspects of language that they noticed in the model essay written about the same topic. Model essays were accompanied by the teacher's explanations. To prevent the possibility of the researcher's bias, two other raters scored the students' papers. The control group did not receive any model essays and during a session, they just wrote about the predetermined topic. In the last stage, at the end of the seven-week program, the participants in both groups were post-tested. The post testing procedures were the same as pretesting.

The statistical analysis of written pre-test data showed that there were not any significant differences between the two groups in the pre-test. After the instruction, the post-test was administered to the participants and the results showed a significant difference between the two groups' mean scores. Finally, the descriptive statistics of students' noticing showed that model essays help students to notice content and vocabulary more than other categories. The results were satisfactory for the experimental group and it shows that model essays can draw learners'

attention to certain linguistic forms in the output and increase "noticing" and improve EFL writing. One major limitation of this study was that subjects could not be homogenized. Language institutes are usually the place where learners of different ages participate. Because of this, the ranges of their ages were different. The researcher could not control the variable "sex" and the groups had mixed gender. Participants were Iranian, so the results cannot be generalized to speakers of other languages. Only seven sessions were going to be spent on the treatment, so time allocated has been limited. Furthermore, as the design of the study was intact group, pre-test- post- test it was not possible to have random selection.

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