INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE LEARNING AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS WORLD

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Language learning problems
Computer assisted language learning
English for specific purpose
English for academic purpose
Language teaching & testing
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ABSTRACT
Measuring the difficulty of the tasks and the cognitive loads they require have been always controversial. Besides, students themselves do not have a clear understanding of their fluency according to the level of task complexity. Assessing the oral production in terms of fluency based on subjective evaluation is one of the main results of the lack of empirical studies regarding task structure and its relation to fluency. This study was an attempt to bridge the gap in literature by exploring the effects of task complexity on the quality of learners’ linguistic output, especially in fluency. Thirty Iranian EFL learners between the ages of 21 to 34 participated in this study. Some sets of picture narration tasks based on Robinson’s resource-directing model were selected for the aim of the study. All the subjects were asked to perform the simple version as well as the complex version of the same picture narration task. The results of a parametric test of MANOVA revealed that increase in task cognitive complexity had no statistically significant effect on fluency. The outcome of this study might shed new light on designing tasks with appropriate level of cognitive complexity.

KEY WORDS: Fluency; Task; EFL Learners; Cognitive Complexity

INTRODUCTION
It is assumed that among all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), speaking is the most important one. People who know a language are referred to as a “speaker” of that language as if speaking covers all other skills. In addition, many language learners are eager to speak fluently. Proficient language speakers need to be capable of processing language in their own heads and put it in a coherent way so that it is not only comprehensible but also can transfer the intended meaning. Rapid language processing is one of the main reasons for including speaking activities in language. This process includes the retrieval of words and phrases from memory into syntactically and propositionally proper sequence. Our aim is to process the information in the moment we get it. The longer it takes us to reply, the less effective and fluent language speakers we are in our communication (Ur, 1996).

To Segalowitz and Freed (2004) the term oral fluency refers to those aspects of oral performance associated with the smoothness of the language use. They consider fluency in terms of speed, hesitation-based measures, efficiency of (second language) L2-specific lexical access, and finally the attention control. It is believed that fluency could be associated with the cognitive demands that the task require. Assessing the students’ oral proficiency based on the level of cognitive complexity has always been difficult for teachers; hence it is felt that we need some more studies in the field of task complexity.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Designing appropriate tasks with an acceptable level of complexity has been the main purpose of syllabus designers for many years. In addition, some applied linguists have been interested to find out the effects of different levels of task difficulty on language learning. As different studies prove, human beings possess a limited processing capacity and are not able to attend fully to all aspects of a task simultaneously. So, in order to achieve a success particularly in oral skills reasonable level of cognitive complexity is appreciated.

According to Harmer (2001), the major elements which are necessary for spoken language are ‘connected speech’. He argues that proficient speakers of English need to be able not only to produce the individual phonemes of
Iwashita, McNamara, and Elder (2001) tried to define oral ability based on the characteristics of the tasks because according to them oral ability is not well defined by differences in task difficulty. In their work, Iwashita et al. (2001) refer to Skehan’s (1998) statement regarding task dimensions and performance conditions influencing task difficulty. Among the factors addressed by Skehan (1998), time pressure and degree of visual support are significant. Other aspects of performance conditions may affect task difficulty in a more complicated way (Iwashita et al., 2001).

Skehan (2003) considers various categories that have impact on task complexity or fluency:

- **Familiar information**: Fluent performance is the result of familiar information.
- **Structured tasks**: The task with clear sequential structure, will elicit more fluent and accurate performance.
- **Complex and numerous operations**: Increasing the number of online operations and transformation of material will lead to more difficult task. This may result in greater complexity, but at the expense of accuracy and fluency.
- **Complexity of knowledge base**: More open knowledge, based on which a task draws, results in more complex language.
- **Differentiated outcomes**: If a task outcome requires more differentiated justification, the complexity of the language will increase.

Robinson (2001, 2005) divides task variables into two categories: resource-dispersing and resource-directing dimensions. In his categorization, resource-directing dimension is linked to three elements (reasoning demands, number of elements, and here-and-now vs. there-and-then-condition). Robinson also associates resource-dispersing dimension with planning, number of tasks, and prior knowledge. The theory of Cognition Hypothesis proposed by Robinson relates more cognitively complex tasks to more accuracy and linguistic complexity in the oral production of learners. However, based on the Cognition Hypothesis, more complex tasks lead to less fluent language. Robinson relates this decrease in fluency to the anxiety of the learners.

The insufficient amount of research related to the impact of task difficulty on fluency demands more studies in this area. In this study we try to depict the influence of task type on fluency through resource-directing dimension of Robinson’s model. The following research question is proposed to pinpoint the relationship between task structure and fluency.

**To what extent does increase in task cognitive complexity affect the fluency of Iranian EFL learners’ oral production?**

**METHODOLOGY**

This study is based on the Robinson’s resource-directing model with the aim of addressing the influence of different level of complexity on the fluency of Iranian EFL learners’ picture narration task. To this end, a quasi-experimental design was used to examine the effect of increase in cognitive difficulty of a task on the fluency of learners.

**Participants**

The participants in this study included 30 female students at the intermediate level. Their age ranged from 21 to 34. The subjects were all native speakers of Persian, and on average they have been studying English for three years at Kish Institute in Tehran, Iran. A non-random sampling was used to select the subjects from two intact classes. The participants were divided into two experimental groups with 15 subjects in each. In order to check the homogeneity, a version of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was administrated.

**Instruments**

For the purpose of the present study, two tests were administered: a TOEFL IBT test for homogenizing the students’ general English, and a post-test for comparing the fluency of the two groups. To check the homogeneity of the subjects, the researchers chose three speaking assignments, two independent and one integrated task, from the book *Official Guide to the New TOEFL* by McGraw (2006).
As mentioned earlier, the participants were divided into 2 experimental groups. The data were collected from 30 subjects attending the class five times a week for a period of two hours. The researchers chose some picture narration tasks for the treatment plan as well as for the post-test purpose.

First, for checking the homogeneity of the 2 groups, TOEFL IBT Speaking Rubric was chosen. The speaking tasks were rated from 0 to 4. For the operational definition in the present study, we decided to assign 0-1 to beginners, 1-3 to intermediate, and 3-4 to advanced level. The participants’ scores ranged from 1 to 3, therefore the researcher could be assured that the subjects were all at intermediate level. Then the obtained scores from 0 to 4 were converted to a score scale of 0 to 30. The results of the independent t-test \( t (28) = .843, P = .406 > .05 \) indicated that the two groups were homogeneous in terms of their general language proficiency. The mean scores for the two groups were 17.66 and 17.31 respectively which proved the homogeneity of the two groups.

Second, before administrating the post-test, we planned 5 sessions for the treatment of the 2 experimental groups. During these sessions the subjects became familiar with the post-test tasks. They were asked to take note of their mistakes and pay attention to the feedbacks given by the teacher and the researcher. The first experimental group worked on more difficult tasks (see Appendix B). These tasks required more causal reasoning and justification for the replies. The practice plan for these subjects included all the aspects which were the purpose of the post-test such as +/- reasoning demands, +/- few elements, and here and now vs. there and then condition. For reasoning demands aspect of the task, two sets of pictures were selected, one with correct order and the other with scrambled pictures. For checking the impact of number of elements on learners’ oral performance, the researcher asked the subjects to narrate the story once with 9 pictures and the other time with 6 pictures (with 3 pictures missing). Finally, for the last aspect of Robinson’s (2001) resource-directing model, here and now vs. there and then condition, the participants were required to tell the story once with pictures in view and another time they had to turn the picture strips over before beginning their narration. For both narrations, the researchers gave the subjects prompts and instruction. The second experimental group, however, were exposed to simpler picture narration tasks with familiar topics (see Appendix C). In this case, a set of four pictures were selected.

Third, to elicit subjects’ oral performance on the post-test, a monologic picture narration task was used. The tasks in this study were manipulated along Robinson’s resource-directing dimension in terms of +/- few elements, +/- reasoning demand, and +/- here and now condition. In order to reach the goal of the study, all the subjects were required to accomplish the simple version as well as the complex version of the same narrative task. The less complex tasks were associated with low complexity conditions such as [+ few elements], [+ here and now], and [-reasoning demands] while the more complex tasks involved high complexity conditions including [- few element], [- here and now], and [+reasoning demands]. In all the steps in the post-test, to avoid practice effect counterbalancing was suggested by the researchers.

Fourth, according to Mackey and Gass (2005), a reliable test should cover rater reliability including inter-rater and intra-rater reliability. In this study, post-tests were scored by 2 raters; they were also scored at different times to assure intra-rater reliability. For assessing the reliability, Pearson Correlation was estimated for both inter-rater and intra-rater reliability. Based on the results, there was a significant agreement between the first and the second raters’ ratings and also between the two sets of scores which were evaluated by one rater at different times. The Pearson R-value was .97 \( P = .000 < .05 \). Therefore, the probability associated with the R-value was much lower than the alpha level of .05. Thus it can be concluded that the two ratings enjoyed both inter-rater and intra-rater reliability.

Finally, for scoring the obtained data from the post-test, the Iwashita et al. (2001) rating scale was used (see Appendix D). In this scale, fluency aspect is associated with hesitation due to word-finding, false starts, and modification of attempted utterance. In the end, a parametric test of MANOVA was conducted to present the results.

**RESULTS**
Based on the MANOVA analysis, the findings for assessing fluency are as follows:

Based on Table 1, the results indicate that the F-observed value for the effect of the difficulty level on the students’ overall fluency in oral production was not statistically significant \( F (3, 36) = 2.94, P = .051 > .05 \), Partial \( \eta^2 = .25 \).
This data represents a large effect size. However, the results should be interpreted cautiously because the effect size value indicates that there is a genuine effect although it was not statistically detected.

Table 1: Multivariate Tests of Total Fluency by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Pillai's Trace</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>638.24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>638.24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>73.643638.24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>73.643638.24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 represents, the F-value of 2.94 indicated non-significant difference between the overall means scores in the experimental groups on the fluency of oral production. Following the results displayed in Table 2 and Table 3, it could be concluded that on average, the experimental group 1 who performed more difficult tasks (M = 1.93, SE = .13) did not outperform the experimental group 2 who accomplished easier tasks (M = 2.20, SE = .13). The following information is obtained from Table 3: F (1, 28) = 2.03, P = .165 > .05, Partial $\eta^2 = .068$. The statistics confirm a moderate effect size, thus there was not any significant difference between the two groups’ means scores on the fluency in the case of different reasoning demands.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Total Fluency by Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
<td>Upper Bound</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency of Reasoning Demands</td>
<td>Difficult Task</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy Task</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency of Number of Elements</td>
<td>Difficult Task</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy Task</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency of Here-and-Now Vs. There-and-Then</td>
<td>Difficult Task</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy Task</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering the number of elements, the differences between the means’ score on fluency in tasks with different number of elements was not statistically significant (see Table 2). Table 3 also reveals that F (1, 28) = .35, P = .55 > .05, and Partial $\eta^2 = .01$. These results proves a weak effect size, hence there was not any significant difference between the two groups’ means on the fluency while checking number of elements.

Table 3: Univariate Statistics for Accuracy in Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Fluency of Reasoning of Elements</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency of Number of Elements</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency of Here-and-Now Vs. There-and-Then</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>3.97 .05</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>Fluency of Reasoning of Elements</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency of Number of Elements</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency of Here-and-Now Vs. There-and-Then</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Fluency of Reasoning of Elements</td>
<td>136.00</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency of Number of Elements</td>
<td>135.00</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency of Here-and-Now Vs. There-and-Then</td>
<td>139.00</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Moreover, Table 2 reveals that the first group’s performance (M = 2.26, SE = .11) was not significantly different from the second group scores (M = 1.93, SE = .11) on the fluency in here-and-how vs. there-and-then task. Table 3, also proves a non-significant difference between the two groups’ means on the fluency in these tasks [F (1, 28) = 3.97, P = .06 > .05, Partial η² = .12]. Figure 1 depicts the results for all the three elements of Robinson’s resource-directing model:

![Figure 1: Means scores for fluency by groups](image)

DISCUSSION
This study sought to explore the effects of increase in task cognitive complexity on fluency of Iranian EFL learners’ oral production in narrative tasks. Considering the findings, it can be inferred that increasing the cognitive complexity along reasoning demands had negatively affected the group who performed more complex task. The second group, exposed to scrambled pictures, needed more processing time to decide on a correct order in order to narrate the story. In addition, they were under more pressure to provide correct forms. The researchers also realized that this group were monitoring and self-correcting themselves extensively while narrating the story; therefore, they were more anxious and that led to slower speech with hesitation. Besides, the time limitation, the cognitive loads of the tasks, and the fear of evaluation by the teacher had negative impact on the fluency of the subjects when they were required for more justifications. This finding is in line with Robinson’s statement about the negative impact of increasing the task complexity on fluency in oral production.

However, the investigation of the impact of increase in task cognitive complexity on fluency proved that the results were not significantly different in the case of number of elements and here-and-now vs. there-and-then condition, that is, there was not a glaring discrepancy between the two groups’ means in fluency aspect of oral performance. Although, Iwashita et al.’s (2001) findings show that a complete set of pictures (-condition) leads to more fluency in narrative tasks, there is little justification in related literatures for the effect of task complexity on fluency.

The findings regarding here-and-now vs. there-and-then condition proved non-significant differences in fluency. However, more complex task (there-and-then condition) led to more fluent speech in the current study. This outcome does not bear out the claim of Iwashita et al.’s (2001) about remembering and coding the events in there-and-then condition which make learners’ speech less fluent.

According to Robinson (2005, as cited in Kim, 2009), the theory of Cognition Hypothesis, shows that more complex tasks may result in more accurate but less fluent speech. Robinson relates this outcome to the anxiety of the learners. In the case of reasoning demands elements in this study, it is felt that the negative impact of complex task on fluency could be due to stressful conditions as well as individual factors in learners such as intelligence.

In general, considering the previous studies and the findings in this study it could be realized that there is not a clear cut statement about the influence of increase in task complexity on fluency; this demands some more studies in the related areas to realize the inconsistencies among different findings.

CONCLUSION
All in all, one of the most crucial aims of the Iranian EFL learners is to speak L2 without pause and hesitation. To reach this goal some studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of different task types and task constructions on the fluency of the learners’ speech. The findings of the current study proved that although there was
not a significant difference between the scores of the two groups in terms of fluency, the group exposed to more cognitively complex tasks got better scores considering the number of elements and here-and-now vs. there-and-then condition in Robinson’s model. Furthermore, it could be realized that by reducing the stressful conditions we may achieve better results while checking reasoning demands element.

To broaden our understanding about the ties between the task structure and the results it can have on oral production, and to gain profound insights in this field some more studies are appreciated in the related area.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
Before generalizing the results of this study to other scope, some limitations should be taken into consideration:

First, due to the time constrains this study was only based on resource directing dimension of Robinson’s model. Resource dispersing dimension, including +/- prior knowledge, +/- single task, and +/- planning time, could have revealed more justification for the hypothesis in this study.

Second, the scope of this study was designed based on cognitive factors; however, interactional factors such as peers correction and feedbacks as well as intra-learner factors including intelligence could have changed the findings.

Third, gender differences were not considered in this research, and the participants of this study were all females, hence the results may not be generalized for coeducational systems.

Finally, it is felt that the small sample size in this study could have influence on external validity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT
This research has been granted by Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran.

REFERENCES
Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Appendix A
Picture Narration Task for Post-test

Appendix B
Picture Narration Task for Treatment (More Complex Task)

Appendix C
Picture Narration Task for Treatment (Less Complex Task)
Appendix D

Iwashita et al. (2001) Rating Scale for Fluency

Fluency

5. Speaks without hesitation; speech is generally of a speed similar to a native speaker.
4. Speaks fairly fluently with only occasional hesitation, false starts and modification of attempted utterance. Speech is only slightly slower than that of a native speaker.
3. Speaks more slowly than a native speaker due to hesitations and word-finding delays.
2. A marked degree of hesitation due to word-finding delays or inability to phrase utterances easily.
1. Speech is quite disfluent due to frequent and lengthy hesitations or false starts.
ABSTRACT
Feedback plays a central role in writing development. One of the crucial roles in writing instruction is the role of paragraph writing in providing feedback to students’ writing. This feedback attempts to aid students to reflect on their writing. The purpose of the current study was to compare the impact of recast and prompt on EFL learners’ tense awareness and their use of tense in writing. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 60 elementary learners were chosen from among first-grade students at Mesbah-e-Noor high school who were homogenized by KET Oxford proficiency test. They were divided randomly into two experimental groups to receive the two treatments: prompt and recast feedbacks. After the instructional period, a test of tense awareness and a composition test were given to both groups as the posttests, and the participants’ scores were analyzed through calculating two Man Whitney U tests, the results of which led to the rejection of the null hypotheses implying that there was no significant difference between the effect of recast and prompt on EFL learners’ tense awareness and their use of tense in writing.

KEYWORDS: Recast, Prompt, Tenses Awareness, Writing Skill.

INTRODUCTION
Learning a foreign language is a long and complex undertaking. One person is affected as he/she struggles to reach beyond the confines of his/her first language and into a new language, a new culture, a new way of thinking, feeling, and acting. Many factors are involved in the acquisition process. Brown (2007) asserts that, “Language learning is not a set of easy steps that can be programmed in a quick do-it-yourself kit. So much is at stake that courses in foreign languages are often inadequate training grounds for the successful learning of second language” (p.1).

With a view of language learning as a creative construction process comes the view that error is an inevitable and positive part of that process. There are conflicting views on the role of error correction in the classroom. According to Hedge (2000), “critics were quick to point out that adult learners can be encouraged to process error correction in useful ways, and the role of the teacher is to provide feedback which learners can work on in order to refine their understanding” (p.15).

Among the different kinds of feedback the role of recast can be useful in helping learners to recognize the corrective intent of the repetition and to attempt a more target-like reformulation. Recast also resembles explicit error correction because it includes full target-like reformulation of the initial error; however, recasts are distinctive in that they are not introduced by phrases signaling its corrective feedback spectrum (Lyster & Ranta, 1997 pp.136-137).

Another alternative type of feedback which is very commonly used is prompts which have been usually compared with recasts in classroom settings (Lyster, 2007). Prompts provide signals that stimulate learners to self-repair rather than providing them with a correct reformulation of their non-target utterance, as do recasts. The following techniques build up the very core of prompts which include clarification requests, repetition of learner error, metalinguistic cues, and elicitation moves.

Furthermore, comparing the effectiveness of explicit and implicit feedbacks Lyster (2004) noted the advantages of prompts over their more implicit opponents-recast. Learners receiving prompts showed greater acquisition than those provided with recasts on both written and oral tasks. He interpreted this as, “the result of prompts’ capability of enabling students to self-repair by using accurate forms. Recasts, despite of allowing learners to hear target forms repeatedly in input, rarely make them notice and correct their own mistakes” (pp.399-426).

One of the grammatical aspects that learners have to notice to correct their own mistakes is using precise form of tenses. English has three main tenses (present, past, future), though, these are made more complex by existence of simple, perfect, continuous and perfect continuous form. One of the approaches that scholars have been interested in
is determining participants’ attitudes to learning tenses through the use of two types of feedback. Despite the strong theoretical claims regarding the acquisition of feedback such as recasts and prompts are more effective (Ellis & Sheen, 2006 p.597).

Teaching tenses could be done through two techniques of instruction. A deductive instruction grammar provides explicit explanations of grammar tenses for themselves and an inductive one provides implicit which explains rules of grammar through examples. For Brown (2007), “On one side of a long continuum are explicit, discrete-point metalinguistic explanations and discussions of rules and exceptions, or curricula governed and sequenced by grammatical or phonological categories. On the other end of the continuum are 1) implicit, incidental references to form; 2) noticing (Ellis,1997) 3) the incorporation of forms in to communicative tasks, or what Ellis,1997 called grammar consciousness raising”(p.276 ).

As William (1988) maintains, “an array of possible spontaneous focus on form, ranging from reactive, teacher-initiated feedback to preemptive comments made in anticipation of student error”(pp.139-151).

According to Doughty and Williams (1998a), communicative language instruction in general, as opposed to simple “exposure” to a studies have shown that rate of acquisition and level of ultimate attainment in a language are enhanced by instruction. Error treatment and focus on language forms appear to be most effective when incorporated into communicative, learner-centered curriculum, and least effective when error treatment is a dominant pedagogical feature—what “called Neanderthal practices” (pp.197-261).

This research also appears to confirm that, “ a primary factor in determining the effectiveness of FFI is a learner’s noticing of form and the relationship of form to recast and prompt feedback being given and a secondary but important factor has to do with the quality of the learner’s uptake”(Brown,2007 p.279).

Often students face problems in developing their ability to think in more meaningful or creative ways. Many of them may often be inexperienced in how to form tenses upon receiving feedback and also construct a sentence then make a paragraph. Therefore, the teacher needs to develop her knowledge through experience and eclectic theoretical techniques for discovering what kind of corrective feedback is appropriate at the given moment and what form of uptake should be expected with focusing on awareness in tenses and using them in writing skill.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tense

In this study the focus is on “tense” which according to Swan (1988) is among those parts of grammar that have an important role in conveying a comprehensible message. Different linguists have proposed different definitions for tense.

Cormie (1992) brings about a definition which seems to be more comprehensive than the rest: “ tense is a grammatical category referring to the location situations in time, it is the basic grammatical category which together with lexical and other indications of temporal ordering, enables the hearer to reconstruct the chronological relations among the situations described in a text and between them and speech situation” (p.458) .

An important factor in this definition is the way Cormie(1992) treats the notion morphologically, because traditional pays great attention to the “inflectional” structure of a tense.

In order to gain insight into how EFL learners acquire morphological tense, numerous studies have examined the order of morpheme acquisition (Alderson,1997; Bailey, Madden, & Krashen, 1974; Dulay and Burt,1974; Larsen freeman, 1997; Piemann, John, & Brindley, 1988). In addition, a great deal of research has been devoted to ESL learner acquisition of tense and morpheme meaning (Alderson, 1983; Baily, 1974; Hatch, 1976). Whereas some specialists on language and tense acquisition believe that learners acquire tense meaning before their morphological forms, others hold the opposite view. EFL teachers and L2 researchers recognized that English tenses are difficult to acquire (De Carrico,1986; Richard, 1982).

**On the nature of writing ability**

Among the four major language skills, creating coherent and extended piece of writing has always been considered the most difficult task to do in a language. Writing is a skill that even most native speakers of a language can hardly master (Zamel, 1985 pp.79-102).

Foreign language learners, especially those who want to continue their education in academic environments, usually find writing a highly difficult and challenging task. Over the years, different approaches have been adopted for teaching and assessing writing (Raimes, 1991).

Traditionally, writing was viewed as transcribed speech. It was often assumed that the acquisition of spoken language was sufficient for, and had to take precedence over the learning of written language. Therefore, teachers mostly avoided introducing writing early in the process of language learning. Because they believed that the difference between pronunciation and spelling would interfere with the proper learning of speech (Silva & Matsuda, 2002).

The primary focus of this approach (transcribed approach) was on formal accuracy. Teachers were required to employ a controlled program of systematic habit formation in order for the learners to avoid errors. The learners' writing skill was assessed mainly through discrete-point tests of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence patterns, as well as through tests of controlled compositions. Therefore, the main focus of this approach was on the students’ final written products.

Later, particularly after the mid 1970s, understanding the need of language learners for producing longer pieces of written language led scholars to realize that there was more to writing than constructing well-formed grammatical sentences. This realization led to the development of the paragraph-pattern approach in which Raimes (1991) emphasized the importance of organization at extra sentential levels. The major concern of this approach was the logical construction and arrangement of discourse forms, especially to create different forms of essays. This was also product-oriented approach in which learners were required to focus their attention on forms or final products (Silva & Matsuda, 2002). The assessment in this approach was based on how well learners would be able to create error-free final products. However, these product-oriented approaches were not consistent with the new emerging idea of discourse analysis after mid 1980s which emphasized the non-linear generation of thought and its expression in the process of communication. This reaction was mostly due to the prescriptivism and linearity inherited in product-oriented approaches.

Dissatisfaction with the product-oriented approaches paved the way for the emergence of process approach to writing. According to Silva and Matsuda (2002) process approach to writing is a recursive, explanatory, and generative process or the strategies involved in writing. In the classroom, the objective of the process approach is to help the learner develop practical strategies for getting started drafting, revising and editing.

From what was said so far, writing, which was once considered the major expertise of the privileged and well educated individuals, has become an essential skill for people at all levels of education in today’s global community. Writing is usually used in many communicative activities, such as composing academic, essays, business reports, letters, reporting analysis of current events for newspapers, web pages, e-mails, and/or short off-line messages in widely used messenger program. Therefore, the ability to write expressively and effectively allows individuals from different cultures and backgrounds to communicate their thoughts and their needs.

**Recast**

According to Long’s (1996) interaction hypothesis, “environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner’s developing L2 processing capacity” (p. 414). In other words, conversational interaction may facilitate L2 learning because it constitutes a context in which L2 learners’ attention is directed toward some formal aspects of the language. In particular, Long argued that “Negative feedback obtained during negotiation work where may be facilitative of L2 development, at least for vocabulary, morphology, and language-specific syntax, and essential for learning certain specifiable L1-L2 contrasts” (p. 414).

Recasts are one such type of negative feedback. By utilizing a stimulated recall technique to elicit introspective data, the present experimental study addresses the issue of how L2 learners interpret recasts for the learning of
morphology, in particular, irregular past tense forms. According to Nicholas, Lightbown, and Spada (2001), recasts are “utterances that repeat a learner’s incorrect utterance, making only the changes necessary to produce a correct utterance, without changing the meaning” (pp. 732-733).

Prompt

An alternative type of feedback that has been compared with recasts in classroom settings is referred to as prompts (Lyster, 2004, 2007; Lyster & Mori, 2006, 2008; Ranta & Lyster, 2007), because they provide signals that prompt learners to self-repair rather than providing them with a correct reformulation of their non-target utterance, as do recasts. Prompts include clarification requests, repetition of learner error, metalinguistic clues, and elicitation moves. Several classroom studies have shown prompts to be more effective than recasts; for example, Havranek and Cesnik (2001) found repair following prompts to be the most effective feedback combination in a range of English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms.

In a classroom study of adult ESL learners, Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) compared the effects of recasts versus prompts on students’ use of the simple past tense in English. Operationalizing prompts as a repetition plus a metalinguistic clue (e.g., “you need the past tense”), they found significantly superior effects for prompts over recasts on delayed posttest measures. In a similar ESL context, Ellis (2007) compared the effects of recasts and prompts (again operationalized as a repetition plus a metalinguistic clue) on the acquisition of past tense –ed and comparative –er in English. He found that prompts were overall more effective than recasts but more so for the comparative than for past tense forms.

Prompt versus Recast

The relative effectiveness of different types of feedback continues to attract attention in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), equally so for researchers with theoretical interests in the cognitive processes triggered by feedback and for researchers and practitioners alike interested in how feedback can be effectively yet seamlessly integrated into classroom interaction in ways that drive second language (L2) development forward.

A considerable amount of recent research, both in and out of classrooms, has concerned recasts: implicit reformulations of learners’ non-target utterances (for helpful reviews of this literature, see Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001).

Knowledge about the characteristics and effectiveness of recasts continues to expand, and it is now widely accepted that their effectiveness is constrained by a wide range of variables. Specifically in classroom settings, the extent to which teachers’ intentions and learners’ perceptions overlap is known to affect recast effectiveness (Mackey et al., 2007), as is the interactional context in which recasts are provided. For example, Oliver and Mackey (2003) found in child English as a second language (ESL) classrooms that learners produced significantly more modified output following recasts in explicit language-focused exchanges than in exchanges that were content based, management related or communicative in nature. In addition, recasts of phonological and lexical errors are more noticeable than recasts of errors in morphosyntax (Carpenter, Jeon, MacGregor, & Mackey, 2006; Han, 2008; Lyster, 2001; Mackey, Gass, & McDonough, 2000), as are recasts that are short and contain minimal changes (Egi, 2007; Philp, 2003; Sheen, 2006).

Recasts benefit developmentally ready learners more than unready learners (Mackey & Philp, 1998) and learners with high accuracy scores in their use of the target forms more than learners achieving low accuracy scores (Ammar & Spada, 2006). Trofimovich, Ammar, and Gatbonton (2007) found not only that higher proficiency learners benefit more than lower proficiency learners from recasts but also that, independent of L2 proficiency, other learner characteristics associated with accurate L2 production after hearing a recast include phonological memory, attention control, and analytic ability.

Ellis and Sheen (2006) argued that recasts have received an inordinate amount of attention in SLA research, owing in large part to their ubiquity and consequent availability for study. They continued: Despite the strong theoretical claims regarding the acquisition potential of recasts, there is no clear evidence that recasts work better for acquisition
than other aspects of interaction such as models, prompts, or explicit corrective strategies. Indeed, there is some
evidence that the last two of these are more effective than recasts (p. 597).

Similarly, Lyster (1998, 2002, 2007) argued that, especially in classroom settings that are more meaning-oriented
than form-oriented, other types of feedback might serve more effectively than recasts as negative evidence (i.e.,
information about the incorrectness of an utterance; see Gass, 2003). A growing number of studies have recently
investigated the effects of different types of feedback on L2 development in both classroom and laboratory settings
but with different outcomes across these different settings.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
To meet the mentioned purpose the following research questions were raised:

• Is there any significant difference between recast and prompt in their effect on EFL learners' tense awareness?
• Is there any significant difference between recast and prompt in their effect on EFL learners' use of tense in
writing?

METHODOLOGY
In order to find appropriate answers to the posed questions, the researchers followed certain procedures and made
use of certain instruments, which are reported in this section.

Participants
The 60 participants were selected out of initial 90 participants based on the scores which they obtained in the
proficiency test which included reading, writing and listening skills. This is the while, the pre-post tests included
only writing was the focus of the study. My main concern is that the participants in each group might not have been
at the same level of writing at the beginning of the study. They might have been selected because of the good scores
which they could obtain in the listening and reading tests but not the writing component.

Instrumentation
In order to obtain measurable data with which the results of the study could be statistically analyzed, the following
instruments were utilized.

The English language proficiency test used in this study was a sample of the Key English Test (KET) adopted from
KET practice tests by Capel and Ireland (2008).

The reliability and item facility of the test were checked in the piloting phase of the study and the test was thus
determined to be reliable for the actual purpose of homogenization. KET is Cambridge ESOL’s exam which
recognizes the ability to deal with everyday written and spoken English at basic level. It has two pamphlets and in
the present study, the first pamphlet comprising reading and writing was used. The participants had to understand
simple written information such as signs, brochures, newspapers, and magazines. They also had to fill in the blanks
and use some words in simple sentences and write a short paragraph of writing around 25 words. This section
consisted of 55 questions and a writing passage and it took about 1 hour and 10 minutes.

The second pamphlet was listening, in which the participants had to show their ability to understand conversations
and other spoken materials. This part had 25 questions and it took the participants 30 minutes to answer.

The mentioned proficiency test was selected based on the average level of proficiency of the participants. KET test
was piloted on 60 participants with similar characteristics of the main participants of the study at the same high
school.

In addition to KET proficiency test, students wrote a paragraph as a pre-test in order to check their use of tenses
before treatments. The topic of the paragraph was based on the students’ supplementary book. In addition to writing
a paragraph, both groups took a 20-item multiple-choice test of tense in order to be homogenized with respect to
their tense knowledge before the treatments.

Procedure
To achieve the purpose of the study the following steps were taken:
At the very outset of the study, 90 female elementary students were selected through convenient-random sampling method. The test used in order to homogenize the participants was Key English Test (KET) since the researcher assumed it suitable for elementary level EFL learners.

The KET proficiency test was administered to 90 participants in two classes at first grade level in Mesbah-e-Noor high school. The mentioned test consisted of two pamphlets. The first part was reading and writing and the second one was listening.

The KET was first piloted on 60 participants with almost similar characteristics as the target group before the actual administration in order to make sure that test had appropriate item and test characteristics. The data were analyzed and 10 items showing poor item facility and malfunctioning indexes were discarded. The reliability was calculated to be 0.78, and the test was thus suitable for the screening of the target sample.

Next, the test was administered to the main participants of the study in order to homogenize them. Participants whose scores fell between the range of one standard deviation above and below the estimated sample mean were selected for the actual purpose of study. Then they were randomly divided to two groups to receive the two treatments. Both groups were checked for their homogeneity regarding their writing abilities and their tense knowledge. The study lasted for 28 sessions of 90 minutes twice a week.

Tenses investigated in this study (according to students’ 1st grade English text book in high school) included: present, past, future (to be going to & will), present perfect and present perfect according to their main course book. The rationale for selecting these tenses was that they are the ones that are included in the syllabus to be taught to students at the first grade of high school.

The participants in one experimental group received recast on the use of tenses in writing and the other experimental group received prompt. In order to write in the recast or prompt group, the participants viewed a picture and used their understanding of the picture to make a story. For instance: the researcher made a picture about their friend’s birthday party, then at the bottom of the picture asked them, what will you do?( practice on using future tense). In addition, they wrote their paragraphs according to the titles of Top Notch book. A paragraph lasted about 30 minutes and consisted of 50 words. On the other hand, to make the recast group write, the researcher taught a specific tense then gave them a topic to write about to provide the participants with practicing on the use of that tense in writing. For instance, the researcher asked them to write, “what are you going to do when you grow up?” They wrote the composition using future tense.

Recast and prompt were individualized through the researchers' written notes in different colors on the margins of the participants’ writings. A recast, as Lightbown and Spada (2006) reformulated a student’s incorrect utterance while maintaining the central meaning of utterance.

The following example was provided by the researcher in the recast group:

Participant’s writing: When I was child, I don’t clean my bed room. In line with what Tomlin and Villa (1994) propose for providing recast, the researcher underlined the wrongly used tense, then expected the participant to correct it by herself. Then the teacher checked her corrections in the following session (p.132).

According to Lyster (2004) an alternative type of feedback that has been compared with recast is referred to as prompt, because it provides signals that prompt learners to self repair rather than providing them with a correct reformulation of non-target utterance, as do recast.

As Lyster (2007) mentioned prompts appear in the form of certain set of body gestures that the teacher demonstrates immediately after students' misusing of the tenses. In the present study the students were asked to read aloud their writings slowly to the class and the researcher provided them with prompt in case they used the tense in question wrongly. For instance, if the participants failed to use simple past tense correctly the teacher moved her hand backward across her shoulder to indicate past tense. Or she moved both hands smoothly across the chest to mean...
that progressive tense had to be used. The researcher used body gesture during the treatment while the participants read their writings orally.

The tenses were covered during 28 sessions of the course. Then every two or three sessions, the participants wrote a paragraph according to the lesson title and tense which was taught to them. The sum of scores of paragraph writings were calculated as the post-test scores. After the instructional period, the participants of the two groups were given the tense awareness test.

As for inferential statistics employed to verify the null hypotheses of this study two Mann-Whitney U tests were used in order to estimate the significance of the difference between the means of the two groups on the writing and tense awareness test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was aimed to compare the impact of recast and prompt on EFL learners' English tense awareness and use of tenses in writing. The design of this study is "A Experimental group design" which is a subset of Ex post facto design. In this study, the feedback types (recast and prompt) were the independent variables. Tense knowledge awareness and use of tenses in writing were dependent variables and the level of language proficiency (elementary level) and gender (female) were control variables.

The data analysis in this study comprised two series of calculations: Descriptive and Inferential statistics. In order to standardize the KET test and the post-test, the researcher calculated the test reliability, item facility and item discrimination of the tests in the pilot stage. After piloting the Key English Testing (KET), it was administered on the main participants to choose those who turn to be homogeneous.

As for inferential statistics employed to verify the null hypotheses of this study two Mann-Whitney U tests were used in order to estimate the significance of the difference between the means of the two groups on the writing and tense awareness tests. The process of data analysis began with the selection of the required sample of population (participants). At the very outset, the selected section of KET (Key English testing) was piloted among a group of participants with very similar characteristics to the target group. Item facility and discrimination were calculated along with basic descriptive statistics i.e. mean and standard deviation. Ten malfunctioning and non-functioning items were discarded, and the reliability was calculated to be .78. The test was thus determined to be suitable for actual homogenization of the target sample.

In the next step, the piloted test was administered to the main participants. Basic descriptive statistics were calculated and accordingly those participants whose scores fell between one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected, and then divided into two groups to receive two different treatments. The researcher-made tense awareness post-test was piloted before the actual administration. It was piloted on a sample of participants with very similar characteristics as to the target group. An item analysis was conducted, and then its reliability was calculated (as reported below), and it was determined to be suitable in order to be administered as the achievement post-test.

Homogenizing the participants at the outset

The homogeneity of the two groups with respect to their writing abilities before the intervention had to be checked. The following table presents the descriptive statistics of the scores that the participants obtained from the KET writing test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Ratios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recast writing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.5583</td>
<td>1.09009</td>
<td>-.075</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prompt writing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.5417</td>
<td>1.15423</td>
<td>-.132</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid N (listwise) 30

As the skewness ratios both fell within the normality range of ±1.96, it is concluded that both sets of scores were normally distributed. Therefore, the significance of the difference between the two means shown in the above table (2.55, and 2.54) can be tested through a t-test. The following table shows the result.
Table 2: Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writing pretest</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.822</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>57.811</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in the above table, the difference between the means of the two groups on the writing pretest turned out to be insignificant (t=.057, p=.954) with the equality of the variances assumed (F=.051, p=.822). Therefore, the researcher was rest assured that the two groups were not significantly different regarding their writing abilities before the treatments.

Also, to make sure that the two groups were not significantly different with respect to their tense knowledge before the outset of the treatments, a t-test was conducted to compare their mean scores on the test. But prior to that, the normality of the distribution of both sets of scores was checked as an assumption for a t-test. The following descriptive statistics table shows the results:

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Ratios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recast</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>12.433</td>
<td>2.87298</td>
<td>.485</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompt</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>12.900</td>
<td>2.69546</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above table demonstrates, both sets of scores were normally distributed as the skewness ratios fell within the normality range of ±1.96. Also, the table shows that the two groups obtained the mean scores 12.43 and 12.90. The following table depicts the results of the Levene's test, and the t-test:
**Table 4: Independent Samples Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td>-.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-.649</td>
<td>57.766</td>
<td>.519</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the variances assumed to be equal (F=.048, p=.827>.05), the result of the t-test can be interpreted as showing a non-significant difference between the means of both groups (t=.649, p=.519>.05). Therefore, the researcher was rest assured that the there was no significant difference between the tense knowledge of the two groups before the intervention.

**Post Tests**

An achievement post-test was administered among the participants of the two groups once the treatment was completed. Then other post-test which was the sum of writings paragraphs were given to students during the treatment. The results of the details of both descriptive and inferential statistics are presented hereunder:

To show the inter-rater reliability between the raters of the writing test, correlation between their scores had to be estimated. But before that, the assumptions of correlation had to be met: the first assumption is normality of distributions of the sets of scores. The following table shows the descriptive statistics of the scores the two raters gave to the writings of the recast group.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics, Recast group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater 1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>7.4167</td>
<td>1.50478</td>
<td>-.831</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rater 2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>7.2833</td>
<td>1.55188</td>
<td>-.780</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As depicted in the above table, both distributions were normal as the ratios (skewness statistic/std.error) did not exceed the normality range of ±1.96. The second assumption is linearity of relationship between the two variables.

![Scatter plot of the scores given by the two raters to the writings of the recast group.](image)

**Figure 1: Scatter plot of the scores given by the two raters to the writings of the recast group.**

As the graph shows the dots are clustered around a straight line and form a cigar shape, hence the linearity of the relationship.

As the assumptions were met, it was safe to calculate the correlation between the two sets of scores given by the two raters to the writings of the recast group. The following table shows the result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>rater1</th>
<th>rater2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rater1</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rater2</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.945**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As shown above the correlation coefficient was as high as .945 and significant (p=.000<.05). Therefore, the mean of each pair of scores was to be considered as the final score of each student.

The same assumptions were checked for the scores given by the two raters to the writings of the prompt group. The following table shows the descriptive statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>rater1</th>
<th>rater2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rater1</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rater2</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.945**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Descriptive Statistics, Prompt group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Ratios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rater1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>7.5250</td>
<td>1.40404</td>
<td>-.640</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rater2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>7.3167</td>
<td>1.35655</td>
<td>-.733</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>7.5250</td>
<td>1.40404</td>
<td>-.640</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As depicted in the above table, both distributions were normal as the ratios (skewness statistic/std.Error) did not exceed the normality range of ±1.96.

The following graph shows the linearity of the relationship to meet the second assumption.

Figure 2: Scatter plot of the scores given by the two raters to the writings of the prompt group

As shown above, the clustered dots around the straight line demonstrate a cigar shape, hence the linearity of the correlation. The following table shows the result of the correlation analysis:

Table 8: Correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>rater1</th>
<th>rater2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.842**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

As the correlation turned out to be significant (r=.842, p=.000<.05), the mean of each pair of scores given by the two raters to the same student was considered as the final score.
To compare the effect of prompt and recast feedbacks on the tense recognition and writings of the students, a MANOVA had to be calculated. But first the assumptions had to be met. First, the normality of the distributions of each set of scores was checked. The following table shows the descriptive statistics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recastT</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>34.8667</td>
<td>3.83930</td>
<td>-.717</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promptT</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>36.6000</td>
<td>2.79901</td>
<td>-1.054</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recast writing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>9.37</td>
<td>7.3487</td>
<td>1.50657</td>
<td>-.805</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prompt writing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td>7.3687</td>
<td>1.48631</td>
<td>-1.399</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following graphs show how each set of scores is distributed.

Figure 3: Histogram of the tense scores obtained by the recast group
As displayed in table 9 above, the tense and writing scores of the prompt group did not show normality as the ratios exceed the range of ±1.96. But the rest were normal. Therefore, the researcher had to compare the tense scores and the writing scores of the two groups separately through t-tests. To compare the tense knowledge of the two groups and conduct a t-test, the normality of distribution of each set of scores was checked again. As shown already the scores obtained by the prompt group were not normally distributed. Therefore, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted. The following table shows the result:
As shown in Table 10, the prompt group obtained a higher rank compared with the recast group in the tense knowledge test. However, Table 11 shows that the difference was not significant at .05 level of significance (M=331.5, p=.07>.05). Thus, the corresponding null hypothesis was confirmed.

To compare the posttest writings of the two groups also a t-test was needed, and again the assumption of normality of the two related sets of scores had to be checked. As shown in Table 12 the distribution of the writing scores of the prompt group turned out to be not normal. Therefore, again, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was run. The following tables show the result.
As shown in table 12, the recast and prompt groups approximately obtained the same ranks, and table 13 depicts that the minor difference between the ranks was not significant (M=449, p=.988>.05). Therefore the corresponding null hypothesis was confirmed.

The following figures show the bar graphs representing the mean scores obtained by the two groups on the two tests.

![Figure 7: Bar graph representing the mean scores of the two groups on the tense knowledge test.](image)

![Figure 8: Bar graph representing the mean scores of the two groups on the writing test.](image)

The researcher also opted for a comparison between the pretest-posttest scores of the two groups, to explore whether each group benefited significantly from the treatments or not. To this end, two-way repeated measures ANOVA was needed to be calculated once for the pre-test and posttest scores of the two groups on the tense awareness measure, and one more time for the pre-test and posttest scores of the two groups on the writing measure. But firstly, the assumption of normality of the distribution of the scores was checked for each set of scores. The following table shows the descriptive statistics of the scores.

<p>| Table 14: Descriptive Statistics of the pretest-posttest scores of the two groups on the two measures |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Ratios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prompt tense pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>12.9000</td>
<td>2.69546</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prompt tense posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>36.6000</td>
<td>2.79901</td>
<td>-1.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prompt writing pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.5417</td>
<td>1.15423</td>
<td>-.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prompt writing posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td>7.4727</td>
<td>1.34626</td>
<td>-.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recast tense pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>12.4333</td>
<td>2.87298</td>
<td>.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recast tense posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>34.8667</td>
<td>3.83930</td>
<td>-.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recast writing pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>2.5583</td>
<td>1.09009</td>
<td>-.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recast writing posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>9.38</td>
<td>7.3247</td>
<td>1.56541</td>
<td>-.783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As depicted in the above table all the skewness ratios fall within the normality range of ±1.96 except for the scores on the tense awareness posttest obtained by the prompt group (2.47>1.96). Therefore, a two-way RM ANOVA was run on the pretest-posttest scores of the two groups on the writing measure, and their scores on the tense awareness measure had to be compared separately as the assumption for the normality of the distribution of scores was not met for the post test scores of tense awareness belonging to the prompt group. Therefore, to compare the pretest-posttest
scores of the prompt group on the tense awareness measure, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test, as the non-parametric equivalent for a repeated measures t-test was run. The following tables show the result.

**Table 15: Descriptive Statistics of the tense awareness pretest-posttest scores of the prompt group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Percentiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prompt tense pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.9000</td>
<td>2.69546</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>25th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prompt tense posttest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36.6000</td>
<td>2.79901</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>11.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 15, the prompt group obtained a higher mean on the tense awareness posttest compared with that on the pretest. The following tables show whether the difference was significant.

**Table 16: Ranks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>prompt tense posttest – prompt tense pretest</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompt tense pretest</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Ranks</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>465.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ties</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed in the above table, the difference between the ranks of the two sets of scores turned out to be significant ($Z=4.79$, $p=.000<.05$). Therefore, it is concluded that the prompt group improved its tense awareness across time (before and after treatment). To compare the pretest-posttest scores of the two groups on the writing test, a two-way RM ANOVA (mixed between-within ANOVA) was conducted. The following tables show the results:

**Table 17: Test Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>prompt tense posttest – prompt tense pretest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>$-4.792^a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As displayed in the above table, the difference between the ranks of the two sets of scores turned out to be significant ($Z=4.79$, $p=.000<.05$). Therefore, it is concluded that the prompt group improved its tense awareness across time (before and after treatment). To compare the pretest-posttest scores of the two groups on the writing test, a two-way RM ANOVA (mixed between-within ANOVA) was conducted. The following tables show the results:

**Table 18: Descriptive Statistics of the pretest-posttest scores of the two groups on the writing measure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>feedback type</th>
<th>writing pretest</th>
<th>writing posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recast</td>
<td>2.5583</td>
<td>1.09009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompt</td>
<td>2.5417</td>
<td>1.15423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.5500</td>
<td>1.11310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 18 above depicts that both groups improved their use of tense in their writings across time, as their posttest means were higher than their pretest means (recast=2.55 vs. 7.32, and prompt= 2.54 vs. 7.47).

Table 19: Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Box's M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box's M</td>
<td>.831</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df2</td>
<td>605520.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19 shows that the assumption of equality of covariance is not violated as the sig. value is not less than .001 (.85>.001).

Table 20: Multivariate Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>.881</td>
<td>431.031</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>58.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>431.031</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>58.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>7.432</td>
<td>431.031</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>58.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>7.432</td>
<td>431.031</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>58.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table reports that the interaction effect between time and grouping was not significant (p=.726>.05). Hence, the main effects should be inspected separately. The value for Wilks' Lambda for time is .119 with a sig. value of .000 (less than .05). This suggests that there was a change in the writing performance of the participants across the two time periods, and the main effect for time was significant. Also the Partial Eta Squared value suggests a large effect size using the criteria proposed by Cohen (1988): .01=small effect, .06=moderate effect, .14= large effect. Afterwards, the researcher explored the between-subjects effects. The following table reports the result:

Table 21: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2969.279</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2969.279</td>
<td>1691.460</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grouping</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td></td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.787</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>101.816</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.755</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 21, the main effect for grouping turned out to be insignificant (F=.074, p=.787>.05), implying that there was no significant difference between the two groups with respect to their pretest and posttest scores on the writing measure.

Overall, the latter inferential statistics demonstrated that both groups developed their tense knowledge and their ability in using tense in writing, and that both treatments (recast and prompt) were significantly effective, though there was no significant difference between the two groups on the posttest scores, and that both groups developed their tense knowledge and use equally.
CONCLUSION
The outcome of the post test analyses demonstrated that the corresponding null hypotheses which stated,

- There is no significant difference between the effect of recast and prompt on EFL learners’ tense awareness.
- There is no significant difference between the effect of recast and prompt on EFL learners’ use of tense in writing were confirmed.

As the two groups were checked to be homogeneous with regard to their tense knowledge and their ability in using tenses in their writings, the final absence of any significant difference between their mean scores on the achievement post tests could be contributed to the equivalence of the effects of the types of instruction they received. It implies that there is no significant difference between the effect of recast and prompt on EFL elementary learners’ both tense knowledge and tense use in writing.

Based on the findings of the present study and the researcher’s observations during the actual conduct of the study, a number of pedagogical implications can be drawn for EFL learners.

With respect to corrective feedback, the study contributes significantly to debates with both theoretical and practical relevance by confirming that recasts, when compared to other feedback options especially, “prompts” are not necessarily the most effective type of feedback in getting students familiar with tenses and their correct use in writing. In terms of pedagogical implications, one might not expect these findings to generalize to other instructional contexts, yet Ammar (2003) drew similar conclusions in the context of intensive ESL instruction, which entails communicative language teaching but not content-based instruction.

Moreover, immersion teachers can expect to continue their balancing act, varying their use of prompts and recasts according to context (Lyster, 2002 pp.381-397). But it is necessary to act more systematically in planned ways, taking in to account the cognitive dimensions of processing and representation associated with specific target features in L2 learners’ developing interlanguage system. Recast and prompt feedbacks such as those suggested in this study, can be easily used in several classrooms once students understand recasts and prompts and have some experiences with them.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
Like any other study, the researcher faced limitations which were beyond her control as follows:

- Due to the regulations of high schools, the researcher could not have access to male participants; therefore, the result of the study may not be generalized to male population of EFL learners.
- The researcher conducted two briefing sessions, one at the beginning of the term and the other in the middle of the term to provide the students with two written guidelines and to direct them throughout the whole treatment procedure. Because of time limitations in high schools the researcher could not allocate more than two sessions of the course to the briefing explanations of written guidelines while more sessions seemed to be needed for the successful mastery of the issue by the students.
- The participants in each group might not had been at the same level of writing at the beginning of the study. They might had been selected because of the good scored which they could obtain in the listening and reading tests but not the writing component.

REFERENCES


**The Authors**

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ABSTRACT
Margaret Atwood’s novel The Handmaid’s Tale describes a futuristic society where all sexual affairs, except that for procreation, have been abandoned. This investigation tries to show that the acquisition of identity in the symbolic order portrayed by Atwood consists of a process of identification with figures of authority. Žižek’s reworking on cultural notions introduces the concept of fantasy into the political field. In Žižekian view, the symbolic identity is achieved by the register and internalization of cultural norms through identification with figures of symbolic authority in the field of fantasy. In Žižek’s Lacanese, the subject is decentered and a person’s sense of identity is constructed by external Ego Ideals that center upon sublime objects of Ideology. They allocate the subjects different places in the socio-political totality and give them a social mandate, a definite role to play in worldly affairs. The Handmaids’ fantasy is created into believing that the repression and lack of freedom, they experience, is the ideal condition for a human being. Virginity and pregnancy are two sublime objects of ideology that help the government to regulate the Handmaids’ fantasy. This study uncovers the ways system refers to Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and a character called Janine to present Ego Ideals for the Handmaids as the most important group in the novel.

KEY WORDS: Ego-Ideal, Sublime Object of Ideology, Symbolic Order, the Handmaids.

INTRODUCTION
Margaret Atwood occupies a central place in recent development of North American literature. Today she has published more than forty books of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry dealing with diverse themes as feminism, ecology, gothic tradition, political relationship between Canada and the United States, and power politics. The American Library Association (ALA) lists her masterpiece The Handmaid’s Tale (1985) as number 37 on the 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990–2000. In The Handmaid’s Tale, published in 1985, Canadian writer Margaret Atwood paints her most vivid portrait of a futuristic state, named Gilead that deals with themes of identification and the various means by which it gains agency. Atwood also satirically comments upon the deeply flawed ideology of Gilead; society is constructed to maximize the possibility of reproduction. In such a theocratic society, identities are simplified into different roles, each serving only one role and all forming an efficient machine of household and procreation.

Many critics work on Atwood’s masterpiece The Handmaid’s Tale. Coral Ann Howells (1995) remarks the novel is “closer to the new feminist scholarship which has moved beyond exclusively female concerns to recognition of the complexities of social gender construction” (p. 128). J. Brooks Bouson (1993) announces that Atwood “lays bare the cultural and literary script that assigns women the passive self-effacing roles and encourages them to collude in their oppression as they consent to femininity” (p. 9). These critical notions are crucial but they ignore the point that in any symbolic order different discourses operate all together to identify subjects with the symbolic values. Therefore, the study of characters’ identification with a methodology that covers psychological and political elements all at once is still essential. In order to fill the mentioned gap, this thesis refers to Slavoj Žižek.

Born in 1949, Slavoj Žižek is a Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic who participates in various disciplines such as political theory, film theory, and theoretical psychoanalysis. He has a gifted mind, with a surprising understanding of contemporary theory. Studying Žižek is a stimulating experience, “one is simultaneously informed, edified, and entertained” (Sciull, 2011, 296). Žižek’s works draw on three main areas of influence, philosophy, politics, and psychoanalysis. In each of these areas, Žižek is influenced by the writings of a single individual, “Georg Hegel in
philosophy, Karl Marx in politics, and Jacques Lacan in psychoanalysis” (Myers, 2003, p. 14). He is influenced by Hegel’s account of totality as the product of a process that preserves all of its moments as elements in a structure (Sharpe & Baucher, 2010, pp. 38-9), Marx’s focus on the mechanics of society as one “to clarify how the workings of individuals should be regarded” (Myers, pp. 17-20), and Lacan’s psychoanalysis and philosophy as “the most controversial psycho-analyst since Freud” (Macey, 1994, p. xiv).

This investigation tries to show that the acquisition of identity in the symbolic order portrayed by Atwood consists of the process of identification with figures of authority. Different Ego-Ideals allocate the subjects different places in the socio-political totality and give the subjects a social mandate, a definite role to play in worldly affairs. The Handmaids’ fantasy is created into believing that the repression and lack of freedom, they experience, is the ideal condition for a human being. Virginity and pregnancy are two ideas that help the government to manipulate the Handmaids’ fantasy. This study uncovers the ways system refers to Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and a character called Janine to present Ego Ideals for the Handmaids as the most important group in the novel.

**SUBJECTS POLITICAL IDENTIFICATION WITH EGO-IDEAL AND SUBLIME OBJECTS**

In our fantasy, we “form our sense of selves” or manage loss of enjoyment by our identifications with various symbolic entities, which may include job titles, leisure activities, religious affiliations, nationalities, and value systems. All of these symbols are “abstract ideas” in some respects, yet they have a power to register and establish subjects in order to insure the continuity of symbolic order (Ryan, 2010, p. 59).

The symbolic Other, as split, is argued in Žižek’s book *How to Read Lacan* (2007), where Žižek elucidates the central distinction between the Ideal Other of the symbolic order (the Ego-Ideal) and the superego of the Real:

The Ego-Ideal is the agency whose gaze I try to impress with my ego image, the big Other who watches over me and propels me to give my best, the ideal I try to follow and actualize; and the superego is this same agency in its revengeful, sadistic, punishing, aspect. The underlying structuring principle of these three terms is clearly Lacan’s triad Imaginary-Symbolic-Real: ideal ego is imaginary, what Lacan calls the “small other,” the idealized double-image of my ego; Ego-Ideal is symbolic, the point of my symbolic identification, the point in the big Other from which I observe (and judge) myself; superego is real, the cruel and insatiable agency which bombards me with impossible demands and which mocks my failed attempts to meet them, the agency in the eyes of which I am all the more guilty, the more I try to suppress my “sinful” strivings and meet its demands. (p. 80)

Žižek points out that a person’s sense of identity – her ego – is constructed of two components. On the one hand, there is a person’s ideal ego. It is the one who the person would like others to see her. It relates to the imaginary category of human experience. By this technical term, Lacan argues that this level of our identity is at first “modelled on loved others we perceive around us, whose behavior we strive to mirror in order to win their love, and stabilize our sense of who we are” (Sharpe & Baucher, p. 47). On the other hand, there is a person’s Ego-Ideal. This component of the ego involves symbolic identification. As it has declared, the register of language and culture is called the symbolic Order, therefore, symbolic identification refers to the internalization of cultural norms through identification with figures of symbolic authority. A person’s Ego-Ideal is the perspective from or in which the subject would like to be seen as the person one hopes to be. The key thing is that the Ego-Ideal, as its name suggests, involves the dimension of the symbolic order. A person’s Ego-Ideal is some idea rather than any specific person with which the process of identification is achieved (ibid, pp. 48-9).

The Ego-Ideal centers upon a master signer or a sublime object of ideology; Žižek believes:

To grasp this fully, we have only to remember the above-mentioned example of ideological 'quilting': in the ideological space float signifiers like ‘freedom’, ‘state’, ‘justice’, ‘peace’ [...] and then their chain is supplemented with some master-signifier ('Communism') which retroactively determines their (Communist) meaning: 'freedom' is effective only through
surmounting bourgeois formal freedom, which is merely a form of slavery; the 'state' is the means by which the ruling class guarantees the conditions of its rule; market exchange cannot be 'just and equitable' because the very form of equivalent exchange between labor and capital implies exploitation; 'war' is inherent to class society as such; only the socialist revolution can bring about lasting 'peace', and so forth. (Žižek, 1995, p. 102)

Master signifier is a key word for symbolic identification that, in itself, is just a signifier, but one that, in the “psychic economy of the subject,” plays a special role: it is a signifier without a signified. It “quilts the field” of a certain context; in other words, it prevents the chain of signifiers by setting itself as the master one (ibid, p. 104). Rousseau, and finally “the Rousseau family,” is just a name, just a succession of some sounds. If it is grouped in an entire family heritage, it will be full of meaning – especially for the subject Jean- Jacques Rousseau. More precisely, the family name specifies, here for Rousseau, “a place in society as a place of admirable achievements and the prominent ideals.” In other words, in the psychic economy of the subject the Ego-Ideal maintains the place of the symbolic Order. It holds the sociocultural totality by giving the subject a position in society, a symbolic position with authority (Sharpe & Baucher, p. 50). Žižek believes that successful political ideologies necessarily refer to and turn around sublime objects posited by political ideologies (1995, p. 96). These sublime objects are what political subjects take it that their regime’s ideologies’ central words mean or name extraordinary Things like God, the Father, the King, in whose name they will (if necessary) transgress ordinary moral laws and lay down their lives.

SYMBOLIC IDENTIFICATION IN THE HANDMAID’S TALE
In The Handmaid’s Tale, Margaret Atwood describes a future where all sexual affairs, except that between a man and wife or for procreation, have been abandoned. Romance, love, and sexual pleasure have no place in human endeavors. They have been summarized to a ceremonial act wherein a Handmaid, as a servant, is used by her commander specifically for breeding purposes. Such a suppressive symbolic order banned the mere hint of sexuality in any form; even the showing of an ankle by a woman is considered illegal base on religious doctrines. Atwood describes:

What's going on in this room, under Serena Joy's silvery canopy, is not exciting. It has nothing to do with passion or love or romance or any of those other notions we used to titillate ourselves with. It has nothing to do with sexual desire, at least for me, and certainly not for Serena. (Atwood, p. 105)

All sexual fantasies are repressed in every possible way. As Žižek announces the Handmaids’ fantasy manages or domesticates the traumatic loss of the enjoyment, which “cannot be symbolized” (Žižek, 1997, p. 97). The Handmaids’ fantasy is manipulated into believing that the repression and lack of freedom they experience now is the ideal condition for a subject. There are two important ideas for the Handmaids’ ego in Gilead with which they identifies: virginity and pregnancy. They are the core of ideas and master signifiers that fill the split between the symbolic meaning of social ideals and the institutional ritual that holds these social ideals (ibid, p. 103).

The Handmaids identify with the figure of Virgin Mary as an Ego-Ideal for the concept of virginity. They must cover themselves in such a way that their skins be invisible just as Mary does not show her body and her beauty. The narrator depicts his journey to the nightclub as:

We glide together through the darkening streets. The Commander has hold of my right hand, as if we're teenagers at the movies. I clutch the sky-blue cape tightly about me, as a good Wife should. Through the tunnel made by the hood I can see the back of Nick's head. His hat is on straight, he's sitting up straight, his neck is straight, he is all very straight. His posture disapproves of me, or am I imagining it? Does he know what I've got on under this cloak, did he procure it? And if so, does this make him angry or lustful or envious or anything at all? We do have something in common: both of us are supposed to be invisible, both of us are functionaries. I wonder if he knows this. When he opened the door of the car for the Commander, and, by extension, for me, I tried to catch his eye, make him look at me, but he acted as if he didn't see me. Why not? It's a soft job for him, running little errands, doing little favors, and there's no way he'd want to jeopardize it. (Atwood, p. 232)

This cover prevents them from sexual temptations and fantasies. The Handmaids’ bodies are expected to be hidden from views because they are women and “Paul wrote that women should keep their heads veiled because they were not, like men, made in the image of God” (Warner, 1976, p. 178). The red dress is always there to remind them of their destiny and their role in the symbolic order, as that of the Virgin Mary. Virgin Mary is here the Ego-Ideal or the
agency whose gaze the Handmaids “try to impress with their ego image, the big Other who watches over” them and propels them to give their best, “the ideal they try to follow and actualize” (Žižek, 2007, p. 80).

Their garment is the same as the Virgin Mary in most Christian pictures, where her long red dress that covers all of her body is prominent. In the Handmaids’ ideological fantasy, an ideal Handmaid is one that is perfect the same as the Virgin Mary who is the symbol of female perfection; she was a perfect daughter, wife, and mother without sexual desires. The image of perfection “is built on the equivalence between goodness, motherhood, purity, gentleness, and submission” (Heartney, 2003, p. 6). Offred gives a picture of Gileadian pregnancy as:

Arousal and orgasm are no longer thought necessary; they would be a symptom of frivolity merely, like jazz garters or beauty spots: superfluous distractions for the light-minded. Outdated. It seems odd that women once spent such time and energy reading about such things, thinking about them, worrying about them, writing about them. They are so obviously recreational. (Atwood, p. 105)

The Handmaids’ conception should be without having an orgasm or any other kind of pleasure, just like the Virgin Mary, who was conceived without having any sexual intercourse with a man, without feeling any pleasure. Again, Virgin Mary, as Žižek believes, is the concern of “symbolic, the point of symbolic identification, the point in the big Other” from which the Handmaids observe and judge themselves (Žižek, 2007: 80).

As a virgin, it is expected that the Handmaids free themselves from any desire. The denial of desire derives from the Fall of Adam and Eve, who after “having eaten the forbidden fruit covered their genitals, knowing that they were naked” (Warner, p. 54). Therefore, the passion and the desire of making love are considered as sin, not as the sexual act by the big Other. In this symbolic order, like the Fathers of the Church, also, for Commanders the sexual act should not aim at pleasure, but only at reproduction. The Handmaids are accepted by and in the symbolic order firstly as virgins, because, as Kristeva writes in About Chinese Women (1977), “Christianity does associate women with the symbolic community, provided they keep their virginity” (p. 145). Virgins are accepted by the symbolic order because their sexuality is controlled. The big Other expects the Handmaids to leave their bodily and sexual instincts behind and concentrate on the spirit that is the symbolic order’s most privilege. The idea of virginity, which derives from the Virgin Mary, is very important for Gilead as “the son of God chose to be born from a virgin mother because this was the only way a child could enter the world without sin” (Warner, p. 54). The Handmaids, as a part of symbolic order, looks at themselves in a “narcissistic satisfaction,” that as Žižek affirms, is provided by looking at themselves “through the other” or Ego-Ideal (Žižek, 1993, p. 16).

Although the Handmaids are not virgins in usual sense, but the regime treats them as such. The paradox here lies in the fact that the Gileadian signified for virginity is not connected to the sexuality of the body but to the virginity of the senses: to what the Handmaids eat, see, and hear. In chapter twelve Offred narrates:

I put the tray on the small white-painted table and draw the chair up to it. I take the cover off the tray. The thigh of a chicken, overcooked. It’s better than bloody, which is the other way she does it. Rita has ways of making her resentments felt. A baked potato, green beans, salad. Canned pears for dessert. It’s good enough food, though bland. Healthy food. You have to get your vitamins and minerals, said Aunt Lydia coyly. You must be a worthy vessel. No coffee or tea though, no alcohol. Studies have been done. There's a paper napkin, as in cafeterias. (Atwood, p. 75)

They are always given the healthy food in order to make sure that they are virgin and safe to do their functions. The Handmaids’ ears are exposed to the extracts from the Bible in their everyday life through their commanders and in their communication with other Handmaids. In addition, as Offred notes, “Given our wings, our blinkers, it’s hard to look up, hard to get the full view, of the sky, of anything,” they see what the veil they are wearing allows them to see (ibid, p. 40).
The Handmaids must be kept virgin because the symbolic order values the virginity of body as a channel of communication with God; and it is God who will allow them to have a baby. Offred explains the Commander's reading from the Bible as:

> The Commander, as if reluctantly, begins to read. He isn't very good at it. Maybe he's merely bored. It's the usual story, the usual stories. God to Adam, God to Noah. Lie fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. Then comes the moldy old Rachel and Leah stuff we had drummed into us at the Center. Give me children, or else I die. Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? Behold my maid Bilhah. She shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. And so on and so forth. We had it read to us every breakfast, as we sat in the high school cafeteria, eating porridge with cream and brown sugar. You're getting the best, you know, said Aunt Lydia. There's a war on, things are rationed. You are spoiled girls, she twinkled, as if rebuking a kitten. Naughty puss. (Atwood, p. 232)

Offred is allowed to go shopping, but she can do nothing else. When she returns home, she “takes a bath, goes into her room, where she waits for the food to be brought to her” (ibid, p. 43). To grasp this fully, we have to only remember that the idea of virginity is, in Žižekian term, an ideological quilt that in “the ideological space float signifiers like 'freedom', 'state', 'justice', 'peace' [...] and then their chain” is a master signifier “which retroactively determines their meaning” (Žižek, 1995, p. 102).

Gilead defined a Handmaid’s position to “that of (grammatical) object and patient” (Staels, 1995, p. 459). Offred can do nothing more than just sit there, be served, and wait, keeping in mind that she is just a container and accepting her destiny, just like Virgin Mary, as Ego-Ideal, “who bowed her head and submitted unmurmuringly to her destiny” (Warner, p. 191). She puts this point in plain words:

> So. More waiting. Lady in waiting: that’s what they used to call hose stores where you could buy maternity clothes. Woman in waiting sounds more like someone in a train station. Waiting is also a place: it is wherever you wait. For me it's this room. I am a blank, here, between parentheses. (Atwood, pp. 239-40)

Thus, the Handmaids’ identities is made in a position of waiting; waiting to be fed, waiting to be impregnated, and waiting to be pregnant like their Ego-Ideal, Virgin Mary. Waiting is their “social and ideological function” that is constructed by “a superior and legitimate way” through their Ego-Ideal (Žižek, 1995, p. 123).

There are also no mirrors for the Handmaids because they want the Handmaids not to see and themselves as a whole subject. The house is characterized as:

> As in a nunnery too, there are few mirrors.
> There remains a mirror, on the hall wall. If I turn my head so that the white wings framing my face direct my vision towards it, I can see it as I go down the stairs, round, convex, a pier glass, like the eye of a fish, and myself in it like a distorted shadow, a parody of something. (Atwood, p. 19)

Elsewhere she describes her bathroom as:

> There's a blue bath mat, a blue fake-fur cover on the toilet seat; all this bathroom lacks from the time before is a doll whose skirt conceals the extra roll of toilet paper. Except that the mirror over the sink has been taken out and replaced by an oblong of tin, and the door has no lock, and there are no razors, of course. (Ibid, p. 62)

The only way they can see their body is on window glasses, where they see it in fragments; their body is present and absent at the same time. In the Househould, “mirrors are practically absent, because freedom for self-reflection saves one from the traditional search for identity” (Staels, p. 457). In mirror, the Handmaids would see their hands, head, legs, and their body as a whole; but the symbolic order expects them to think of their body as a walking womb:

> We are for breeding purposes: we aren't concubines, geisha girls, courtesans. On the contrary: everything possible has been done to remove us from that category. There is sup-posed to be nothing entertaining about us, no room is to be permitted lore the flowering of secret lusts; no special favors are to be wheedled, by them or us, there are to
be no toeholds for love. We are two-legged wombs, that's all: sacred vessels, ambulatory chalices. (Atwood, p. 146)

This also goes back to the Virgin Mary, the mother who sacrifices her body and her desires in order to be accepted as a subject within the symbolic order. In order for the mother's body to be accepted as an ideal one, the Handmaids have to reject their sexuality. In such an ideological system, all people accept the Handmaids because of their dignified role as future mothers. It is clear in Offred’s encounter with Guardians, “the two young Guardians salute us, raising three fingers to the rims of their berets. Such tokens are accorded to us. They are supposed to show respect because of the nature of our service” (Atwood, p. 31). It shows that a Handmaid’s position in Gilead is considered as the one that Virgin Mary occupies in western cultures, an elevated one that every women wish to achieve. In Gilead, as “a kind of microcosm of the social structure, an image of society […] as a stable totality with well-defined class distinctions,” Virgin Mary is not as she “really was” but seen as “wanted to be seen in order to appear likeable, in brief the ego-ideal of society” (Žižek, 1995, p. 76).

Offred speaks also about Janine, a very important Handmaid in the novel, who represents the Handmaids’ Ego-Ideal. Offred looks at her as:

Janine, was paraded out in front of her, her and the other Wives, so they could see her belly, feel it perhaps, and congratulate the Wife. A strong girl, good muscles. No Agent Orange in her family, we checked the records, you can never be too careful. And perhaps one of the kinder ones: Would you like a cookie, dear? Oh no, you'll spoil her, too much sugar is bad for them. Surely one won't hurt, just this once, Mildred. And sucky Janine: Oh yes, can I, ma'am, please? (Atwood, p. 115)

Janine, as an Ego-Ideal is “the perspective from or in which they would like to be seen as the person they hopes to be” (Sharpe & Baucher, p. 48). She is an idea with which the Handmaids deeply identify. Janine is the most powerful Handmaid in the novel. Although all the Handmaids could have power over the Wives, they do not, except Janine who is the only pregnant woman in The Handmaid’s Tale. Before her pregnancy, in the Red Centre, she is described as a woman without a will of her own, whose existence is defined by serving others and is cast off the Handmaids’ group, Offred believes “Janine was like a puppy that’s been kicked too often, by too many people, at random: she’d roll over for everyone, she’d tell anything, just for a moment of approbation” (Atwood, p. 139).

In pregnancy, she is a woman who can control others. She is not like a puppet in the hands of whoever wants to control her; on the contrary, when she gets pregnant though, Janine gains the dignity she never had among the other Handmaids:

As we wait in our double line, the door opens and two more women come in, both in the red dresses and white wings of the Handmaids. One of them is vastly pregnant; her belly, under her loose garment, swells triumphantly. There is a shifting in the room, a murmur, an escape of breath; despite ourselves we turn our heads, blatanty, to see better; our fingers itch to touch her. She’s a magic presence to us, an object of envy and desire, we covet her. She’s a flag on a hilltop, showing us what can still be done: we too can be saved. (Ibid, pp. 36-7)

Janine has what all the Handmaids fantasize in the symbolic order, which is to be pregnant. Therefore, in symbolic identification Janine is a key figure for providing the Ego-Ideal for the Handmaids; Janine position is the very place from where they “are being observed,” from where they look at themselves so that they appear to themselves “likeable, worthy of love” (Žižek, 1995, p. 116). Janine shows off, and this is true and at the same time expected, since it is her only chance to be on top of the other Handmaids; Offred says:

The women in the room are whispering, almost talking, so great is their excitement. “Who is it?” I hear behind me. “Ofwarren. No. Ofwarren.” “Showoff,” a voice hisses, and this is true. (Atwood, p. 26)
Therefore, whereas the symbolic order often devalues and trivializes women, “the pregnant woman can gain a certain sense of self-respect” (Young, 1998, p. 279).

Pregnancy is unique for every woman in Gilead because the woman is experiencing it by and for herself and everybody else is excluded. Although from the very beginning of her conception Janine knows that the baby she has in her belly shall not be hers, pregnancy gives her a desirable position among subjects in the symbolic order. In Žižek’s view, the ideology of Gilead, as a successful political ideology, necessarily refers to and turn around pregnancy as sublime objects posited by the political ideologies. This pregnancy is what political subjects take it that their regime’s ideological central words mean or name extraordinary, in whose name they will (if necessary) transgress ordinary moral laws and lay down their lives (Žižek, 1995, p. 96).

Janine has the chance that other Handmaids do not have, to accomplish her mission in Gilead: giving birth to the baby. Atwood explains:

> A woman that pregnant doesn't have to go out, doesn't have to go shopping. The daily walk is no longer prescribed, to keep her abdominal muscles in working order. She needs only the floor exercises, the breathing drill. She could stay at her house. And it's dangerous for her to be out, there must be a Guardian standing outside the door, waiting for her. Now that she's the carrier of life, she is closer to death, and needs special security. Jealousy could get her, it's happened before. All children are wanted now, but not by everyone. (Atwood, p. 26)

Since all of them are in menopause and cannot have a baby, Janine is the only example of the Handmaids’ power over the Wives. Because no other Handmaid is pregnant throughout the novel, she is an ideal among the subjects.

In addition to the sense of superiority, pregnancy allocates Janine the privacy that the other Handmaids do not have, but long for. Offred wishes to be like Janine as she imagines, “such a, so well behaved, not surly like some of them, do their job and that's that. More like a daughter to you, as you might say. One of the family. Comfortable matronly chuckles. That's all dear, you can go back to your room” (ibid, p. 115). During pregnancy, nobody can interfere in her relationship with the baby and her thoughts for it. Although the baby will be taken away at the moment of birth, nine months pregnancy gives her power. She is respected much more as a future mother because pregnancy and motherhood takes the reader back to the Virgin Mary, the absolute and perfect Mother of all, who in the Gileadian belief has the most valuable definitions. This situation of the woman changed in the face of the Virgin Mary “who gives birth to the redeemer” (Warner, p. 59) and becomes the “second Eve” (ibid), who brings in a new spiritual sense to all Christians instead of the sense of Fall.

These evidences gives credit to Žižek’s idea that fantasy operates in filling the split between the symbolic meaning of social ideals and the institutional ritual that holds these social ideals in political ideologies (Žižek, 1997, pp. 106-220). Being under these processes, a Handmaid’s fantasy is constructed in such a way as even starts to accept willingly the role of Handmaid that has been imposed upon her. The Handmaids have been manipulated into believing that this sinister symbolic order was designed for their own good, “Offred at first accepts assurance that the new order is for her protection” (Chauhan, Jul. 2011, p. 2). She even starts to measure her self-worth by the viability of her ovaries and this negatively affects her self-image. This is why Offred characterizes the deploring act of ceremony as “nor does rape cover it. Nothing was going on here that I haven’t signed up for. There wasn’t a lot of choice, but there was some and this is what I chose” (Atwood, p. 121). This statement is very strange. It shows to what extent a Handmaid’s identification with Ego-Ideal progresses that the deploring act is not considered so bad. It verifies that she is beginning to “embrace the system and justify the violations that are being committed against her” (Chauhan, Sep. 2011, p. 4).

The fantasy of the Handmaids, as “decentered subjects,” are constructed by external Ego-Ideals (Mary, Christ, and Janine) and external master signifiers (virginity and pregnancy) in such a way that they accept the values of symbolic order willingly (Žižek, 2007, p. 16). Broadly speaking, all people in general support Gilead’s existence by willingly participating in its rituals, serving as agents of the totalitarian state. A woman like Serena Joy, who has a trivial position in the symbolic order, works out authority within her own household delightfully. She jealously protects her little power and practices it eagerly. In a similar way, the women known as Aunts, especially Aunt Lydia, act as willing agents of the Gileadian state. They habituate other women into the ruling ideology, keeping a close eye out for rebellion. As Žižek resolves, the Ego-Ideals such as Virgin Mary and Janine become “externalized as the expectations of the social group to which the individual belongs.” The source of moral satisfaction is no longer the
CONCLUSION
Explaining ideological symbolic orders is always Atwood’s subject in her novels and poetry. An in-depth analysis of her novel *The Handmaid’s Tale* offers that it is profoundly political; her novel represents the subjects’ conflict with power and its forms; dictatorship, tyranny, torture, and the reality of violence (Rigney, 1987, p. 104). For Atwood, literature is a political device to show the operation of ideology, the position of people in a society, and the behavior of that people in the symbolic order. In other words, Atwood’s portrayal of the order referred in *The Handmaid’s Tale* includes the investigation of political elements.

Contemplation on ideology introduces fantasy as a psychological implication into the political field. Therefore, the third part of the theoretical part of this thesis has taken into consideration theorists’ views on the notion of fantasy and its function in controlling thoughts and influencing the public. The concept of fantasy does not include what we would describe as daydreams. It is postulated to be the reservoir of innate, unconscious images and knowledge, which has been built up because of phylogenetic inheritance (Watt, Cockcroft & Duncan, 2010, p. 74). It is argued, “desire is always the desire of the Other” (Žižek, 1997, p. 9). Fantasy plays an important role in symbolic registration and identification.

This investigation has also shown that the symbolic order continues its career by identifying subjects with Ego-Ideals in the field of fantasy. As Žižek announces the Handmaids’ fantasy manages or domesticates the traumatic loss of the enjoyment, which cannot be symbolized (ibid, p. 97). Here, fantasy operates in filling the split between the symbolic meaning of social ideals and the institutional ritual that holds these social ideals in political ideologies. The symbolic order refers to Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, and a character called Janine to present Ego-Ideals for the Handmaids. This referred figures are the concern of “symbolic, the point of symbolic identification, the point in the big Other” from which the Handmaids observe and judge themselves (Žižek, 2007, p. 80). Therefore, in symbolic identification Mary, Jesus, and Janine are key figures for providing the Ego-Ideal for the Handmaids; their position is the very place from where the Handmaids “are being observed,” from where they look at themselves so that they appear to themselves “likeable, worthy of love” (Žižek, 1995, p. 116). These Ego-Ideal are the agency whose gaze the Handmaids “try to impress with their ego image, the big Other who watches over” them and propels them to give their best, “the ideal they try to follow and actualize” (Žižek, 2007, p. 80).

The fantasy of the Handmaids, as “decentered subjects,” are constructed by external Ego-Ideals (Mary, Christ, and Janine) and external master signifiers (virginity and pregnancy) in such a way that they accept the values of symbolic order willingly (ibid, p. 16). It helps the overall regulation and integrity of the subjects and symbolic order. The Ego-Ideals, as the positions that the Handmaids long for and strive to achieve, center upon virginity and pregnancy as sublime objects of ideology. These sublime objects are master signifiers that determine the meaning of other signifiers. Virginity and pregnancy are what political subjects take as their regime’s ideologies’ central words or name extraordinary, in whose name they will (if necessary) transgress ordinary moral laws and lay down their lives (Žižek, 1995, p. 96). It is remarkable to note that these sublime objects are, in Žižekian term, an ideological quilt that is in “the ideological space float signifiers like 'freedom', 'state', 'justice', 'peace' […] and then their chain”, a master signifier “which retroactively determines their meaning” (Žižek, 1995, p. 102). They quit the chain of signifiers in symbolic identification and retroactively determines their meaning. Virginity and pregnancy are what the Handmaids take as the central word of Gilead’s ideology.

Kauffman (1996) proposes “*The Handmaid’s Tale* functions as an anatomy of ideology, exposing the process by which one constructs, psychologically and politically, subjects of the state and then enlists their cooperation in their own subjection” (pp. 233-34). The present study has been designed to provide concrete examples of these concepts within *The Handmaid’s Tale*. This thesis has uncovered Gilead’s use of different mechanisms to oppress its citizens and the reaction of characters to this oppression.
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ON SITUATING THE STANCE OF PERENNIALISM IN THE HISTORY OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN: A PHILOSOPHICAL LOOK

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ABSTRACT
Investigating the philosophical foundations of education in Iran, the writers hold the philosophy behind curriculum in Iranian education system was earlier based on collecting facts whose reliability was determined by a group of elites. Accordingly, this philosophical trend was in line with Perennialism that follows more or less an idealist path. To the writers, it is a fallacy to claim that insights derived from traditional philosophies are in conflict with those of modern philosophies. Employing a descriptive method, the paper is in an attempt to elucidate the philosophical background of education in Iran and holds that although Iranian education system is perennialist per se, it has the potential to merit from the yardsticks of other branches of philosophies, particularly, progressivism and existentialism.

KEY WORDS: history, philosophy, curriculum, Perennialism, Sufism

INTRODUCTION
Long has been written about the history of curriculum development in Iran, but less has been paid attention to the issue whether the history of curriculum development inspired by a philosophical thought is in conflict with the newer philosophies or not. Certainly, we live in a time of change, and change affects the content of curriculum (Pring, 2004). As Riazi and Razmjou (2004) state, curriculum renewal is an ongoing process in educational planning. In this regard, Iranian education system is not an exception. Curriculum renewal provides educators and curriculum developers with the opportunity to incorporate new insights and expectations in academic programs. Thus, in failing to understand change, we may fall victim to criticism. Hanson (1962) claims, “history of science without philosophy of science is blind” (p. 580). Further, it is a fallacy to claim that traditional philosophies, e.g., perennialism, are in conflict with newer ones, e.g., progressivism. The importance of philosophy in the history of education is emphasized in Hopkin’s (cited in Ediger & Rao, 2003). According to Hopkin, philosophy has penetrated into every important decision made about curriculum and teaching in the past and is the basis of every important decision in the future. It is a truism that rarely is there a moment when teachers are not faced with occasions where philosophy is of vital part of action.

Employing a descriptive method, the paper makes an attempt to assert that the history of curriculum is deeply rooted in the philosophy that feeds into it, and it is highly context-bound, but this boundary does not imply that the process of curriculum development is static and is strictly defined by fixed philosophical thoughts, intolerant of diverse perspectives.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
Philosophy and history of science are part and parcel of each other. Hanson (1962) in his aphorism asserts “philosophy of science without history of science is empty” (p. 580). History can be understood either as events separated by time and space or as the events interrelated with time and space. Analytic philosophers are compatible with the first perspective. In effect, this group of philosophers either ignores historical analysis because of the subjectivity inherent in the interconnectedness of contextual realities or objectifies and segments history in order to control reality. In this way, analytic philosophers, or positivists, make an endeavor to conform within the paradigm of modernity (Slattery, 2006). In a nutshell, whether the ignorance of the past or the attention given to the present raises a conflict between tradition and modernity is among one of the central issues that the paper is willing to
In reality, what makes postmodernists distinct from analytic philosophers, as Slattery (2006) maintains, is the fact that postmodernists celebrate the eclectic, innovative, revisionist, and subjective dimension of historical interpretations. What postmodernism is not compatible with is the *domination* of a group of minority, e.g., the elites, and the *unification* of historical view. Accordingly, Mohsenpour (2008) asserts that existential philosophers (e.g., Molla Sadra) claim that the purpose of Islamic education is proving unification through looking at God’s creatures. In effect, the concept of unification is elucidated through using subject-centered programs. In other words, students, in Iran, are taught to reason through structured lessons and drills in order to discover the reality; furthermore, in order to achieve refined wisdom, lessons are content-oriented. In fact, what makes postmodernism in conflict with modernism, as well as with traditionalism, is the notion of unification (Slattery, 2006), which is part of highly center-oriented cultures, such as Iran.

On elaborating the notion of unification, Hashemi (2012) asserts that unification is deeply rooted in music, calligraphy, painting, typography, and discourse in Iranian education system. According to Hashemi, the homophonic nature of Iranian music, for instance, is mostly characterized by “a single melodic line which moves around a theme” (p. 142). In fact, Iranians’ inclination towards the center and the main theme is influenced by the fact that the religious culture, in Iran, guides people to appreciate and worship only one source of power, Allah. Henceforth, this deeply rooted religious belief, directly and indirectly, has an influence on every aspect of the people’s life, leading them to seek unification everywhere (Hashemi, 2012).

In addition, in Iranian Sufism, the concept of Sufi who is in the quest for truth is so close to the meaning of teacher. The teacher has a messianic role. The teacher as the possessor of knowledge stands at the center of attention in class and is believed to be able to solve the problems of the world. Even the seating arrangement of the students would show the superiority of the teacher as the source of knowledge and discipline (Hashemi, 2012). In reality, as Hashemi asserts, the hierarchy that imposes itself upon the curriculum and education in such a context certainly inclines towards the legitimacy of top-down pedagogy. Henceforth, curriculum development in Iranian education system is in favor of the glorification of the past in order to revitalize the present. In a sense, the system of education insists on the reliability of facts that must be transmitted to the next generation.

In addition, what postmodernists insist on, according to Slattery (2006), is that when the norm chosen by curriculum developer is not compatible with the tenets of postmodernism, it results in hegemony. Elaborating the notion of hegemony is not in the scope of this paper, but it suffices to say when class schedules, bulletin boards, announcements, and dress codes all revolve around one activity, football, for instance which is chosen by a group of elites, and school leaders do not provide alternate and equitable activities for those who do not participate in the football rituals, then hegemony is created. Henceforth, educators must be aware of the ways that hegemony is created.

Curriculum development in the postmodern era deconstructs hegemony by challenging the dominance of logical positivism (Slattery, 2006). Logical positivism is challenged as it considers curriculum as a set of facts that can be enumerated; in fact, to logical positivists, some facts are considered as correct and others as wrong. Moreover, the analytic philosophers prefer to set strict aims for learning situations rather provide language learners with different narratives or genres to support their growth. In other words, postmodern educators can no longer teach a subject in terms of facts, or a series of events to be memorized. In effect, the parameter of particularity, according to Kumaravadivelu (2006), contributes to the context-sensitive elements and individuality of the people involved. In fact, postmodernism is not compatible with modernists’ notion of totality which is in line with certainty. Modernists’ strivings towards totality and certainty led to an increasing instrumentalization of reason. To modernists, the enlightenment itself should be enlightened and not posed as a “myth-free” view of the world (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997).

However, it is not plausible to claim that the tenets of post-modernity are in conflict with those of traditions. In fact, that learning situation has not been separated or isolated from the total context is crystal clear (Reid, cited in Yan, 2006, p. 50), but what is not fair to assume is that the stability of a postmodern ideology should not be at expense of marginalizing traditional voices. In sum, the survival of any type of education necessitates to let students celebrate...
CURRICULUM AS FACTS VERSUS CURRICULUM AS PRACTICE

In the history of language curriculum, we face two contrasting views: curriculum as facts and curriculum as practice (Young, 1998). Similar to these two contrasting views, two contrasting approaches are presented: the banking approach and the problem posing approach (Freire, 1970). In the first approach, learners are observed as depositors. In contrast, the second approach, the problem posing perspective, respects the human dignity and helps to emancipate the individual. Investigating the philosophical foundations of education in Iran, the writers hold that the philosophy behind curriculum in Iranian education system was earlier based on collecting facts determined by the elites. Accordingly, this philosophical trend was in line with Perennialism that reflects conservatism of ideas and looks to the past for subject matter in the curriculum (Ediger & Rao, 2003). Perennialists, as Noroozi (2010) puts forth, deals with a realist philosophical base. Its instructional objectives are to educate the rational person; its main focus is on preserving the past. And as Maftoon and Shakouri (2012) claim, knowledge is considered as property that should be transmitted to an individual from an authority. This trend of thought which is inspired by Aristotle’s naturalism and his doctrine of the uniformity of nature connotes that there are natural truths that do not change and that such truths should be made the fixed intellectual content of education (Ediger & Rao, 2003).

PERENNIALISM IN LINE WITH SUFISM

Perennialists trace the foundation of their philosophy back to Plato and Aristotle. Perennialists cling to the belief that certain universal truths or ideas exist at all times and that the level of existence that man attains is determined by his attention or inattention to these eternal principles (Jent, 2003). In line with Perennialism, Iranian education system was earlier inspired by Sufism (Noroozi, 2010). According to Ghadamyari (2012), Sufism most probably originated in Iran in the fourth century H. G. However, Orientalists introduced the term Sufism to European languages at the end of eighteenth century.

On providing a brief history of Perennialism, Jent (2003) defines a perennialist as “one who believes that certain perennial truths in and about education have existed from the very beginning and continue to have existence and validity as ‘first principles’ which all right-thinking men will accept” (p. 4). Among the sufists who propagate Plato’s thoughts in Iran was Shahaboldin Sohrevardi (cited in Azodi & Askari Sarvestani, 2013) and the philosopher who spreads the tenets of Aristotle was Abu Nasr Farabi (cited in al-Talbi, 1993). Farabi, to several scholars (e.g., Vallat, 2011) is a faithful Aristotelian. Farabi, as a peripatetic philosopher, asserts that reality can be achieved by reasoning; in contrast, the primary goals of education, to Sohrevardi, are not limited to achieve the ability to reason but to illuminate wisdom. The founder of Illuminationist Philosophy—Sohrevardi—considers God as the origin of all feeling and thinking. Henceforth, for human beings to be illuminated, they are supposed to be in quest of finding out unknown factors (Kamali Zadeh, cited in Azodi & Askari Sarvestani, 2013). Azodi and Askari maintain that to Sohrevardi, it is not possible to find out any realities of the world through reasoning only. To him, the purification of wisdom is necessary for finding the reality. What Sohrevardi brings is the pedagogy of integration. In fact, he integrates and juxtaposes ancient Persian wisdom, Greek rationalism, and Islamic knowledge. Accordingly, Habibi (2011) contends that to Sohrevardi, there are several ways of obtaining knowledge; i.e., deduction, induction (experience) and intuition. In a sense, deduction is the ability to derive a conclusion from given information by using a set of formal mental operations. Induction, in contrast, implies expanding knowledge by transferring knowledge from previous experience to new situation, and intuition implies gaining knowledge by using one’s feelings rather than considering the facts.

Toussulis (2011) referring to the work of Sedgwick (2004) claims the perennialist perspective cannot be easily discarded because it is inherent in much of Sufism, as well in much of Iranian education system. Toussulis also declares that perennialist perspective protects sufists from being attacked from two sources: modern relativism which denies the vitality of revelation and fanatical fundamentalism which negates esotericism, the concept that metaphysical or spiritual knowledge preserved or intended for a limited group and not for society at large.
Sufism curriculum, as Noroozi (2010) claims, with its themes of love, wonder, and tolerance manifested itself throughout the textbooks of poetry and prose and remained to be popular despite the traditional philosophy of schooling. As Noroozi reports, “poetry seems the right venue to search for these recurring themes” (p. 29). Compatible with the employment of poetry as the path to find reality, several sufists, e.g., Imam Mohamad Ghazali, portray the inability of reason to comprehend the absolute (Noroozi, 2010). Along the same line, the emergence of avoiding rationalism, which is probably part of Iranian culture, is viewed in the light of Sufi thoughts (Ghadamyaari, 2012). Henceforth, the relativist stance of sufists lends a claim to the employment of poetry and verse in curriculum.

Noroozi, also in outlining the tenets of Perennialism in line with Sufism, claims “rote learning and educating moral obedient students [are] virtuous” (p. 33). Moreover, the classes held in khanegha and mosques would follow the perennialist path of teaching. In a sense, the linchpin of Perennialism and of traditionalism is that change in curriculum is unnecessary since truths are stable as revealed through study, and reason is learned by teaching eternal truths. Nevertheless, whether this school of thought suffers from ideological perspectives or is susceptible to change raises a bone of contention among scholars.

Jahani Asl (2003) asserts that “one of the results of this ideological education in Iran is the creation of alienated students, teachers and administrators (from one another) in the educational environments” (p. 118). Accordingly, Jahani Asl likens an obedient teacher to a laborer who is separated from any decision over the curriculum. To him, “the tragedy of creation of the obedient administrator is totalitarian enforcement creating an oppressor. (p.118)

Whether Jahani Asl is in quest of an ideal education inspired by postmodernism or not is unknown, but the employment of new pedagogy, such as progressivism and constructivism, in an absolute sense, in a context whose education is highly centralized involves dehumanizing students from their culture and history. According to Kelman (1976), dehumanization involves denying a person “identity”—a perception of the person “as an individual, independent and distinguishable from others, capable of making choices” (p. 301)—and “community”—a perception of the other as “part of an interconnected network of individuals who care for each other” (p. 301). When people are divested of the agentic and communal aspects of humanness they are deindividuated, lose the capacity to evoke compassion and moral emotions, and may be treated as means toward vicious ends (Haslam, 2006).

Nevertheless, claiming that students are passive and passivity makes students alienated sounds inappropriate because passivity in Sufism is a sign of respect held for Pir, and nowadays for teachers. Also, the system of education employed by a country, either centralized or decentralized, depends on the policies ruled over a country, and the demand of society that is affected by such social factors as language, customs, habits, traditions, and beliefs of people (Farjad, cited in Salari Chine & Soltaninejad, 2012).

The nature of change in curriculum development is contingent rather than certainty (Daniels, Katz, & Sullivan, 2012). The contingency in the nature of curriculum indicates that elaborating on the history of education without giving attention to the hybrid nature of philosophy is empty. Thus, attempting to fix one’s position on the absolutist camp in order to consolidate whatever postmodernists claim to some extent must be compatible with the history, together with the philosophy, that the system of education originated. However, no one denies the fact that the tenets of postmodernism is in stark contrast with the philosophical base of curriculum development in Iranian education system. But claiming that Iranian education system has some distance with the globalized level of education is not plausible. In the same way, prioritizing one norm over the other might be at the expense of creating alienated learners. In this regard, as Hashemi (2012) claims “making any attempt in order to lead curriculum towards postmodernist pedagogy results in dehumanizing of the target group by isolating them from their history and culture” (p. 143).

TRADITION AND MODERNITY RECONCILIATION

The change in a society per se is dynamic, whether it is traditional or modern. Thus, as Gusfield (1967) maintains, “it is fallacious to assume that a tradition society has always existed in its present form or that the recent past represents an unchanged situation” (p. 352). If we do not know where we came from, we will not know where we are going. In fact, the relations between tradition and modernity do not necessarily involve conflict. Gusfield continues “modernity does not necessarily weaken tradition. Both tradition and modernity form the bases of ideologies and movements in which the polar opposites are converted into aspirations, but traditional forms may supply for, as well as, against change” (p. 351).
In this regard, Iranian teachers, not Iranian education system, though are perennialist in teaching, have some inclinations towards progressive existentialism. Atai and Mazlum (2012), on investigating Iranian teachers’ views towards the educational philosophies of Aristotle, Dewey, and Rousseau, concluded that teachers were more or less interested in some aspects of Dewey’s and Rousseau’s philosophies of education. Henceforth, it is a fallacy to claim old traditions are displaced by new changes (Gusfield, 1967). Accordingly, Gusfield continues that the old and new cultures and structures can coexist co-productively without conflict; in fact, the old is not necessarily replaced by the new since mutual adaptations is a frequent phenomenon of social change. In other words, as Gusfield maintains, “the acceptance of a new product … does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of the older form […] new forms may only increase the range of alternatives (p. 355).

Although the challenge between tradition and modernity has always been a heated debate among scholars, Kebede (2004) contends that there is no necessary conflict between tradition and modernity. Modernity is a transient term. Herf (1996) radically asserts “there is no such a term as modernity in general” (p. 1). In fact, the conflicts exist between different value-systems that generate new waves of social change. In addition, the change in a value system does not result from an accumulative process; it is not a mechanistic process. In fact, what causes a shift in one value system is the pressure of new evidence and Iranian education system is not an exception. Revision and transformation of Iranian education system is immutable reality of the country when it is subjected to change (Tamer, 2010). On the plausibility of dynamic nature of change in Iranian education system, it can be claimed that due to the dynamic nature of education in any context, it is legitimate to claim that the history of curriculum development, thought deeply embedded in its philosophy, is constantly changing. In other words, an idea not coupled with its philosophical root will never get bigger if the idea is not tolerant of diverse perspectives.

CONCLUSION
The effectiveness in a system is tied to how well different parts of it—students, teachers, and programs—perform. Along the same line, Mohsenpour (1988) asserts that the philosophy of education in any society is deeply rooted in the student behavior, the teaching programs, the curricula and textbooks, and the major goals of the educational system of that society. Thus, it is undeniable that when educators pursue a stream of philosophy, they incorporate their beliefs into the system, and since such beliefs reflect a specific time and place, they might be in need of revision, and therefore as the nature of change, in any society is dynamic, Iranian educational system is not an exception.

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LITERATURE INSTRUCTION THROUGH READER-RESPONSE APPROACH: DOES IT FOSTER READING COMPREHENSION?

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ABSTRACT
Reading comprehension is one of the four components, which pre-service English teachers in Turkey must acquire at advanced level, and the literature and language teaching course currently imposed by the National Curriculum is aimed at encouraging these students to improve their reading skills alongside literature. This article discusses how reader response approach to teaching English novels could be applied in an effort to maximize these students’ reading skills. A study using a quasi-experimental design was conducted among 91 pre-service English teachers from four 3rd year, intact classes. An intervention of eighteen reading lessons using reader response-based strategies was employed over a period of three months. Tools for the data collection were a pretest, a posttest and an interview conducted after the treatment. The findings from the independent t-test showed a significant difference, revealing the effectiveness of the strategies, and the respondents from the Experimental Group gave a positive feedback regarding the use and effects of these strategies. The results also revealed that writing reading logs exploited as part of reader response activities helped students to get more out of novels and to express themselves freely. The study concludes with implications for pedagogy and research.

KEY WORDS: literature instruction, reader response approach, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION
In Turkey, English is taught to equip pre-service English teachers with various academic challenges through the development of critical thinking and the competent use of language skills. Among these skills is the reading component that has supposedly a heavier weight (nearly 50%) in assessing students’ overall performance. By the same token, it is perceived that pre-service English teachers at the university level are expected to read more than they write. However, reading skill critical for students is not without its problems. Based on our teaching experience and students’ previous results on the English courses, some students have been found to lack both motivation to read in English and adequate reading comprehension skills. This has in turn underscored the need to develop alternative ways of tackling reading skill.

With these considerations in mind, a new course entitled ‘Literature and Language Teaching’ was introduced to pre-service English teachers by Turkish Higher Education (commonly known as YOK) in 2009. The course was intended to assist pre-service English teachers in improving reading skill as a result of their exposure to a wide range of literary texts. The content of the Literature and Language Teaching course entails ‘example short stories and novels from British and American literature; identification of the distinctive features of short stories and novels; different approaches to using literature; examining ways the teaching of language and literature in these two genres; exploring theoretical and practical dimensions of this integration’ (Literature and Language Teaching Syllabus, 2009). Apparently, this course content is not clear-cut and straightforward in the sense that it does not propose a sound approach to integrating literature into language with an emphasis on the development of reading component.

In order for the pre-service English teachers to enhance their reading proficiency at the advanced level, we propose here to use reader-based strategies for teaching English novel, which in essence places the reader at the very centre throughout the reading process. The study reported here examines the effectiveness of the reader response strategies coupled with the presentation of English novel as a literary genre on a group of pre-service English teachers’ reading skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Reader Response Theory in Language Teaching
Reader response theory is having a growing influence on English as a foreign language (EFL) literature theory in English language teaching (ELT) classes (Carlisle, 2000; Hirvela, 1996; Elliot, 1990). Based on the literary theory of Rosenblatt (1995), reader response theory emphasizes a reciprocal relationship between the reader and the text.
The reader with the creative role brings his or her own cultural background and socialization to the text. The meaning, therefore, that the reader creates from the text is synthesized with the text and the life context the reader brings to the text (Rosenblatt, 1991). In this case, meaning is determined as the result of this transaction. Thus, reading, in this approach, is a reflective and creative process and meaning is self-constructed. The meaning and structure of the text are not inherent in the print but are invited by the author and imputed to the text by the reader (Swaffler 1988, 124). In a sense, readers construct their own meaning without heavy dependence on either text or writer.

It follows that Rosenblatt emphasized not only the transaction theory between reader and text as a way to view the reading process, but how reader response theory influences the teaching of reading and literature (Many & Wiseman, 1992). Rosenblatt describes two stances toward reading: efferent and aesthetic (Rosenblatt, 1985). For the purposes of this paper this aspect of the theory needs to be expounded. Rosenblatt (1995) found that a reader takes an efferent stance when the goal of reading is to gain information from the text (e.g. textbooks, newspapers, etc.). When the reader’s attention is focused on the experience of reading itself, an aesthetic stance is taken, which results in the personal, experiential aspects of meaning (Rosenblatt, 1995; Many & Wiseman, 1992). During and after an aesthetic transaction, the reader has a response to the event, which involves the organizing of his or her thoughts and feelings about the text (Rosenblatt 1985: 40).

Admittedly, the teaching of literature as an aesthetic experience frees teaching of literature from the narrow restrictions imposed by, what Carlisle calls, ‘information-gathering exercises’ (Carlisle, 2000). This particularly applies to Turkish EFL readers, whose reading experience is often equivalent to one long comprehension exercise. In these classes, a novel in one hand and a dictionary in the other, learners plough their way through the pages looking up the new vocabulary until they ‘understand’ the story. Their focus of attention is not on the experience they have while reading, but on what facts they can retain for use after reading is over. The story is not being read as literature but as a piece of information (Carlisle 2000, 13).

On the contrary, in the reader response theory, the act of reading is viewed as an active, dynamic process in which readers are in charge of the exploration and development of meaning. In such a context, a variety of personal interpretations and analyses, based on not only the textual elements but also the reader’s personal views, experiences and feelings are welcomed (Padley, 2006; Tyson, 2006; Diyanni, 2000). Thus, students come to recognize that the main concern is not ‘What they understand’ but ‘how they feel’. Rosenblatt contends that the teacher should accept ‘multiple interpretations’ to a text rather than just one ‘correct interpretation’, which allows for creative and critical thinking to take place in the class (Rosenblatt, 1995).

Several activities and techniques have been used to apply the response based theory in EFL literature teaching: Reading Logs (Benton & Fox, 1985, 1990; Carlisle, 2000); Response Journal (Sheridan, 1991); Critical Questioning and Writing (Probst, 1994; Hirvala, 1996); Self-questioning (Davis, 1989). The main task proposed in this paper is centred on student-written reading logs originally put forward by Benton and Fox (1985: 121). It is a simple and direct tool to encourage and tap into learners’ individual responses to a novel. It differs from the other kinds of activities in that students do this task while in the act of reading. Carlisle, a leading proponent of this activity, contends that through keeping a log, the hope is that the learner’s reading experience will go beyond literal understanding and move towards aesthetic appreciation of the text (Carlisle 2000: 14). Hence, the reading log encourages students to enter and explore their secondary worlds. According to Benton and Fox (1985: 2-18), a reader inside a secondary world is engaged in four separate processes: Anticipating/retrospecting: guesses about what is going to happen next, what events lead to current situation, and how the book is going to end; picturing: images that come into the mind’s eye, such as a character’s face or a scene described in the book; interacting: opinions on a character’s personality and actions or feelings about events and situations; evaluating: comments on the skill of the writer. In line with these four key elements of response to literature, the guidelines below, which have been adapted from Benton (1992: 35), explain how to write a reading log (Figure 1).

While you are reading the book write down all the things that go on in your head in a “stream of consciousness” style. As you read, you will be making a record of images, associations, feelings, thoughts, judgments, etc. You will probably find that this record will contain:
Questions that you ask yourself about characters and events as you read. (Answer these yourself when you can.)

Memories from your own experience provoked by the reading.

Guesses about how you think the story will develop, and why.

Reflections on striking moments and ideas in the book.

Comparisons between how you behave and how the characters in the novel are behaving.

Thoughts and feelings about characters and events.

Comments on how the story being told. For example, any words or phrases or even whole passages that make an impression on you, or motifs which you notice the author keeps using.

Connections to other texts, ideas and courses.

An outline of the chapter, no longer than a paragraph.

Please date each entry, and note down the time and place, as well as the mood you are in while reading.

Please note down the page number you are reading when you make an entry.

Please take pleasure and pride in your log.

Please do not try to rewrite the book.

Figure (1): Reading logs.

**Rationale for the Use of Novel**

The benefits of using novel in EFL literature teaching have been highlighted by many ESL/EFL practitioners. Many scholars (Lazar, 1993; Collie & Slater, 1987, Fowler, 1977) have presented compelling arguments for teaching novels in EFL/ESL classes. They argue that we should teach novels because

1. They are enjoyable to read.
2. They are authentic.
3. They help students understand another culture.
4. They are a stimulus for language acquisition.
5. They develop students’ interpretative abilities.
6. They expand students’ language awareness.
7. They encourage students to talk about their opinions and feelings.
8. They foster personal involvement in the language learning process.

The benefits of using novels as textbooks are numerous. Novels can supplement textbooks and form the central focus of instruction (Gareis, Allard, & Saindon 2009: 136). Novels allow for extensive reading (i.e., the reading of a large quantity of text), which has been shown to facilitate general proficiency (Grabe, 1991) and build fluency (MacGowan-Gilhooly, 1991) as well as vocabulary (Horst, 2005; Krashen, 1989). Novels also increase motivation by providing narrative and plot (Cho & Krashen, 1994), a fact evidenced by the growing number of educational novels.

Unabridged novels are especially effective. They not only provide authentic exposure to the English language, but also offer the quantity of reading required to produce substantial improvement in reading skills (Gareis, Allard, & Saindon 2009: 137). Students can be immersed in a context and activities for more than one or two days and thus practice all language skills systematically (Gajdusek, 1988; Gareis, Allard, & Saindon, 1998). An added benefit is that many novels have been adapted for film and in conjunction with their visual counterpart, can be used to teach other literacy skills such as film literacy (Pally, 1997; Seger, 1992).

The previous studies by Benton and Fox (1985) and Carlisle (2000) were restricted to the practical applications of reader response theory in literature EFL teaching. They did not look into the statistical results based on these classroom applications, which is a gap in this area of research. Therefore, to explore the effects of reader response approach to teaching English novel on EFL students in terms of reading comprehension and perceptions, this study investigated the following two research questions:

RQ1. To what extent do students who received a reader-based reading intervention comprehend better than those who do not?

RQ2. To what extent do students who received the reader-based reading treatment perceive the intervention?
METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants of the study were 91 pre-service EFL undergraduate students (73 females, 18 males) from two intact classes, with 48 and 43 students in each. The former served as the experimental group, the latter the control group. They studied English for at least six years in Turkish junior and senior high schools before coming to university. The students were prospective English teachers aged between 21 and 24 years (M=21.5, SD=.96) in their third year of study in the Department of English at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey. The mean Grade Point Average (GPA) for the groups was 2.99 (SD=.43) on a scale of 4. The students were assumed to be of a homogeneous level of English proficiency and reading comprehension skill on the grounds that they all were non-native speakers of English and they had been admitted to the programme on the basis of their scores on the English language component of the university entrance exam. The participants were enrolled in a required core course titled Language and Language Teaching, the purpose of which was to assist students in acquiring advanced reading skills by means of selected literary texts and accompanying literary activities.

The baseline of the two groups was that they took exactly the same courses with the same amount of credit hours. The classes met for one three-hour session per week, for a total of 39 hours over 13 weeks. The teaching content of the two groups focused on the integration of literature into language capitalizing on the selected English novels and literary activities except that the experimental group also spent a good deal of their session on the application of reader response theory.

Instruments and Procedures

To assess the effect of the program on students’ reading proficiency, a reading comprehension test was administered as a pre-test and post-test to both experimental and control groups before (i.e., week1) and after (i.e., week 13) the experiment. The reading comprehension test adopted for the study was specifically developed as part of Ph.D. thesis on ELT by Razi (2009). The reliability of test was .84. Based on students’ previous scores on reading and the researcher’s teaching experience, the test was considered suitable for the participants. The content mainly involves three parts, each of which contains familiar reading passages adapted from, respectively, an original reading text, a short story and a magazine article. The participants were required to answer thirty-two questions in the reading test. The former text contained eight multiple choice (MC) questions, the latter nine, and the last part fifteen, with a total of 32 MC questions. Each question contained four options. The same reading test was repeated at the end of the course. When the students took the pretest, they were unaware that the same test with the same reading texts would be given again, and most importantly, none of the test papers were retained by the students.

After reviewing several collections of English novels, two novels were chosen by the researcher based on the interest of the students in order to be covered in both the experimental and control groups throughout the course. The novels, in the order of their presentation, were “The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and “The Heart of Darkness” by Joseph Conrad. The two novels were selected as they were supposed to evoke a considerable amount of emotional response and were promising to promote students’ versatile opinions and interpretations of the novels. The researcher also hoped that these novels with their plots, characterisation, suspense and ironies could spark the attention of the students and drive them into the free expression of their individual interpretations.

In the control group the traditional method of teaching literature was pursued, and the instructor had the central role in directing students to generate one “correct” interpretation of the novels. The researcher initiated the debate asking about the summary of the novels involved, followed by analysis of the main characters, central themes, setting and other literary aspects of the novels. The students were encouraged to express what they thought about the underlying themes, character development, and the “message” that the novels conveyed; however, it was the instructor who provided the final correct interpretation and explanation. Conversely, the students in this class are onlookers of the teacher’s instructions without assuming a role in changing the path of instruction determined by the instructor.

On the other hand, in the experimental group, the reader response approach to reading novels was implemented. In addition, the activity of student-written logs was introduced as a practical application of reader response theory. Benton and Fox (1985: 21) recommend devoting class time to instructing students on how to write their reading logs until they come to terms with the practice. Carlisle (2000) suggests explaining the main ideas of reader response theory in the first lesson as outlined above, followed by pointed questions such as ‘What is the difference between
reading literature and reading for information? ’ and ’ What do you do when you are reading a story? ’ . Students were made aware of the contribution the reader brings to the text thereby valuing their own responses. For this purpose, students were set a page from a novel and were asked to make notes of their responses to the text in their logs using the guidelines (Figure 1) for assistance whereby a free exploration of ideas was encouraged. Following this phase of preparation, reading logs were assigned as individual homework.

Having read the assigned chapter and made entries in their reading logs, students came to class. At the outset, an outline of the chapter was read out by one or two students. This enabled the teacher to check students’ understanding of the chapter and set the context for group discussion in which students would actively engage. In groups of five, students shared their ideas and feelings, referring to their logs. One student from each group reported the emergent points of their discussion to the whole class. At the end, the teacher collected the reading logs to be evaluated and employed as part of the discussion in the next lesson.

Returning the logs, the teacher mentioned some of the more interesting entries made in students’ logs. Drawing on these entries, students were asked to speculate about the complex strands involving central themes, characterisation and plot cited in the relevant chapter. The teacher acted as a ‘facilitator’ in eliciting responses from students. Likewise, the teacher, whenever necessary, cleared up any remaining areas of confusion in the form of lectures which were delivered on some criticism of the text and cultural aspects likely to be unfamiliar to them.

By reference to the two novels involved, the following samples have been selected from the students’ reading logs in order to exemplify the range of elements of response to literature as cited in Figure 1.

**THE GREAT GATSBY**
All these descriptions give me the sense that some characters are doomed to misfortune or death.
I guess Gatsby is in fact a smuggler although this is never explicitly stated.
I think I can understand the feeling of Daisy. It is a sorrow that when a man must abandon his lover, and his lover falls in love with another man during this period.
The author describes ‘a valley of ashes’ as ‘a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into hills and grotesque gardens’ in a very active and pictorial way, so that the scene is really touching for me.
I find that Nick’s narration gives way to our emotions and feelings and the thought about Gatsby. The way he narrates the story leads us to love Gatsby’s personalities unconsciously although he does not intend to do so as mentioned in Chapter 1, ‘I’m inclined to reserve all judgements.’

**HEART OF DARKNESS**
The descriptions of the jungle give me the feeling of loneliness and misery.
The element of darkness is widely felt throughout the book. I think something terrible will happen sooner or later.
Would Captain Marlow and Mr. Kurtz be killed during the journey they made into, as mentioned in the book, ‘the heart of an immense darkness’? Particularly Marlow must survive as the sole witness who will be capable of depicting the events.

**Data analysis**
All the pretest and posttest scores pertaining to students’ proficiency in reading comprehension were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 15) software program. Prior to the intervention, to ensure that both the Control and Experimental Group were as equivalent as possible, an independent sample \( t \)-test (Levene’s Test) was used to determine whether the Control Group and the Experimental Group were homogeneous. Then, an independent sample \( t \)-test was used again to determine whether if there was any significant difference in the means between the Control Group and the Experimental Group in the postest scores. In addition, the paired-sample \( t \)-test was used to find out whether there was any significant difference in the means of the Experimental Group between the pretest scores and posttest scores in order to supply statistical verification. Regarding the qualitative data, all responses to the semi-structured questions during the interview phase were summarized and analyzed.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**
RQ1. Did students who received a reader-based reading intervention comprehend better than those who did not?

**Quantitative Analysis on Pretest and Posttest Results**
The pretest scores of the two groups were compared using the independent \( t \)-test. From the data below (Table 1), the Levene’s Test for equality of variances shows \( F = 6.218 \) and \( p = .014 \), proving that the variance of the groups was
equivalent. Moreover, the result also reveals \( t = 1.643, \text{df} = 90, \) and \( p = .104 \), demonstrating that the two groups did not differ significantly, but were homogenous.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Results of the Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( F )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance Not assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant at a confidence level of ( p&lt;0.05 ) (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the results above, it can be assumed that the samples of both groups were equal in their reading proficiency levels prior to the intervention. To answer the first research question, the means of the pretest and posttest scores were compared. Afterwards, independent \( t \)-test was employed to provide statistical verification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Posttest Scores between the Experimental and Control Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest Experimental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant at a confidence level of ( p&lt;0.05 ) (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These independent \( t \)-test results show that the mean for the posttest scores for the Control Group was 20.37, and the mean for the Experimental Group was 25.45, with a difference of 5.08 (Table 2). The result in Table 3 (\( t = -9.919, \text{df} = 66, \text{and} \ p = .000 \)) shows that there was a significant difference in the mean for the posttest scores between the Control Group and the Experimental Group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Independent Sample Test Results on Posttest Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variance Not assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant at a confidence level of ( p&lt;0.05 ) (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To this effect, it can be concluded that with the help of the teaching strategies grounded in reader response theory, the Experimental group scored better than the Control Group. As gathered from both the results and the observations within the classroom, the students were experiencing a kind of ‘the intensely personal nature of reading’ (Carlisle, 2000) where they were gradually learning to recreate a story in their own style (Holland, 1975). As a group of students, they talked their way through selected literary texts to understand them. Notably, teacher led group work enabled students to share, as Holland says, their differing subjective viewpoints that make the conversation interesting (1975: 231). Working together assisted students in monitoring their understanding the various strands of the texts by stopping at regular intervals to direct pointed questions, summarize, interpret, predict and clarify.

RQ2. How did students who received the reader-based reading treatment perceive the intervention?
Students' Perceptions

The researcher instructed the participants in the experimental group to concentrate on three perspectives when they were engaged in their reports:

1. The benefits they obtained from the course which features the reader-response approach to teaching literature in ELT classroom.
2. The difficulties they encountered in practice.
3. The suggestions they wished to offer for future courses.

The frequencies for the most commonly mentioned items were tallied and are displayed in Table 4. Table 4 makes it evident that the students gave more positive comments than negative ones. As shown, 39 out of 48 students reported that they improved their reading skills, which they considered one advantage of employing reader-response approach. 32 students expressed that they made considerable gains in vocabulary growth, which in turn enhanced their confidence in reading literary texts because they could develop the very necessary skills for dealing with the unfamiliar vocabulary.

Other relevant benefits were that the majority of the students in the experimental group were enthusiastic about novel reading, and thus 42 out of 48 students reported that they would use the reader-response approach to the teaching of novel for their future English teaching. Likewise, another 37 students also mentioned that the progress that they made in this course would be of particular use to them in other university courses because, in Gajdusek’s view (1988), students can practice all language skills systematically. The overwhelming majority of the students (92%) felt that the reader-response theory was better approach to acquiring English than formal instruction. This underscores the need to provide alternative innovative ways of teaching English which would satisfy students’ varying language needs.

However, 16 students out of 48 reported that they were confronted with the unfamiliar vocabulary and the unusual use of language in reading particularly Conrad’s masterpiece ‘The Heart of Darkness’ which in essence encapsulates the wealth of metaphors and similes. Only 7 students complained about the heavy workload whereby they were required to read the assigned chapter and prepare for the reading logs and then share their views in the classroom. In contrast, most of the participants did not agree with them, stating that it was worth this effort. They particularly reported that engaging in writing reading logs helped them to gain a clearer understanding of the novel. They remarked on how they enjoyed being given opportunity for expressing themselves freely alongside the reading logs.

### Table 4: Reported perceptions of reader-response activity by number and percentage of the participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Number of Students (n=48)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved reading skills</td>
<td>39 (81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made gains in vocabulary growth</td>
<td>32 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged students to use novel for future English study</td>
<td>42 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped in other university courses</td>
<td>37 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better approach to acquiring English than formal instruction</td>
<td>44 (92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unusual use of language in some novels</td>
<td>16 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy workload</td>
<td>7 (15%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** The students were allowed to give as many comments as they want to make, so the total frequency is larger than the number of participants.

**CONCLUSION**

This study has yielded both quantitative and qualitative data in support of the use of reader response theory in ELT classroom, encouraging student teachers’ reflection on their practices. The findings have considerable pedagogical implications for the ELT classroom in Turkey, as the results revealed that the application of reader response approach in ELT literary courses led to a noteworthy improvement in the reading comprehension of students. ELT teachers should be encouraged to model the strategies underlying reader response approach (Carlisle, 2000; Hirvela, 1996) in ELT classroom, providing an alternative to learning how to construct multiple meanings from the texts. In the process, reflective and creative skills can develop, producing an autonomous reader who is capable of expressing his or her own feelings in responding to the literary texts.
This study, which were restricted to a group of third year student teachers from ELT Department at a Turkish University, has potential for further research in that it would be worthwhile to expand this study to include students from different levels of schooling. As an alternative to teaching novel, texts from other genres can also be explored. For instance, short stories might be introduced as part of the reading component in the Turkish English syllabus for the lower or intermediate level. This in turn can provide more evidence as to determine the pedagogical effectiveness of the strategies underlying reader response approach in promoting and sustaining interest in teaching literary skills. Repeating the study in different contexts over a larger period and incorporating different techniques, such as response journal (Sheridan, 1991), writing prompts (Pritchard, 1993) and rewriting narratives from another characters’ point of view (Oster, 1989), is recommended.

REFERENCES


*Cevdet Yılmaz* holds a Ph.D. in English Language Teaching and is an Assistant Professor of Education in the English Language Development at Onsekiz Mart University in Canakkale, Turkey. His special research interests are foreign language teacher training, self-efficacy, the use of literary texts in ELT, methodology, and second language reading development.
TESTIFYING EXPLICIT VS. IMPLICIT CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK ON THE IRANIANS' ACCURACY IN WRITING

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ABSTRACT
This article was an attempt to investigate the nature of two corrective explicit vs. implicit feedback typologies: 'Recasting' as implicit and 'Meta-Linguistic Talk' as explicit feedback on the writing performance of a group of Iranian non-major English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. To this aim, data were collected from 55 female Iranian university students majoring at Nursing at Islamic Azad university of Sabzevar, Iran. Based on a standardized Nelson English Level Test, they were first randomly divided into three homogeneous groups; (2 Exp. and 1 Con.). Each experimental group received one of the two corrective feedback types 'Recasting' vs. 'Meta-linguist talk' while the control group didn't receive any focused corrective feedback. A writing post-test sample was given after the three-month treatment stage. The writing sample was rated by two English instructors in terms of word order and tense use only. Data from three target groups above were analyzed by One-Way ANOVA to compare the performance of the three groups at 0.05 sig. level. The results showed that feedback treatments significantly improved writing skills in the experimental groups; however, the subsequent post-test Scheffet results didn't indicate an exclusive superiority for any of the two feedback types over the other in the two experimental groups (1&2). (Sig.0.09> 0.05). Possible educational implications have been contrastively discussed for the two corrective feedback typologies esp. in Iranian contexts.

KEYWORDS: Corrective Feedback, Explicit vs. Implicit feedback, Recasting, Meta-linguistic Talk, Writing Performance

INTRODUCTION
Error production by Language learners is considered a normal status and of a revealing nature; however, of more crucial fact is deciding on how to approach the errors made by the learners. In EFL contexts, this issue is even of more paramount importance since the kind of input and subsequent feedback that the learners take is usually confined to the class time period by his/her instructor. Accordingly, providing proper feedback on the part of the teachers gets really pertinent. Giving the feedback at the right time and place has always been a challenging issue as there is still no conclusive consensus among L2 scholars as to the nature and propriety of error correction approaches.(Ferries, 2004; Sachs & Polio 2007; Kepner, 1991 & Chandler, 2003)

Significance of the Study
A language teacher must always be aware of possible other varied sources for errors in his/her classes and realize the need to take the right route towards providing the right corrective feedback. Errors presumably reflect the learners' level of competence; however, a teacher needs to draw a distinction between errors which are noticed and corrected by the speaker himself through being prompted to do so, and errors which the learners cannot correct themselves because of a lack of linguistic knowledge. Changing the direction towards eradicating the errors without knowing the
exact root of the problematic areas is thus a naïve decision for the probability of teachers' taking wrongful strategies for error correction.

In natural settings of language acquisition, a child has an enormous opportunity to draw the proper input without being reminded explicitly as to what input to select and which content to attend to however the child is soon able to be changed into a very complex and developed language user, whereas foreign language learners, rarely have resource to such various aids except their teacher. Thus taking the proper technique by the language teacher in approaching the errors is to a large extent crucial as it might save the necessary time and energy put to the tasks by both teachers and learners.

In fact, in an EFL situation, the pedagogically appropriate approaches towards developing writing skills have been paid lip service to. Writing in and of itself provides a rich opportunity for sharing ideas and communicating intents for language development. Not only can writing be an excellent experience through which the interlocutors in teachers-students or student-students interactions can exchange ideas and messages in L2 in a warm atmosphere, but it can also be best employed for its own pedagogical aims like developing linguistic knowledge and enhancing academic literacy skills in an efficient way (Tan & Miller 2008).

In this article, the nature of two corrective feedback typologies: 'Recasting' vs. 'Meta-Linguistic Talk' by the teacher intervention was empirically evaluated on the writing performance of a group of Iranian non-major EFL learners. In recasts, teachers provide the learner with a well-designed form of a native-like utterance either in written or oral modality. The intention is that the provided information gives clues to the learner in an implicit way so that s/he can incorporate the changes on his/her own and make progress whereas in Meta-linguistic corrective feedback, all linguistic knowledge is communicated in an explicit and direct feedback provision by the teacher; all the necessary info plus the correct newly-made structure is given explicitly to the learners.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY
A quick search through the existing literature on the right corrective feedback; direct vs. indirect shows some rather controversies. Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam, (2006) worked on an experimental research in which the effects of recast and meta-linguistic corrective feedback was studied on the acquisition of past tense -ed in a normal classroom situation. The participants were 34 ESL learners and their proficiency level was lower intermediate. During the communicative tasks, the first group elicited more correct target forms compared with the second group. At the end, there was a significant difference between the two groups’ pre-test versus the delayed test results. The results were clue for the outperformance of the first over the second group. On the other hand, in another study by Frantzen’s (1995), some college students of intermediate Spanish were studied. In one group, the structurally mal-formed were supplemented and they received direct correction. In the other group, the learners’ errors were just marked but not corrected. At the end of the semester, both groups improved in overall grammar usage on the post essay however, neither group showed significant improvement in written fluency over the semester. Still, in another study by Robb, Ross, and Shortreed (1986) salience of feedback on error and its effect on EFL writing quality was surveyed; in their study, all the students had improved in terms of accuracy which was proved it had been at the result of being exposed with different types of error feedback including explicit direct correction, notation of the type of error using a code, notation in the text of the location of error, and marginal feedback about the number of errors in the line.

In another research by Pishghadam, Hashemi, and Kermanshahi (2011), the researchers proposed that when learners themselves notice there is a mistake, they get involved in something which this in effect aids in more consolidated learning, better than the time they are just passively following the teachers' commands.

Overall, the perplexing existing literature urged the authors to investigate the two contrastive corrective feedback patterns, namely recasting vs. meta-linguistic talk as indirect vs. direct feedback typologies on the performance of a group of adult Iranian learners. The purpose was to investigate the role which proper corrective written feedback: explicit vs. implicit plays in engaging the L2 learners’ cognitive processes in their writing performance. Thus, the question put forward for the current research was:

1. To what extent, do Iranian university students benefit from explicit vs. implicit corrective feedback types in their writing tasks?
METHODOLOGY

Participants

In order to find plausible explanations for the research question of the present survey, an empirical study was performed among 55 sophomore female Iranian university students majoring at Nursing who were taking their general English course (GE) at Islamic Azad university of Sabzevar, Iran. Their age range was 20-25.

Data collection instruments

The independent variables, namely two types of corrective feedback 'recasting' and 'meta-linguistic Talk' were systematically controlled during the data collection procedures. All three classes were directed with the same instructor. Number of proofread samples, time on task and the revising stage were tried to be averaged equally in all three classes. (Table 1)

After the treatment process, one post test of production type including a free-writing task was performed at the end of the experimentation stage. The three groups were asked to write a sample paragraph of approximately 100 words on a prescribed subject. Here, the topic was even controlled for any possible biasing on the part of the learners' interest. The chosen topic was "Prevention is better than treatment". The subjects weren't aware of the target analyzed grammatical forms in their writing samples.

The drawn samples were analyzed by two English instructors in terms of structural accuracy focusing only on tense use and word order in correct English usage. Inter-rater reliability was estimated for the two subsequent rates. Correlation Coefficient between the two rates showed an acceptable index. (r = 0.7)

Procedures

For initial screening of the population as to proficiency level, a standardized Nelson English Language Test battery at intermediate level was given to the students (Test 250 D). A typical test of this series entails 50 items comprising a 37-item grammar section along with 13 items on vocabulary knowledge. Through administering the test, the scores at two extreme poles (highest and the lowest 10 % scores) were removed from the experimental phases of the study to cater for the homogeneity of the subjects. Fifty-five homogenized subjects were chosen for the experimentation stage.

The whole subjects were randomly divided into three groups; Two experimental and one control group. Exp. Group 1 received recasting corrective feedback while Exp. group 2 was provided with a lengthy discussion in the guise of 'Meta-linguistic explications' glossed in their paragraph margins and finally the third group didn't receive any focused corrective feedback like the other two groups. All three classes were also directed with the same instructor.

In each session, after finishing the reading section of the main course, the students were asked to write a summary paragraph for the text in the post-reading phase of each lesson. Class periods were held three hours per week for each group. The average number of sample paragraphs which were commented by the instructor for each individual in three subsequent groups was approximately between 10-14 samples, since the researcher couldn't guarantee that all subjects be present in all sessions for the treatments. The written paragraphs were collected and analyzed in terms of the errors of tense and word order only in order to ensure the maximum control over the selected variables. The next session, the subjects were asked to revise their sample paragraphs which had been proofread by the instructor with the provided feedback. In the current study, no peer correction was allowed to be utilized in order to check the variability that recasting can bring about, since peer correction usually entails Meta-talk that could minimize the natural effect of recasting induced by the teacher.

The feedback type, average rate of proofread samples, and time allotment for the experimental and control groups has been illustrated in Table 1.
Table 1: Treatment Characteristics for the experimental and control groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Number of subjects</th>
<th>Feedback Typology</th>
<th>Number of proofread samples for the groups</th>
<th>Drafting Stage (Time on Task)</th>
<th>Revising Stage (Time on Task)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental 1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Recasting</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental 2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Meta-linguistic</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Non-focus</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>10 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The whole process of data collection took one academic semester taking about three months.

DATA ANALYSES AND FINDINGS
The research design in this study was experimental, with three different treatments for experimental and control groups, followed with a post-test. Several statistical analyses were conducted to answer the research question in this study.

In order to establish the purpose of the study, the following procedures were followed: At first, a validated proficiency test was administered catering for initial screening. In the second phase of the study, it was tried to examine and control the nature of two corrective feedback typologies, namely recasting and meta-linguistic Talk as the induced post-activity pointers by the teacher intervention. The procedures, as was illustrated in the previous sections, were followed for the three groups. In order to check the nature of input given to the three groups, a post-test production test consisting of a free-writing paragraph was assigned for the whole class at the end of the semester and analyzed in terms of tense use and word order only in order to ensure maximum reliability and control over the result.

The next step was checking the degree the means for the three groups were significant. Then, a repeated measure of one-way ANOVA (3*3) analysis of variance followed with a post hoc Regression Scheffe was performed using SPSS statistical Package Database ver. 20. The results indicated a significant mean difference among the experimental and control groups at 0.05. (p value: 0.000< 0.05). A full-data set are then given below (Tables 2, 3 & 4).

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA for the two experiment and control groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA scores</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>8278.267</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4139.133</td>
<td>16.838</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>12782.533</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>245.818</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21060.800</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A closer look at analysis of variance for both within group and between groups in Table 2 above shows a reasonable F. ration (F = 16.8) which is large enough to reject the null hypothesis. In Table 5 below, the result for multiple comparisons are depicted for Scheffe Post hot regression test to care for mean differences.
Multiple Comparisons

Table 3: Multiple Regression Comparison (Post-hoc) for the three groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exp. 1 recasting exp. 2 meta-linguistic</td>
<td>-6.8000</td>
<td>4.9580</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>-19.2941 5.6941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exp. 2 meta-linguistic control group</td>
<td>23.3667*</td>
<td>5.3552</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>9.8715 36.8618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exp. 1 recasting control group</td>
<td>6.8000</td>
<td>4.9580</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>-5.6941 19.2941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control exp. 1 recasting exp. 2 meta-linguistic group</td>
<td>30.1667*</td>
<td>5.3552</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>16.6715 43.6618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exp. 1 recasting exp. 2 meta-linguistic control group</td>
<td>-23.3667*</td>
<td>5.3552</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-36.8618 -9.8715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exp. 1 recasting exp. 2 meta-linguistic control group</td>
<td>-30.1667*</td>
<td>5.3552</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-43.6618 -16.6715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As the data in Table 3 and the subsequent box plot figure 1 clearly shows, mean differences for the control and experimental in all three comparisons are significant. However, mean variability for the two experimental groups, though higher for meta-linguistic feedback type, isn't statistically significant.

![Box plot for ANOVA analyses as to the contrastive corrective feedback types: recasting vs. meta-talk](image)

As Table 4 for the Scheffe post test also shows the two experimental groups have been sub-categorized in the same column (exp. 1 \( \mu = 59.7 \) / exp. 2 \( \mu = 66.5 \)) thus indicative of their insignificant variability.

Table 4: Sub-set for post-hoc Scheffe multiple comparisons for the three groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Subset for alpha = 0.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>control group</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exp. 1 recasting</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>59.7000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exp. 2 meta-linguistic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66.5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.435</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
So, overall, based on the results gained through ANOVA analyses, the two corrective feedback typologies that entailed direct vs. indirect dichotomies were equally but not exclusively beneficent for the target group of the present study. Possible implications and concluding remarks are discussed in the next section.

DISCUSSION
Overall, the present research which was a partial replication of Ellis et. al (2006) research, was aimed at surveying the nature of two induced corrective feedback namely recasting and meta-linguistic talk thought to be beneficent for a group of Iranian EFL university students. Going through various statistical analyses, it was found that providing both corrective feedback (recasting and meta-linguistic) as post-activity writing commentaries can equally but not exclusively improve the L2 learners' efficacy.

The main innovation in the present study was the inclusion of a non-focus control group which didn't receive any post commentaries in their performance. In Villalobos' work (2010) on the use of recast in EFL classrooms, the efficacy of recasting was investigated in pre-task and the preparation stage in order to prevent oral errors from happening during the main communicative stage among a group of university students attending an ESP chemistry class. However, he reported his findings working on two students through an action research. At the end, he was certain to claim that recasts in the pre-task and the preparation stage really prevented oral errors from happening during the task cycle. Although, in an action research, immediate application and not the development of theory on generalization of applications are habitually followed, the problem of non-randomization of population could at least be minimized by assigning a control group. Not using a control study in his study, he might be quite at stake to explain why and how the subjects benefited from this corrective strategy. In Rahimi & Dastjerdi's research (2012), a similar trend had been adopted; no control group was assigned. In their study, effective error correction method was investigated through immediate vs. delayed responding by the instructor in developing learners' complexity, fluency and accuracy in speech. The participants had been divided into two groups. For G1 errors were corrected immediately and for G2 with some delay, then it was finally reported that delayed error correction has had positive effect on fluency and accuracy but not on complexity. In effect, again, the true nature of the tasks used can't be verified if there is no control group.

In the present survey, the outperformance of the second experimental group that received meta-linguistic error correction, though not significant statistically (μ = 66.5) compared with the first experimental group receiving recasting as implicit corrective feedback (μ = 59.7), indicates, at least among other things, that it has been beneficial to some extent. Maybe, further research is still needed to be done for larger groups to verify the above data. Possible pedagogical implication could be inherent in Meta-Talk as a consciousness raising methodological practice in EFL vs. ESL situations. Recent communicative approaches which emphasize 'Focus on Form' (FonF) vs. over focus on meaning even in ESL settings are a case in point. As Ellis (1994) asserted, there are two ways to practice focus on form. The first can be accomplished through the activities that call for both communication and FonF, and the second through corrective or curative response which are given during the learners' performance in communication activities.

Now the crucial point is how of consolidating the right channel for the erroneous forms to get right. As it was already stated, in recasting, this guidance to the right channel isn't always done with ease, as some forms aren't noticed by the learners. A case in point, here, might be the effects that age and level bring to the learning circle. According to Lyster 1998 (cited in Schurt Rauber & Gil, 2004), 'young L2 learners may not easily take heed of the target vs. nontarget mismatches in the interactional input. In order to bring the learners’ attention to such mismatches, teachers should provide some indicators in order to facilitate peer- and self-correction compared with just the repetition of a teacher’s recast or explicit correction’. Thus, different feedback types are claimed to bear various effects on learning and result in different degrees of attention.

CONCLUSION
To recap, the main intention in the present study was to compare and contrast the effectiveness of two corrective feedback typologies current with the ongoing debate studies over error correction. The findings in this research were consistent with Schurt Rauber's (2004) & Ashwell's article (2000) in that teacher's correction true type feedback is highly appreciated and considered as an important asset for the development of EFL language skills in general and writing skill, in particular. Nevertheless, the findings in this research weren't consistent with Truscott's (2004) work. Truscott believed that due to inapplicability of providing corrective feedback in language classrooms and many inconclusive results in this regard, all corrective feedback must be abandoned. He argued that corrective feedback
can only be harmful in that it diverts time and energy away from more constructive activities like additional writing practices. Kepner (1991) also found no significant error counts between a group receiving error correction with the one getting message-related comments, though in this study since learners weren't asked to process the comments and didn't go for any self-correction, the results as to the nature of feedback type is still vague.

Limitations of the study

In the present survey, the statistical analyses over mean variability though significantly showing the outperformance of the two experimental over control group, for the two experimental groups receiving the two dichotomous direct vs. indirect feedback typologies the results weren't significantly clue for the variability of the two feedback types at the significance level of 0.05 %. Two possible reasons might have been at work here; Time and Gender which can also be mentioned as the limitations of the present survey. Maybe further research projects can control these two factors to enlighten the findings in this regard.

Concerning time span, the current research was performed during an academic semester which due to subject variability, the researcher couldn't keep the subjects constant to demonstrate the nature of true feedback types in longer periods and get more assurance in the results. In a longitudinal study by Lalande (1982), students who had received indirect corrective feedback outperformed learners in the direct correction group. Further studies must maintain longer-term designs apart from academic settings which may let more time to focus on the nature of feedback typology efficacies. Still, another limitation of the present study was the matter of Gender. Since male candidates for Nursing weren't accessible for any investigation in this academic setting, the researcher used just female participants. Maybe further studies clarify the issue more clearly considering both males and females as to providing corrective feedback typologies. The debate still continues.

REFERENCES


ABSTRACT
This study investigates the differences in the perceptions of the appropriateness in advice giving in English between Iranian Persian English as a foreign language (EFL) male and female learners. Data were collected through an adopted version of a Multiple Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) by Hinkel (1997). The questionnaire involves a series of questions with regard to advice giving or opting out to a peer acquaintance (equal status) and an instructor (higher status). The result of the study illustrated that both groups perceived the social distance in the situations with peer acquaintance (equal status) and instructor (higher status) differently. The learners also differed in the types of advice they used as the appropriate choice. For Iranian Persian EFL male learners, in both situations (peer acquaintance and instructor) they preferred indirect advice rather than the other three options which are hedge advice, direct advice and opting out. On the other hand, for Iranian Persian EFL female learners, they selected hedge advice in both peer acquaintance and instructor situations as compared to the other three options (direct advice, indirect advice and opting out). The study concluded that Iranian Persian EFL learners should be provided with programs that improve the awareness on different appropriate conversational strategies in English language. The findings of this study are expected to be beneficial in cross-cultural and cross-gender comparison studies.

KEYWORDS: Speech act, Advice-giving, Gender

INTRODUCTION
In communications, the speakers’ behaviour and selection of certain words are particular based on several factors such as social distance between the speaker and the hearer, social status between the speaker and the hearer, gender, and the complexity of situations. Many studies of pragmatic awareness have conducted on different speech acts such as apology (Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989; Eslami-Rasekh & Mardani, 2010), refusal (Beebe et al., 1990; Vaezi, 2011) and request (Blum-Kulka & House, 1989; Jalilifar, 2009). Those studies have contributed to revealing the differences between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) and to better understanding of the use of appropriate linguistic forms in different languages and cultures and further to avoiding communication breakdowns. Yet, not many studies were conducted on the speech act of advice (Hinkel, 1997; Matsumura, 2001; Bordería-García, 2006; Chun, 2009, Al-Shboul et al. 2012), and in Iranian context, to the researchers’ best knowledge, there has been no investigation of giving advice conducted on Iranian Persian EFL learners. Consequently, it seems to be useful of examining how the speech act of giving advice is perceived in English by Iranian Persian EFL learners at University Kebangsaan Malaysia (henceforth, UKM) that would contribute in cross-cultural and cross-gender comparison studies. In other words, this study focuses on gender as the main focus to investigate the differences of the advice speech acts’ realizations between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners at UKM. The researchers aimed to reveal how gender can influence speakers’ perception of advice giving. The reason for selecting English in the present study refers to the fact that English is the medium of instruction for Iranian Persian EFL learners in Malaysia and is also a language that is frequently needed in their everyday interaction. Hence, more attention should be paid to pragmatic competence of the Iranian Persian EFL learners rather than their grammatical competence.
THE SPEECH ACT OF ADVICE
Unlike other speech acts such as refusals, apologies, and requests, the speech act of giving advice has not yet been explored adequately (Bordería-Garcia, 2006; Chun, 2009). Accordingly, very few definitions of what advice giving entails are available. For example, Searle (1969) stated that advice giving is a type of speech act which the speaker believes will benefit the hearer. He added that by advice giving, the speaker is doing the hearer a favour because it is not clear to both of them that the hearer will do the act without the advice being given. Searle distinguished between advice and request as advising is more like telling on what is the best for his/her rather than what s/he should do. Another definition was given by Brown and Levinson (1987) who described advice giving as an “intrinsically face threatening act” (p. 65), where the speaker indicates that s/he does not mean to avoid obstructing the hearer’s freedom of action. Nevertheless, Brown and Levinson observe that the degree to which advice is a face-threatening act differs among cultures based on several factors such as social status and social distance between the interlocutors, gender, complexity of situations, and the politeness strategies considered appropriate in a particular culture. Once again, this study focuses on gender as the main focus to investigate the differences of the advice speech acts’ realizations between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners at UKM.

LITERATURE REVIEW
A large body of literature have illustrated that while speech acts are universal, the socio-pragmatic rules leading the appropriate enactment of any given speech act vary greatly among cultures and languages. There are some studies have been focused on advice giving in various contexts. For instance, Kuo (1996) investigated how gender emerges as a strong variable with respect to both the occurrence of advice giving as well as the form and style of this speech act. The findings of the study illustrated that female speakers were more likely to give advice to their same-sex interlocutors and they use various linguistic devices, sentence containing auxiliary models or hedge, and justifications with advice forms to convey advice. However, only 4 instances of advice are found in all-male conversations and, either seriously or jokingly, they are all in imperative form.

In another study, Hinkel (1997) conducted a study on cross-cultural differences of advice giving in terms of production collected by discourse completion test and perception collected by Multiple Choice Questionnaire (MCQ). The participants were 40 Chinese and 40 American native speakers. Hinkel split up the two groups in terms of males and females. The findings of the study revealed that one of the most significant differences between the Chinese with regard to collective self and Anglo-American individualism lies in the Confucian and Taoist precept of interdependence with others which is in contrast with cultural values emphasizing personal autonomy. Therefore, this study is significant since it compared the two different instruments which were a discourse completion test and multiple choice survey questionnaires to elicit participants’ perception in the framework of advice-giving studies.

Matsumura (2001) investigated a quantitative approach of second language socialization in terms of learning the rules for advice giving among Japanese and Canadian learners. The result of the study showed that the former group started lower in pragmatic performance than the latter but then suppressed them. Moreover, the study illuminated the variance of the perception of social status in both groups. This study is significant because it provides an important longitudinal analysis of how the pragmatic competence on advice giving developed over time. However, Matsumura did not specify what caused such important development of pragmatic competence with regard to cultural differences between Canadians and Japanese. In addition, Matsumura used only one method for the study of perception.

Borderia-Garcia (2006) focused on cross-cultural differences in the productions and perceptions of advice giving. In the one hand, the result of the study illustrated that there is not any significant difference in the perceptions of appropriateness of non-conventionally indirect, conventionally indirect, and direct forms of advice by the native speakers of Spanish and the native English. On the other hand, the findings of the study revealed that these issues differed in the oral productions with the Spanish speakers showing a significant preference on giving direct advices. This study is significant for the reason that it is one of the speech act studies which looked at the concept of pragmatic transfer in the framework of advice.

Chun (2009) conducted a study on cross-cultural differences in the speech act of giving advice by Korean speakers and Canadian English speakers. The findings of the study indicated that there was a major difference between Canadian and Korean learners with regard to the social distance. The Canadian learners were less dependent on social distance compared to the Korean learners. The Canadian learners tended to give advice considerably less frequently to peers and superiors compared to the Korean learners. Therefore, this study is significant because it broadened the conventional framework of the existing two cultural types of individualism and collectivism in the Korean and Canadian contexts.
Recently, Al-Shboul et al. (2012) conducted a study focusing on the perceptions of the appropriateness in advice giving in English between American English native speakers and Jordanian EFL students. The findings of the study showed that two group of the respondents had the same perception of the social distance in the situations involving peer acquaintance and instructor. On the other hand, they were different in terms of the types of advice they showed as the appropriate choice. This study is significant since it is one of very small number of Arabic Advice studies that investigated the speech act of advice as recognized by Jordanian Arabic learners of English as a foreign language.

As it is mentioned above, the appropriateness of advice giving differs among various cultures, moreover, most of the studies have been done on advice giving so far, did not focus on gender as a main variable. Based on the literature no specific studies have been conducted on advice giving among Iranian Persians context. Thus, it would be beneficial to examine how the speech act of advice giving is perceived in English by Iranian Persian EFL learners at UKM that would contribute in cross-cultural and cross-gender comparisons.

THE STUDY
This study aims to investigate gender differences in the perceptions of the appropriateness of advice giving in English between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners. It also aims to give interpretations of these salient differences between the two groups. It is mainly based on the variable of gender and how it can influence speakers’ perception of advice giving. The concept of gender is used to explain socially constructed categories in terms of sex. It has been argued that gender influences speakers’ communication styles. Sukyadi and Ayu (2011) pointed out that language and gender focus on the language characteristics used by men and women: how gender stereotyping works in their preference of language styles. Wardhaugh (1992) also discussed gender as one of the characteristics that influenced people’s communication. Results from these studies indicated that men and women normally use different linguistic styles. They describe women’s speech as being different from that of men. According to Brend (1975) Women are found to employ certain patterns associated with surprise and politeness more frequently than men. Moreover, Lakoff (1975) stated that women may answer a question with a statement that employs the rising intonation pattern associated with making a firm statement. It is because they are less sure about themselves and their opinions than men are. In the present study, the researchers tried to reveal the differences of the appropriateness of advice giving in English between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners. Thus, the related research question emerged from the literature is if there are any differences between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners’ perceptions of the speech act of advice giving.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The sample included 40 postgraduate Iranian Persians EFL learners in UKM. The participants involved 20 females and 20 males who were in the 25-34 year old age bracket majoring in PhD degree. All the participants were Iranian Persians monolingual who were sharing the same cultural background. Based on the participants’ scores in international English language testing system (IELTS) and test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL), the participants’ level of proficiency in English was intermediate.

Instrument and Procedure
A multiple choice survey questionnaire (see Appendix) adopted version of Hinkle’s (1997) was used for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire involves eight situations that required advice giving or opting out: four included statements addressed to the social superior and four to the peer acquaintance. Each situation was accompanied by three MC selections in random order:(1) direct advice involving the model “should,” (2) hedged advice using “need to” or other softeners or hedging advices, lexical hedging (“may be, I think”), or questions, and (3) indirect comment including no advice or suggestions. The fourth selection was an explicit choice for opting out that remained constant for all selection. Examples of direct advice, hedge advice, and indirect comments are illustrated in (1) to (3), respectively:

1. You shouldn’t order the hamburger. I had it here before, and it was really greasy.
2. May be it’s not a good idea to order a hamburger. I had it here before, and it was really greasy.
3. I had a hamburger here before, and it was really greasy.
The questionnaires were distributed among the participants in UKM campus. They were given instructions on how to answer the questions and no time limitation for answering the questions was mentioned in order not to make the participants stressed or in a hurry so that they could answer the questions carefully and patiently. In addition, the researchers welcome any questions from the participants in case they would face any difficulties while answering the questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research question of the present study was formulated to find out if there are any differences in the perception of the speech act of advice giving between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners. Hence, the results showed the existence of cross-gender differences between the two groups of participants. In general, Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners perceived the social distance in the situations with peer acquaintance (equal status) and instructor (higher status) differently. They also differed in the types of advice they utilized as the appropriate choice. For Iranian Persian EFL male learners, in both situations (peer acquaintance and instructor) they preferred indirect advice rather than the other three options which are hedge advice, direct advice and opting out. On the other hand, for Iranian Persian EFL female learners, they selected hedge advice in both peer acquaintance and instructor situations as compared to the other three options (direct advice, indirect advice and opting out). This is in accordance with findings from Kuo (1996) where female speakers were more likely to give advice to their same-sex interlocutors and they use various linguistic devices, sentence containing auxiliary models or hedge, and justifications with advice forms to convey advice. On the other hand, only 4 instances of advice are found in all-male conversations and, either seriously or jokingly, they are all in imperative form. In addition, Baca (2011) found that the interlocutor openly commented on his preference for more female-like advice, which he seemed to associate with greater care and concern for all parties involved. These comments could indicate that when giving advice, the interlocutor expected that females would differ from males in their interpersonal communication style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Hedge</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer acquaintance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Unreliable car</td>
<td>M 11 (55) F 10 (50)</td>
<td>M 5 (25) F 7 (35)</td>
<td>M 4 (20) F 3 (15)</td>
<td>M 0 (0) F 0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Academic course</td>
<td>M 3 (15) F 1 (5)</td>
<td>M 5 (25) F 9 (45)</td>
<td>M 12 (60) F 9 (45)</td>
<td>M 0 (0) F 1 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Repair shop</td>
<td>M 3 (15) F 5 (25)</td>
<td>M 5 (25) F 8 (40)</td>
<td>M 12 (60) F 7 (35)</td>
<td>M 0 (0) F 0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Library</td>
<td>M 4 (20) F 0 (0)</td>
<td>M 7 (35) F 17 (85)</td>
<td>M 7 (35) F 0 (0)</td>
<td>M 2 (10) F 3 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Library</td>
<td>M 3 (15) F 0 (0)</td>
<td>M 3 (15) F 12 (60)</td>
<td>M 8 (40) F 4 (20)</td>
<td>M 6 (30) F 4 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Illness</td>
<td>M 5 (25) F 8 (40)</td>
<td>M 8 (40) F 9 (45)</td>
<td>M 5 (25) F 3 (15)</td>
<td>M 2 (10) F 0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Restaurant</td>
<td>M 4 (20) F 10 (50)</td>
<td>M 4 (20) F 5 (25)</td>
<td>M 12 (60) F 5 (25)</td>
<td>M 0 (0) F 0 (0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: frequency count is listed in each cell, with percentages provided in brackets

More specifically, Iranian Persian EFL male learners chose the options of direct advice more than females did in three out of four situations with peer acquaintance (see Table 1). In other words, they were more direct in the situations of Unreliable Car, Academic Course, and Library. However, Iranian Persian EFL female learners selected direct advice option more frequently than Iranian Persian EFL male learners did in the Repair Shop situation. Although their reflections were varied in the options of choosing direct advice between Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners, these differences seemed to be negligible. For instance, in the Unreliable Car situation, both Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners chose the option of direct advice in the mostly same frequency at 11 and 10 respectively. On the other hand, the differences between males and females seemed to be notable in the
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Library situation as 4 out of 20 males used the option of direct advice while none of the females selected that option. This is in accordance with Kuo (1996) where male speakers use the form of imperative in all instances of advice conversations.

Iranian Persian EFL female learners selected the options of hedge advice more than males did in the all situations with peer acquaintance. For example, in the Library situation the differences between males and females were noticeable as 17 out of 20 females selected hedge options for the situation while only 7 out of 20 males chose the same option. These particular results agreed with those found in Kuo (1996) where female speakers were more likely to provide advice sentence containing auxiliary models or hedge, and justifications with advice forms to convey advice. However, Iranian Persian EFL male learners chose the options of indirect advice more than females did in the all situations with peer acquaintance. For instance, 7 out of 20 males selected indirect options in the Library situation while none of the females selected the option. This may be attributed to the fact that while giving advice may be considered as a face-threatening in conversations among male speakers, who either avoid doing it or choose to do it boldly, it is positively affective for women, who resort to a variety of stylistic and linguistic means to maintain equality and rapport.

Unlike peer acquaintance situations, Iranian Persian EFL male learners’ frequency choices of direct advice were less than females in 3 out of 4 instructor’s situations. In other words, Iranian Persian EFL male learners’ frequency choice of direct advice was more than females merely in Library situation. As it is illustrated in Table 1, in the Library situation none of the females used the option of direct choice while 3 out of 20 males selected direct advice option. Therefore, Iranian Persian EFL female learners were more direct in the situations of Illness, Book Store, and Restaurant. According to Fishman (1978) formal features that characterize women’s speech such as asking question aims to ensure reaction. In contrast, men’s speech is marked by features (e.g. statement) than do little insure to further talk. In the present study, it would be seen that Iranian Persian EFL female learners viewed giving direct advice as a matter of friendliness, rapport-building, concern, sincere interest, and solidarity towards their instructor.

Iranian Persian EFL female learners chose the options of hedge advice more than males did in the all instructor’s situations. Although their selections were different in the options of choosing hedge advice, these differences seemed to be unimportant in the situations of Illness, Book Store, and Restaurant. For example, in the Illness and Book Store situations, both Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners chose the option of hedge advice in the mostly same frequency at 8 (males) and 9 (females). However, the differences between males and females seemed to be significant in the Library situation as 3 out of 20 males used the option of hedge advice while 12 out of 20 females chose that option. As previously mentioned by Kuo (1996), female speakers are more likely to give advice to their same-sex interlocutors and they use various linguistic devices, sentence containing auxiliary models or hedge, and justifications with advice forms to convey advice. On the other hand, only 4 instances of advice are found in all-male conversations.

Finally, in the all instructor’s situations (Library, Illness, Bookstore and Restaurant) Iranian Persian EFL male learners selected the indirect options more than females did. For example, with regard to the Restaurant situation 12 males out of 20 selected the option of indirect advice while 5 out of 20 females selected the same option. One could argue that the reason that males selected indirect advice more than females is evolutionary pressure has made status more important for males. Thus, since status matters relatively less for females, they can select direct advice more. This is in accordance with Juhana (2011) in her study of the use of apologizing speech acts realization by male and female students. She explained that a common reason as to why apologies are difficult is because an apology causes loss of status. She added one could argue that the reason women apologize more than men is due to evolutionary pressure has made status more important for men, because men need status to compete for mates. Therefore, as status matters comparatively less for women, they can apologize more.

According to the findings of this study, school curriculum should consider the differences between male and female learners in the area of speech act. For instance, providing examples of how male and female learners differ in terms of advice giving. The researchers would like to highlight that school curricula in EFL contexts should focus not only on structures and vocabulary but also on the sociopragmatic aspects of the language. Moreover, English teaching and learning in Iran have to give emphasis to not only linguistic competence but also pragmatic competence. Iranian Persian learners who aspire to study in an English speaking country should be careful about the language transfer.
phenomena and they ought to be alert of the appropriateness of giving advices to the speakers of the target language, English, to avoid misinterpretation of intent and cultural understanding among the two groups of speakers.

CONCLUSION
The findings of the study revealed how the speech act of advice giving is perceived in English among Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners. The present study illustrated that Iranian Persian EFL male and female learners differed in the perception of advice giving as well as the types of advice they used as the appropriate choice. Although this study answered the research question, further research on advice giving in the context of Iranian Persian EFL learners need to be conducted with regard to the production of advice giving and cross-cultural differences in advice giving. The findings of this study may be limited to the following considerations. More research is needed to support the current findings including a bigger number of participants with different social groups. Thus, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other groups due to the small sample size. Moreover, the procedure of data collection is exclusive to merely using one instrument which is Multiple Choice Questionnaire to obtain the necessary data needed to answer the research question. Therefore, the data analysis is based on the nature of the data collection and the instrument used to conduct this study. Finally, and probably due to the fact that the questionnaire was not piloted with the participants of the present study, the researchers were not able to obtain estimates about the expected response rates, data quality, the validity and comprehensibility of the questionnaire. Hence, the questionnaire should be piloted with a similar group of people to the intended participants in order to make necessary adjustments to administrative aspects of the study such as the time needed to complete the questionnaire.

REFERENCES


**Appendix**

An Adopted Version of Hinkle’s (1997) Multiple Choice Questionnaires (MCQ)

**Instructions:**

Eight situations are described in the items below. Following the description of a situation, you will find a multiple choice selection of three possible statements, A, B, and C. Choose the statement (or question) that you think would be the most appropriate to say in the situation. If you think it would be appropriate to say nothing, choose option D.

When you are responding to the questions, please keep in mind the following imaginary student: N H is a student in your department. You have similar interests in your majors. You have talked to N H several times in the department lounge.

Also, please keep in mind the following imaginary college instructor: There is an instructor in your department with whom you have similar professional interests. You have talked to this instructor several times in the department lounge.

**Situations**

1. You see the instructor working in the library very late in the evening. The instructor looks tired. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. You should not work so hard. It’s very late
   B. Why do you work so hard? It’s very late
   C. I’m going home soon. It is very late
   D. Nothing

2. N H’s car breaks down frequently. N H is planning on driving it to New York to see some relatives. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. I think it may be risky for you to take such a long trip in this car
   B. Taking such a long trip in this car may be risky
   C. You shouldn’t take this car for such a long trip. It may be risky
   D. Nothing

3. N H is considering taking a course. You have heard that the course is really difficult. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. I’ve heard that this course is really difficult
   B. It’s better not to take this course. I’ve heard it’s really difficult
   C. You shouldn’t take this course. I’ve heard that it’s really difficult
   D. Nothing

4. You and the instructor in a Bookstore. The instructor is considering buying an expensive book. However, you think that another store may sell the book at a lower price. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?
A. You should buy the book at the other store. This store has high prices
B. This store has high prices
C. May be, it’s not a good idea to buy the book here. This store has high prices
D. Nothing

5. **N H** is thinking of taking a car to a *Repair Shop* downtown. However, you know of a shop on the corner where you have taken your car. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. I usually take my car to the shop on the corner. It’s closer
   B. You should take your car to the shop on the corner. It’s closer
   C. It’s better to take your car to the shop on the corner. It’s closer
   D. Nothing

6. You and the **instructor** are in a *Restaurant*. The **instructor** says something about ordering a hamburger. You ordered a hamburger in this *Restaurant* before and, in your opinion, it was really greasy. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. You shouldn’t order the hamburger. I had it here before, and it was really greasy
   B. May be it’s not a good idea to order a hamburger. I had it here before, and it was really greasy
   C. I had a hamburger here before, and it was really greasy
   D. Nothing

7. You see **N H** working in the library very late in the evening. **N H** looks tired. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. Why do you work so hard? It’s very late
   B. You should not work so hard. It’s very late
   C. I’m going home soon. It is very late
   D. Nothing

8. You see the **instructor** working in the department office. The **instructor** looks ill and clearly doesn’t feel very well. What do you think would be appropriate to say in this situation?

   A. You look like you don’t feel well
   B. You should go home. You look like you don’t feel well
   C. May be, it’s better to go home. You look like you don’t feel well
   D. Nothing

**Thank you for your time and effort!**
THE ROLE OF LANDSCAPE ON PROTAGONIST’S SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN THE STONE ANGEL BY MARGARET LAURENCE

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ABSTRACT
The Stone Angel is a story of Hagar’s transformation and reconciliation. Hagar’s inner quest is based upon reconciling and arriving to real self. Hagar tries to realize her inner landscape rather than external landscape. This paper examines the role of Manawaka landscape on Hagar’s inner landscape.

KEY WORDS: Landscape, Manawaka, The Stone Angel, Manitoba, Internal and External Land

INTRODUCTION
The level of understanding of the protagonists of Margaret Laurence about geographical places is related to her experiences at this place. Laurence’s awareness is developed through her life experiences. Northrop Frye in his essay “Conclusion to a Literary History of Canada” (1965), observes that Canadians have an identity crisis with a difference for they are less perplexed by the existential question “Who am I?” than by some riddle such as “Where is here?”(11)

The Stone Angel, shows Margaret Laurence's abilities in portraying the landscape of Manitoba and her ability to penetrate the mind of Hagar. Hagar, running away from her family, sits alone in the forest. Her mind is free from the boundaries; like the forest, she sees the forest as a free place, she reflects about the wind movement:

Now I perceive that the forest is not still at all, but crammed with creatures scurrying here and there on multitudinous and mysterious errands. A line of ants crosses the tree trunk where I'm sitting. Solemn and in single file they march towards some miniature battle or carrion feast. A giant slug oozes across my path, flowing with infinite slowness like a stagnant creek. My log is covered with moss—I pluck at it, and an enormous piece comes away in my hand. It's long and curly as hair, a green wig suitable for some judicial owl holding court over the thievish jays or scavenging beetles.(192)

RECONCILING EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL LANDSCAPE
Henry C. Phelps explains Hagar’s connection to place and home: “her residence is always invested with an air of transience, waiting, and uneasy expectation – ‘marking time’ ([SA] 160), as she acutely characterizes it” (2000, 68). Hagar realizes that she would “never get out. The only escape from those places is feet first in a wooden box”(185). Her view of the Home is completely antithetical to the meaning of the word “home,” as a secure place, where one’s identity is grounded: “Those places have nothing to do with nursing or homes—the name’s all wrong”. (221)

Jason sees his family as an extension of himself. He dresses Hagar in a manner that will show others how prosperous he is. Hagar’s life begins at the same time that her mother’s life ends, leaving Hagar with her father and her brothers, Matt and Dan. She does not have any female role model. Hagar equates weakness with femaleness. She has a problem of communicating her feeling and thoughts from her father and society.

Hagar suffers from inner problems; Hagar is a victim of social circumstances. Some part of her problem relates to traditional society. When she travels to Manawaka, her attitude changes in a way reflected by the landscape. The novel shows the inner problem of Hagar and influence of outer landscape on her inner landscape.

Laurence brings the battle of oppositions in her novel; reconciliation of the external and internal world is the ultimate end of The Stone Angel. In Hagar’s spiritual journey, the role of landscape and external world is clear.
Although her physical nature cannot help Hagar to overcome her problem and landscape of her inner world cause a lot of problems for her. One of her problem is her pride.

The first indication of her pride is in the second sentence of the novel. Hagar explains the stone angel on her mother’s grave as “my mother’s angel that my father brought in pride to mark her bones and proclaim his dynasty.” (2) When Hagar encounters many problems on account of her pride, she seeks some place to hide.

In this situation forest brings peace for Hagar, when she senses her impending death and needs to find freedom to die. Her mind focuses on death when she feels her son and her daughter in law, Doris, are treating her like “a calf to be fatted” (35), and as though “she were not there” (32)

**PROTAGONIST’S INNER PROBLEM**

Hagar’s pride and inability to communicate were formed in her childhood and throughout her adult years and must be death with if she wants to complete her quest. Hagar has some fault in her way to find her real self. Pearson and Pop state that the hero’s journey “complicated further by the human tendency not to understand completely all the ramifications of a single experience” (77). Hagar is talking about her pride as a wilderness; she compares her inner feeling with the wild nature of Canada.

Laurence suggests that this pride is as unnatural as civilizing the prairie bluffs with “portly peonies” (5). Silence is a prison for Hagar. This is another ambiguous nature of her inner landscape. Hagar uses language as a weapon against others. She lets the minister “flounder as she makes no reply to his conversation” (41). She likes her daughter-in-law’s cooking but does not compliment her because she does not respect her (67). Due to her problem in communicating, she finds nature as a calm place. Nobody annoys her in the forest. She can think about her inner self.

Although she feels pride in being aligned with the town, yet she lives on the farm with her husband. Her world and her landscape have changed. Yet she is unable to talk about her feeling. When she understands that she cannot leave her father or her husband behind she decides to reconcile her past and present and shape her real self. In this struggle for identity, the role of her country and its wild nature is momentous.

In her old age she assumes Manawaka as a small place. W. H. New estates “Hagar takes Manawaka into her son Marvin’s suburban home and then into the multicultural; hospital in Vancouver”. (New 2000, 69) Hagar’s life is connected with the life of her country. Canadian history is between wars and prosperous times. Canada’s previous security in its future is made insecure by the fact that over sixty thousand Canadians died defending unity, progress and the new national pride. This is the impact of her country in Hagar’s life.

**TOWARD SELF-REALIZATION**

Hagar’s awareness happens on a trip into Manawaka, from farm to the city; Hagar goes to sell eggs with John, her second son. One of the houses she goes to sell eggs is the house of her childhood acquaintance, Lottie. Her daughter refers to Hagar as the “egg woman” (132). She realizes that she has lost herself and need to find herself in civilized environment. She looks at herself in a public space how a person could change so much and never see it. So gradually it happens. She sees herself in men’s clothes with altered body and a face that does not change. During her life Hagar escapes from civilization to nature and goes from place to the garden. In urban area she feels dissatisfaction. In nature she feels led to unknown place. She learns to blend the inner world with outer world.

*The Stone Angel* can be read as a story of personal development from a position of weakness and alienation to a position of self-understanding and responsibility. The concerns with isolation and alienation are present themes in Canadian literature. Hagar also has a journey to inner part of her mind and she struggles with alienation and her environment.

For Hagar place may function as an element of connecting people in a community. The sense of community is explained by the train that is a symbol of leaving. When she hides in the forest, she sees in her imagination the train as a dragon:

> The train stirred and shook itself like a drowsy dragon and began to move, regally slow, then faster until it was spinning down the shining tracks. We passed the shacks and shanties that clustered
But at the same time she sees the water are the parts of wounded landscape. In this moment Hagar is ready to change; she finds herself in a womb-like place where she can be spiritually reborn. Guerin et al explains “water is the common symbol for the unconscious as is the blackness around Hagar” (150, 1). Water brings renewal for Hagar. She does not imagine herself as a stone again. Instead she plays like children on the beach. In this moment she feels as a free woman. In this beautiful place she does not fear again; instead she hears the “vapid chucking of the sea” (234)

CONCLUSION

In Hagar’s spiritual quest the role of landscape and nature is evident. Through the story, her physical nature cannot help her to overcome her problem, landscape of her inner world causes a lot of problems for her. Inner freedom for Hagar comes in forest, when finally finds her alliance with the community, the spiritually free protagonists depicted in Margaret Laurence’s novel. Laurence has given opportunities to the heroine whose courage has allowed her to resist surrendering to the patriarchal society.

Laurence’s protagonists penetrate and conquer nature and overcome the personals shortages. At the end of the novel, Hagar has returned to nature and her female self. Hagar has a glance to her past in the dark cannery. For the first time, she cries, she was unsatisfied on her own behavior. Hagar begins to value her female self. Hagar compares herself to the ancient mariner who gets rid of himself after he blesses the creatures of the sea. She finds the strength of older women who are rooted like old trees. Trees and nature bring strength for Hagar.

For Hagar, memories of the place help her to shape her real identity, this identity that brings her reaffirmation and reconciliation with her life. The Stone Angel is the story of the development of old Hagar’s personal identities through her connection with nature.

REFERENCES

ABSTRACT
In Friedrich Nietzsche's world there are two important features which have a decisive role for explaining his philosophy, "Death of God" and "Superman (Übermensch)". This paper, first is going to discuss about these two complicated theories and then study the way that Friedrich Durrenmatt, as a dramatist, applies these two concepts and other Nietzsche's notions and this would be the framework of this paper, but what is more important than a new explanation of the two famous Nietzsche viewpoints, is the way of applying them by Durrenmatt in his works.

KEY WORDS: Nietzsche, Superman (Übermensch), Durrenmatt

THE APPLICATION OF NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY TO DURRENMATT'S SELECTED PLAYS
The important thing in the world of playwriting is conveying deep and universal humanistic concepts which can be performed anywhere in the world. Friedrich Durrenmatt is among those dramatists, whose plays are not belonging to a specific people, but they are written for all the people and his emphasis on human has made him much more important in world of drama. "What encouraged Durrenmatt to write is his emphasis on human predicament."(Rahnama, 1978:175)

The more important point in this research is the ways that philosophical concepts can be applied in playwriting. Philosophy is a way of truth searching and truth is that compulsory "becoming". In "Beyond Good and Evil" Friedrich Nietzsche proposed a question about truth:

"What really is this ‘Will to Truth’ In us?" (Nietzsche, 2008:13)
And Überlohe in “The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi” says:
"Truth, I will tell her the truth" (Durrenmatt, 1950:90)

Drama has been intertwined with philosophy from its birth and Durrenmatt is not an exception. Durrenmatt had some studies in philosophy and theology at University of Zurich, therefore, he wrote his plays under the influence of his academic learning, but what kind of philosophy? The question is that as a stylized dramatist, Durrenmatt benefited from which philosophy? This research is an effort in finding out whether Nietzsche's philosophy formed the theoretic basis of Durrenmatt's playwriting or not?

Answer to this questing can be a great assist to playwriting in order to find out that how we can use philosophy, which is a complicated truth, in simple language and apply it in playwriting. Of course this is a very important and complicated issue which has been used by different people in different eras. For example, Seneca who was a Stoic philosopher and dramatist used his philosophy in his writings.

Seneca's life was a combination of many contrasts. His position in Nero's court was an obstacle for him to practicing the principles he believed in and Since he gained a quite considerable wealth in a short time, he was under this criticism that his life is in contrast with basic notions of Stoic philosophy (Kosari, 2007:13).

The Representative of Stoics in medieval period in first century was Seneca who is known for his numerous letters and essays on moral issue (Babaei, 2007:214). Also, Machiavelli who was a writer in 15th and 16th Century created his works by using philosophy especially political philosophy. Another example is Jean-Paul Sartre whose plays serve as a means of conveying his philosophy.
On the other hand Durrenmatt along with Bertolt Brecht and Max Frisch are among most influential and prominent German dramatists and we should also note that from early times until today Germany has always been rich in philosophy (Of course, if there is still any believe in the philosophy), therefore, understanding Durrenmatt’s world, his philosophical ideas and his influences on drama can be very helpful to see how we can benefit from philosophy in our works. By applying philosophical concepts in dramatic texts we can have something to present to the whole world not only to a small region. According to Lacan’s split subject, there is no need of local path for globalization. We do not need any antithesis for reaching globalization, rapidly from thesis we can reach to antithesis and the path to antithesis is to having a discourse for world. With a philosophical basis, Durrenmatt could have a new discourse for all; therefore we should understand and comprehend this discourse. His discourse, which can be traced and analyzed in a systematic structure starts with Romulus the Great (1959) and even until today we can still see the novelty in his works. investigating and finding this novelty is the aim of this research.

If the philosophical basis of Durrenmatt is Nietzsche, then the importance of this research would be solving one the complexity of playwriting which is Durrenmatt, himself and that’s because of complex technique of Durrenmatt’s wordsmanship, so by tracing his philosophical approaches we understand his complex works. In the middle of his plays, Durrenmatt reveals all the important information and until the end of plays he only elaborates on those information. Dramatic intrigues are a part of this information. For example in the middle of "The Visit" all the intrigues has been resolved. Claire Zachanassian says that I give you money if you kill Alfred Ill and all the townspeople of Güllen thinking about some ways to kill Ill and of course he will be killed, therefore from the middle of the play until the end it’s the time for processing of this information which have two part; one aspect is the love of Ill and Claire and the other is the moral aspect (with Nietzsche's definition) of townspeople.

We are familiar with this technique and have been understand it, but it is the philosophical layer of the play which makes it more important. The question is that why Claire wants to kill Ill? They are both in love with each other. Claire has both money and power so what convinces her to kill Ill? At first glance “revenge” can be the answer but the more important question is that why she didn’t forgive him?

By understanding the philosophical approaches of Durrenmatt's thinking, all these questions become evident. The hypothesis of this research is that Nietzsche and his philosophy have the answers to these questions so the following is an investigation to reach the answers.

THEORETICAL STRUCTURE

The basis of this research is the philosophical concepts of Friedrich Nietzsche. He was born on 15 October 1844 in Röcken and died at the age of 55 on 25 August 1900 from severe pneumonia. What make him more famous than the other philosophers is his theory on human’s future in which he talked about "the death of God". By this theory he criticized the common ethics of humans both in his time and after. In general, Nietzsche was against four main traditions in West's civilization: ethics of Christianity ,Secular ethics ,morals and values of ordinary people and some of Socratic concepts which is remained in different societies. In Nietzsche's philosophy one of his main preoccupations is Christianity and human ,in his time and also in our time. Nietzsche became more and more obscure in Christian conversations. For him the main reason for “The death of God” is Christianity. One of His main problems is the absolute fact which is a basis in Kant's philosophy. In this regard J.P Stern said:

Nietzsche is always making special principles for special people. Unlike the absolute fact of Kant, he is completely against generalization of principles. Nietzsche's attack is not towards Jesus but Christianity (Magee, 2011:384). Nietzsche is not a fan of poor people and he attacked them severely in his philosophy. He believed that sympathy of a powerful person is alright but he hated the notion of supporting the poor from any possible source.

Thus he reproduces the contradiction as the pain of individuation but resolves them in a higher pleasure, by making us participate in the superabundance of unique being or universal willing (Deleuze, 2012.42).

Deleuze's idea about Nietzsche's philosophy is like saying yes to a which will be emerged inside of man, so after the death of God, man would say yes which is the basis for the theory of "superman". In this theory, Nietzsche tells us that
between ourselves and the other we should choose ourselves and instead we should use the other as jump ladder. Self and valuing one's existence is one of the factors of becoming a "Superman". This approach is a kind of self-analysis and Nietzsche is one the pioneers in this relation. The interesting point is that Nietzsche started this self-analysis from himself. About Nietzsche, Freud said:

No one never can know Nietzsche better than himself, not today not even tomorrow" (Magee, 2011:390). But what is the benefit of Superman in a world who's God has been died? From Nietzsche's point of view in a world without God, the man himself should become god and for reaching this he should value his own existence. Deleuze believed that "the death of God" is a formula which leads to the creation of "superman", for him this is not a theoretic proposition but it is a dramatic proposition:

It says at one and the same time: God existed and he is dead and he will rise from the dead, God has become Man and Man has become God. The phrase "God is dead" is not a speculative proposition but a dramatic proposition, the dramatic proposition par excellence (Deleuze, 2011:261). This dramatic basis with its focus on death becomes a pure mixed cognitive object. By transforming God to a mixed cognitive object, the existence or nonexistence of God won't be determined in an absolute way and death and life would have relative and partial determinations, so that's why Deleuze puts a dramatic basis for the death of god.

The dramatic proposition is synthetic, therefore essentially pluralist typological and differential. Who dies and who puts God to death? “When gods die, they always die many kinds of deaths” (Deleuze, 2011:261). This dramatic basis of Nietzsche's philosophy has attracted artists towards it. Nietzsche stated his ideas metaphorically and for an artist what is better than a free interpretation of ideas of a philosopher? Artistic and aesthetic issues are related with Nietzsche's thinking in different layers and in my opinion that's why he had a great influence of creative artists (Maggie, 2011:404).

Romulus, Claire, Alfro, Mississippi: Nietzsche's true children

Karl Jaspers: "The only person who can understand the essence of Nietzsche's thought is the one who first has this essence in himself" (Jaspers,2004:41). Nietzsche believes that the thing that provides us with most interest is not that whether our interpretation from world is true or false because no one can know this by sure. The most important thing is that whether this interoperation can develop the will to power to strength and control the world or it expands anarchy and weakness? This theoretical basis which Nietzsche developed in "the will to power" is exactly the same action which Durrenmatt created in Great. In this play Romulus is deliberately helping the ruin of the Empire and for starting this he tried very hard to become the Emperor of Rome and then he became such a irresponsible Emperor and didn't take any action in response to the threats that led to the fall of Rome. In fact, Durrenmatt was trying to pursue Nietzsche's theory which he proposed in "the will to power". In his play Durrenmatt answers the question which Nietzsche asked in "the will to power". Romulus is the true image of the theory of superman. In the world which its God is dead, Romulus considers himself as the only person who can be God and rules in God’s place.

“Now in a world without God, humans should have the courage to become Gods. The greatest need of today’s civilization is to create a new kind of personality, Tough, powerful and brave superman who is intellectually and morally independent.” (lavine,2005:413).

Based on the Nietzsche’s theory of "the will to power", Romulus took the power and in relation to theory of “the death of God” he became a reason for the fall of Rome .Durrenmatt’s answer to Nietzsche’s question is that in a world without God “the will to power" would leads to anarchy which ultimately brings the freedom of body. In “Human, All Too Human” Nietzsche revealed a very important fact about his theory which is necessary for understanding Romulus, he says:

“ Enough, I am still living; and life is, after all, not a product of morality: it wants deception, it lives on deception... but there you are, I am already off again, am I not, and doing what I have always done, old immoralist and bird-catcher that I am - speaking unmorally, extra morally, "beyond good and evil"?” (Nietzsche, 1982:4). The above quotation is exactly the life of Romulus. He is awaiting death but suddenly Odoacer comes along and proposes him with a calmer throne. Odoacer is the first part of Nietzsche’s viewpoint. Nietzsche has opened a new language for life and also Zarathustra had too much emphasis on language. Life should be with reason but rational because if we don’t care for ourselves, nobody will care for us either. There is no other god who support us, so this is the strategy
of Romulus. He just cares about himself. Romulus words is Nietzsche’s worlds too, he also wants to speak rationally. At first he pretends insanity but he finds out that nobody understands him, therefore, he is forced to tell the truth to his wife, Julia.

Romulus: I didn’t do that because of severe ambition but because of need. What was the purpose for you, for me it was just a means? I became Emperor, just because of a political theory…

Julia: There’s just something about you and that is Inaction.

Romulus: that’s it. my political theory is to do nothing.

Julia: so for doing nothing you should become Emperor?

Romulus: only in this way, my inaction would have a meaning. The inaction of ordinary people cannot be effective.

Julia: this act will put the state endanger.

Romulus: that’s the point!

Julia: what do you mean?

Romulus: you just got the reason of my inaction.

Julia: it’s impossible to deny the necessity of reign

Romulus: I have no doubt about the existence of a state, I only doubt in the necessity of our reign which has become the World Empire. Before I became Emperor, this reign was a system which did Murder, pillage, oppression on behalf of other nations.

Julia: I’m surprised... if you have such an idea about the world governance of Rome, so why you became Emperor?

Romulus: the only reason that Rome has been alive from so many times ago until now is that it always had an Emperor. I had no choice but to become Emperor so I can ruin this empire.(Durrenmatt,2005:94-95)

What Durrenmatt pictures for us here is the same as the basis of Nietzsche’s theory. Necessarily Nietzsche’s superman must not have a mustache like Nietzsche. Nietzsche’s superman is a person who can do anything on the way of reaching his purpose without having any fear from anybody else. In this theory, the action of superman would be remained. What Romulus wants to do -which he did very well too- is an ideal for Nietzsche’s theory and only a superman can do that.

In “The Antichrist” Nietzsche stated that we should all put an end to your lives like Manis. We should enjoy life and Romulus did the same thing. He loves chicken so he prefers to stay at home breeding domesticated chickens. Now we can understand that “Romulus the Great” is not only a dramatic piece but it is a play which is exactly written based on two Nietzsche’s theory of “the death of ” and “happiness”.

About happiness Nietzsche said:

“What is happiness? — the feeling that power increases — that a resistance is overcome” (Nietzsche, 2007:38)

Let’s see what is the strategy of Romulus .he tells to Julia that:

Romulus: I married you so I can become Emperor and you married me because you wished to attain the status of Empress and I was the well-descended Romulus but you were born from the relation of Emperor with a slave woman. I transformed you as a legitimate person and you gave me the Empire Crown. (Durrenmatt, 2005:91)

This the first part of Nietzsche’s definition of “happiness” until “the power increases”. In the second part Romulus’s happiness is in a place where a resistance is overcome and without any doubt this resistance is the Rome’s resistance which should be demolished . This the last dialogue of Romulus:

Romulus: now the rule of Rome Empire is ended (Durrenmatt, 2005:143).
Now it can be simply proved that theoretical basis and structure of “Romulus the Great” is Nietzsche’s theory of “happiness”. It is based on this theory that Romulus talks and provide others with speeches and ultimately he reaches to happiness. in the first place a happy person is the one who can be superman.

With another approach in this play and Nietzsche's theory of “happiness” we can also mention the concept of “sympathy” in Nietzsche’s philosophy. For Durrenmatt, sympathy helped him in developing his text. For proving this we can compare one of Nietzsche’s sentences with a dialogue of Romulus.

“Not contentment, but more power; not peace at any price, but war; not virtue, but efficiency (virtue in the Renaissance sense, virtue, virtue free of moral acid). The weak and the botched shall perish: first principle of our charity. And one should help them to it. What is more harmful than any vice?—Practical sympathy for the botched and the weak--Christianity…” (Nietzsche, 2007:38).

Romulus: in all my life, my effort was to ruin Rome Empire. I gave myself the right to be the judge of Rome, because I had prepared myself for death. I asked my people to be victimized in a horrible way because I was also ready to become a victim. I let my people to be defenseless and I let them to be killed because I was also decided to be killed (Durrenmatt, 2005:134,135).

Romulus thought how he can be happy? How he can use his superman power? How he can reach to the thing that he is only worth of it? For this he has the help of Nietzsche. In the “Twilight of the Idols” he answered this question: war “All means are justified; every ‘case’ is a case of luck. Especially war. War has always been the most sensible measure for spirits who have become too inward looking and profound; even wounds have the power to heal. I have had a motto for a long time: The spirit soars, velour thrives by wounding,”(Nietzsche, 2005:155). Under the pretext of Nietzsche’s theory of war, Durrenmatt used a war scene for the manifestation of his protagonists: Minister: I just became the Prime Minister. Situation appears to be critical. Foreign governments are fully aware of everything. The market is tense. There are exaggerated rumors .but in fact the situation is perfect to take the run of everything (Durrenmatt 1956: 91).

In “The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi” the war situation put the power to minister and we can see the same situation in “Romulus the Great” in which he prefers a war. For starting this war, Romulus first tries to diminish Rome so the old rival, Germans, become tempted. When the Germanic army started the attack, the war started.

Like a superman, Romulus consider himself as the judge because like Nietzsche's Zarathustra he knows that the great judge, God has been dead and now he should do the judging because he has the power to do such. He has happiness now. He does his judging and at the end, in another part of the world he will live his life in a great peace, just like the Nietzsche's ideal. During the play he excessively said that he wants to be killed but his true fate would happen at the end of play.

Romulus: I appoint the German Prince Odoacer, to be the new king of Italy.

German: Viva King of Italy Odoacer ; instead I will bestow Rome Emperor a pension of 6000 gold coins per year and a countryside villa. Romulus: now the hunger period of Emperor finished. Here this the glory crown and you can find the king's sword among gardening tools (Durrenmatt.2005:142).

The end of superman's life is stated in above and Durrenmatt tried to pass Nietzsche's theory through his artistic filter. Romulus would have a great life while embracing lots of coins every year. He would be happy for his beliefs and ideas led him to have a happy life. Romulus' life is the lesson of Durrenmatt's character from Nietzsche's concepts.

In "the visit", Durrenmatt has been close to this concept of Nietzsche. The town of Güllen once had a very advanced industry until Claire Zachanassian moved to Hamburg and became a prostitute .after marrying with Mr. Zachanassian, Clarie became very rich. Since she had a big hatred from her hometown, she bought all the industrial sources of this city and made them all inactive. The play begins when Claire returns to Güllen. Here we see that she took everything out of the way in order to gain more power and this is her time to shows her power. Güllen is an example of recession in modernism which Nietzsche had been talked about it too. Claire announced that she will make a donation of one billion units of an unspecified currency, half for the town and half to be shared among the families. Her donation is conditional on someone's killing Alfred III who was the love of her youth. The town became developed by credit but even in the new situation nothing changed, as if everything is still calm and there is
"Truth" in who has killed his boss. This truth takes the exact definition that Nietzsche stated in his "The power to will", and after some time from their relationship his boss died, but in trial this death is stated differently as if it was Traps game, the truth would have another form. Alfredo Traps had a close relationship with his boss' wife sometimes ago this truth is not a common and ordinary truth but it is a philosophical truth. In a trial that its judge has made it like a "Nietzsche said: reality needs to be criticized not worship and philosophy would release human from illusion no matter what it costs " (Jaspers, 2004.11).

"None of the characters in "the visit" have an evolution. And Durrenmatt wants them all just to be alive. They don’t live. They are all alone.

"Nietzsche is the enemy of democracy, Socialism and Collectivism. he loves loneliness” (Ahmadi, 2005:155).

We can vividly see this love of loneliness in all of Durrenmatt's characters. Claire Zachanassian is an obvious example for this. She always tried to decrease her loneliness by marrying several times but still she prefers her privacy and her solitude. Nietzsche and Durrenmatt's characters have the same pain and joy which they both suffer from them and enjoy them. Mobius wants to be alone from all the people so he can be alone in a Luxurious mental hospital. Romulus empties the Imperial Palace so he can have more joy in his loneliness comparing to the time when he is with others. Alfred Traps travels alone with his car. Anastasia cannot be with anybody and she just gets rid of everybody who comes to her life. Überlohe prefers to be alone in a wood. A man, in the evening conversation has sat alone in his room waiting for the other to come. As if all the characters has become the “Steppenwolf” of Hermann Hesse. Solitude, the love of Nietzsche, but the difference between Nietzsche's solitude and Hesse's solitude is that the protagonist in Steppenwolf runs away from technology and industry to find solitude again but Nietzsche's superman became alone in order to gain power .in the following act of "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi", the minister talks to powerful Anastasia:

Minister: you are an animal but I like animals. You don’t have any plans .you are a day person.as you betrayed your husband, you will betray me and others too .there is always a more powerful thing for you than what you already have .whatever comes in future will ruin today. No one can stop you. (Durrenmatt, 1950:74)

But Anastasia is always alone and this solitude is always in the search of power. A power which ultimately goes to a person who is lonelier than Anastasia: the Minister .this solitude has power inside it.

"Truth" in ideas of Nietzsche and Durrenmatt

"Which of us is the Oedipus here? Which the Sphinx?" (Nietzsche, 2008:13). What is the relationship between truth and reality? Is every reality a truth? Does every truth become real? The answer is no. The relation between these two is in a way that some realities are truths and right. When a just, moral, social and economic system forms, it means that this system is both real and right. When you risk your life for the success of a movement, it means that your act is both real and right. You did a self-sacrifice which is an actual action. Some other realities are not real and right but they are false. When you violate a person's rights, it is a reality. You oppress him or her which is real thing but your oppression is not a truth and it is anti-truth and false. So we have two kinds of reality: the first kind are those realities which are true and right such as justice. When a justice is realized and achieved, it becomes a right truth. The second kind is those realities which are real but they are false and anti-right such as oppression and injustice. When you do an injustice, this reality is anti-truth and anti-right. This relation between reality and truth.

"Nietzsche said: reality needs to be criticized not worship and philosophy would release human from illusion no matter what it costs " (Jaspers, 2004.11).

In "Die panne " one thing become important which has not been addressed before the trial. There is a truth here but this truth is not a common and ordinary truth but it is a philosophical truth. In a trial that its judge has made it like a game, the truth would have another form. Alfredo Traps had a close relationship with his boss' wife sometimes ago and after some time from their relationship his boss died, but in trial this death is stated differently as if it was Traps who has killed his boss. This truth takes the exact definition that Nietzsche stated in his "The power to will".

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"Truth" is therefore not something there, that might be found or discovered—but something that must be created and that gives a name to a process, or rather to a will to overcome that has in itself no end-introducing truth, as a processes in infinitum, an active determining—not a becoming conscious of something that is in itself firm and determined. It is a word for the "will to power." (Nietzsche, 1968:298).

And this truth has been created for the new game which has been planned by the judge, attorney and the lawyer. Christianity has explained that making a new truth for carrying out a goal is amoral but Nietzsche explicitly rejected morality.

"It is a painful and tragic spectacle that rises before me: I have drawn back the curtain from the rottenness of man. This word, in my mouth, is at least free from one suspicion: that it involves a moral accusation against humanity. It is used--and I wish to emphasize the fact again--without any moral significance..." (Nietzsche,2001:2)

Claire Zachanassian also creates a new truth:

Butler: do you know Mr. Ill?
Koby and Loby: we are blind. We are blind
Butler: do you recognize him by his voice?
Koby and Loby: by his voice. By his voice.
Butler: in 1940 I was the Lord Chief Justice of Gülleen. How did you two testify at that court?
Koby and Loby: we said that we had sex with her. We said that we had sex with her.
Butler: you testified this before me, the Court and God. Is it true?
Koby and Loby: it was a false testify. It was a false testify.
Butler: why did you lied?
Koby and Loby: Ill had bribed us. Ill had bribed us.
Butler: what did he gave you?
Koby and Loby: one liter liquor. one liter liquor.
Claire Zachanassian: now Koby and Loby tell what did I do with you?
Koby and Loby: she ordered to find us. She ordered to find us.
Butler: that's right. she ordered to search for you two in all over the world. Koby, You went to Canada and Loby went to Australia but Claire Zachanassian found you both and what did she do with you?
Koby and Loby: she gave us to Toby and Roby. She gave us to Toby and Roby.
Butler: and what did Toby and Roby do with you?
Koby and Loby: they made us blind and they mutilated us. They made us blind and they mutilated us.
Butler: so this was the story. a judge.an accused. two false witnesses and an unjust verdict in 1910.so I am asking you Suer, is it right?
(Claire Zachanassian stands)
Claire Zachanassian: yes
Ill: it was for a long long time ago.
Butler: what did happen to the child?
Claire Zachanassian: (in a low voice) she only survived one year.
Butler: what did happen to you at that time?
Claire Zachanassian: I became a prostitute
Butler: why?
Claire Zachanassian: because of the court's verdict I became notorious....
Butler: and now you want justice, Claire Zachanassian?
Claire Zachanassian: I have the power. Gülleen can have one billion if someone's killing Alfred Ill (Durrenmatt.1963:34-35).

Claire can do whatever she wants but the first important thing for her is to create a truth and now by the help of that truth and her power, she can create the act of nature. We usually confront with a court scene in Durrenmatt's works, it can be public court like in "Die panne" and "The visit" or the court scene can be created by some answers and questions and interrogation in character's house or some other satiations like in “The Physicists", "abendstunde im spatherbst", “nachtliches gesprach mit einem verachteten menschen” and “The marriage of Mr. Mississippi”. The reason of these trials is creating a new truth which is one of the basis of Nietzsche's philosophy. Durrenmatt just love to create new truths too. In the “Twilight of the Idols” Nietzsche made a new path for Truth:

Sometimes for Durrenmatt this truth can have a root in the politics of his time and in some other time it is only a humanistic issue. The important thing for Durrenmatt is truth and creating that truth. In "The Marriage of Mr.
Mississippi: Durrenmatt had a great maneuver on the issue of truth in order to open a window to the idea of "creating the truth"
Mississippi: He betrayed you
Anastasia: who said such a thing? (Durrenmatt.1950, 24-25)
And now without mentioning anything about the betrayal of her husband, Mississippi circulates some rumors and continues his truth creation.
Mississippi: do you confess that you knew about your husband's betrayal (Durrenmatt:27)
And again only the truth is important for Durrenmatt.
Mississippi: (in a serious mode) in this very strange moments which we see the effect of truth in ourselves. the 25 years of being an attorney obligates me to warn you that for once, both of us should confess before each other even if this confess costs our destruction. (Durrenmatt: 25)
And in the end of the play we again see the complexity of creating the truth. this time Mississippi, in the costume of insane, jump to the house from a window and interrogate his ex-wife an interrogation for finding truth.
Mississippi: do you insist on the claim which says you weren't the mistress of Comte?
Anastasia: I cannot understand the reason of your suspicion.
Mississippi: its reason lays on the existence of good and evil in human's id. dear Anastasia, Comte Bodo confessed while he was drunk and drunk people always say the true things. (Durrenmatt :119,120)
Creating the truth is different from finding truth. In philosophy the simple definition of truth and real is that, real is what it is and truth is what it should be. In Nietzsche's definition of truth he assigned the "what it should be" to human so he creates what it should be and Durrenmatt also created truth in his works. The truths which does not exist because his characters always lie, from Anastasia in "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi" to Alfro Traps in "Die panne".
About this issue Nietzsche said ironically: 
"...is there any actual difference between a lie and a conviction?--All the world believes that there is; but what is not believed by all the world!...."( Nietzsche,2001:30)

The Change of the world by Superman
Thus affirms another world from the one of life, nature and history; and inasmuch as he affirms this "other world", must he not therefore deny its opposite, this world, our world, in doing so? (Nietzsch,2005,112). Nietzsche wanted to change the world. In his view, his true readers are not born yet and he said these both at the beginning of "Antichrist" and "Thus Spoke Zarathustra"
Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None (Nietzsche,2009:2).
Durrenmatt chose this view as the theme of "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi". In the first monologues of this play, Saint-Claude says:

Saint-Claude: the surprising fate of three men has been presented here. All three, same as each other, had this idea that with different ways they can change the world and save some parts, but they had bad-luck in their ways: they met a woman.

The theory of changing the world by Superman has exactly the above features. In this play, Durrenmatt tried to play with some of Nietzsche's thoughts. In fact Durrenmatt puts a woman as Achilles' heel of his protagonist and as we all know, when it came to women Nietzsche always had problem with them. In this play, Durrenmatt chooses the winner of his play a person who follows his thought better than any other superman. It should be noted that "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi" is not a refusal to Nietzsche's thinking but it is like making a joke with Nietzsche. At the end Durrenmatt still performs what Nietzsche had been considered, the winner of the play is minister who rules and does not have any attention to others.

Minister: I don’t have anything but greed for having more power and now I am embracing the world (Durrenmatt: 128).
Nietzsche said:

"Wherever the will to power begins to decline, in whatever form, there is always an accompanying declines physiologically, decadence." (Nietzsche, 2001:7)
And it would be this theoretical basis which Durrenmatt used to put minister as his power. Sometimes we may think that Durrenmatt wanted to make fun of these mortals, but the truth is that in Durrenmatt's time and in our time, mortals have still power and this power is the same power which Nietzsche had been talked about. In the next part we will analyze whether Durrenmatt was agreed with power or not?

**Durrenmatt after Nietzsche**

If we make a route from what Nietzsche had been pictured for human and put "The death of God" in the beginning of the way and "Superhuman" at the end, we will find young Durrenmatt walking in mid-way.

"The only moral principle of Superman is the acceptance of life: to be powerful, creative, happy and free" (Lavine, 2005; 413).

In his wordsmanship, Durrenmatt had a certain path which can be traced by Nietzsche's philosophy. He wrote "Romulus the Great" in 1950 when he was 29 years old. He wrote this play to be a piece of Nietzsche's unquestioning thoughts. We can find all four features of superman in the character of Romulus. Since he is Emperor of Rome, he is powerful. He is smart and creative because he found a way to ruin the great Rome Empire happy which can conceived from his hobby of breeding chickens and his behavior. He is free because no one can stops him from doing anything.

Romulus: when an Emperor want to fire his country, he should ruin what he wants to break and trample what he wants to ruin. (Durrenmatt, 2005:83). But the path would not be stable for Durrenmatt, gradually his concerns passed Nietzsche and there is clear reason for this: Nietzsche did not see and experience the horrible and catastrophic war which Durrenmatt saw. Without any doubt, his path changed in 1956 when he wrote "the visit". Now Nietzschean superman has become a woman and she is not happy anymore. A woman as Superman who has muscular character.

"When a woman has masculine virtues, you feel like running away; and when she doesn't have masculine virtues, she runs away herself." (Nietzsche, 2005:159). Without paying attention to above sentence, Durrenmatt Puts Claire in a virtue of superman. Claire only shows her femininity at the end of play. She does not cry. She does not escape from anything. Her kierkegaardian despair have more reflects than her Nietzschean happiness now from four Nietzschean features we can only see three of them and the happiness has been gone. But the laws of nature are existed still and we can see this basis in characters of "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi " . Saint-Claude (to Mississippi): you have intelligence and I have power (Durrenmatt,?:64). Also Anastasia have the intelligence and minister have the power. In "The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi " all four characters of the play have power but their power has been broken between themselves.

In 1962 when Durrenmatt wrote "The Physicists" he takes away the power from his Superman who is Mobius. Now Nietzschean superman is in a mental institution and he cannot even move without having the permission of his nurse. He does not have any place to move. He does not have any purpose or intends and he even does not have the mood to sit besides other patients. from four features of Nietzschean superman, he only has one: creativity. At the end of this play you get this feeling that the last monologue of the play is like Durrenmatt's review of his path from Nietzsche to himself. He challenges Nietzschean superman and he claims that what can do a man who have only the creativity is to pretend to be a Psycho.

Mobius: I am Suleiman, the poor king Suleiman. Once I was very rich and god-believer. From my power all the other powerful people began to shudder. I was the Sultan of Freedom and justice. But my wisdom took off my fear of god and as I didn’t fear from god anymore, my wisdom ruined my wealth. The lands which I was the king of them are ruined now. They are all vacant, like foggy desert ..... (Durrenmatt,19661:102).

Durrenmatt has vividly mentioned the "the death of God" theory and considers the "the death of God" as the reason of destruction of his character. I should also note that by "the death of God" Nietzsche didn't mean the death of transcendent God, he meant that the memory of God has been forgotten. As Lavine said:

"What Nietzsche meant by "the death of God" is the death of our memory of God. This is our belief in god which is dead now: at the end from the brutal attacks of Empiricists like David Hume and his followers, God was ruined" (Lavine, 2005:412).

Durrenmatt has the same idea of Lavine. His character whose once was like Romulus, Breeding chickens and had whatever he wants, is in despair now and as he knew his not crazy he should pretend that so he can have some peace away from people, the peace that Nietzsche hated it. People stay young only if their souls do not stretch out languidly and long for peace... Nothing is more foreign to us than that one-time desideratum of 'peacefulness of the soul', the
Christian desideratum; there is nothing we envy less than the moral cow and the fat happiness of good conscience. (Nietzsche, 2005:215).

Durrenmatt often used the Nietzschean concept of "Happiness" for the characters of his plays. "Formula for my happiness: a yes, a no, a straight line, a goal . . ." (Nietzsche, 2005:161). In the oxford dictionary of plays, under the title of "Dance of death" there is statement by August Strindberg which says:

Edgar is a captain in the Swedish coast artillery. In all his life he is in constant hostility with his life, Alice . he has solid muscles and because of this illness he constantly goes to coma and come back to life again . . . . Durrenmatt used this play and creates a box game from it . a box game between Edgar and Alice. (Peterson, 2002:100,101).

"Play Strindberg" is a play with all of Durrenmatt's thoughts which he has been dealing with from the start. These thoughts display not that much of Nietzsche’s philosophy, as if "Play Strindberg" is the last paper of Durrenmatt's book. He makes a box game, a box game between those who have the claim of supermanity, those who always claim that they are the best but they are nothing. In somewhere in the play Alice wants to swagger him in this way:

Alice: If I did not marry you, I was still in theatre.
Edgar: what a lucky theatre!
Alice: I was a famous actress
Edgar: but critics didn’t think that way
Alice: critics are all mean
Edgar: but they aren’t a fool (Durrenmatt, 2001:15)
In another part of the play, Edgar says:
Edgar: lean on me and you would never have any trouble, I rule in this island. The doctor is a fool obsequious person which will be shivers before me . in this island everybody have fear from me.
Alice: almost everyone (Durrenmatt, 2001:21)
The "almost everyone" here means no one. In this scene Edgar is talking proudly of himself, in front of Kurt, and Alice just humiliates him gradually. This is what Nietzschean superman does with each other. They just kill themselves.

Now Durrenmatt is somehow out of Nietzsche's path. Comparing to young Durrenmatt, the middle aged Durrenmatt does not have that much devotion to Nietzsche, to poet-philosopher.

“Nietzsche thought that there will be a crisis in which all the existed value systems with their loose bases and old judgments would collapse….. And after that there would be a re-birth” (Hollingdale, 2006: 217)
Durrenmatt still displays the world which is about to collapse and ruined, in cinema we can see this collapse in "Fight club" of David Fincher which is displayed in the last scene .it is the collapse of idea which we see in "Fight club" which is can be seen also in Durrenmatt way of thinking. As Nietzsche also said, after this collapse there would be another birth. Now Durrenmatt has independent ideas and thinking. His thinking follows Nietzsche's thinking but in different way: he routs Nietzsche's superman, he routs "happiness", he routs Nietzsche's "the death of God " just for one reason: the only thing that routs this Superman is nothing but himself.

CONCLUSION
What is completely clear is the great influence of Nietzsche on Durrenmatt's works and in this research I tried to show this impact. Durrenmatt criticized the human of his era by the help of Nietzsche's concepts on human. The human of his time is a man who has experienced war and needs help to stands up but there is nobody who can help him. By finding this approach in Nietzsche's philosophy, Durrenmatt creates a new world in his works which is no
longer under the influence of Nietzsche but himself. Durrenmatt became a superman and he ruled his own world. This world is not a Nietzschean’s world, it belongs to no one but Durrenmatt himself.

As a great Swiss author who spoke German, German's world was very important to him. He has done such a great job in drama of the word which I believe doing research is necessarily needed to understand his world.

As a great philosopher, Nietzsche was a new theorist whose ideas have still great importance on certain schools of thought. The final result of this research is that although Durrenmatt was hugely under the influence of Nietzsche but at the end of his career he reached to an independent world of his own. For understanding this new word, extra researching is absolutely needed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
MAINTAINING THE LOCAL DIVERGENCE IN THE GLOBAL CONVERGENCE IN SYLLABUS AND CURRICULUM DESIGN IN ELT

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ABSTRACT
This paper discusses the reasons why curriculum and syllabus design processes are required to be glocalized, introducing “glocalization” as a means for curriculum developers in general and syllabus designers in particular to maintain the local divergence within the global convergence. The paper introduces some ways in which the traces of the globalization trends can be found in syllabus and curriculum design in English language teaching (ELT), discussing that slavishly following the methodologies in syllabus design as well as the models in curriculum development introduced as optimal by the West may turn to be counterproductive in many non-western countries. It is suggested that to have an efficient curriculum, curriculum designers should strive to change the direction of pure globalization to glocalization which connotes consideration and awareness of the local needs, values, socio-cultural norms, and learning styles of the learners in a specific country, race, and culture and localization on the basis of some principles. The implications of glocalization for syllabus design and curriculum development have also been mentioned in the form of ten principles functioning as a framework within which curriculum and syllabus designers can make their local decisions.

KEY WORDS: curriculum models, Curriculum development, Syllabus design, Globalization, Glocalization

INTRODUCTION
"Globalization” which is one of the main characteristics of the modern society is predominantly a loan from the science of economics (Sifakis & Sougari, 2003). It has, however, found its way into other sciences to convey the way the western societies are culturally, politically, and ideologically inviting the other societies to convergence. Posing the globalization versus localization dilemma, in this paper, we will argue that resisting globalization in all aspect is not productive. Believing that being a radical supporter of either localization or globalization will lead us to irresolution, and a never-ending struggle, we would like to discuss some ways of providing fair circumstances and efficient syllabus for English learners in non-western parts of the world; globalization should be interwoven with localization. Considering the fact that in many countries, the learners' expectations about what fine materials have to offer, their learning styles, and their socio-cultural norms are not in line with those of the people in Western countries, it appears that following globalization slavishly without striving to maintain local identities is unrewarding. The following discussions include some of the ways globalization is mirrored in syllabus and curriculum design. The paper also embeds why and how globalization- thinking globally and acting locally- can be opted for and employed both to reconcile the conflict between those who defend globalization and those who criticize it, and to provide efficient curriculum for learners of English in various countries.

Globalization and English Language learning
Viewing globalization as the process that promotes surpassing national boundaries and increasing the interconnectedness and instant global communication among nations, Gray (2002) has (“has” should be deleted) identified three main ways in which globalization has affected the use of, and consequently the demand for learning English language in the world. He viewed the rise of international and intercontinental corporations, the headquarters of which are mostly located in English speaking countries as the first impetus for the spread of English language in the world, since typically, English is used as a lingua franca and the language of legal documentation in ventures
Globalization or Localization Dilemma: "Glocalization" to the Rescue

In order to thrive within the mainstream of globalization, it is required to think globally, and act locally as the slogan of the globalization suggests (Marquis & Battilana, 2009). Adopting the either embrace or oppose globalization view does not appear to bear fruit, as the merits of thinking globally and benefiting the globally designed and well-tried principles cannot be totally ignored. Opting for one of these two mainstreams, those who share Wilk's (1999) opinion by believing in the deep chasm and irreconcilable contrast between globalization and localism, are likely to limit their scope; consequently, they are fated to be deprived of the advantages the other trend has to offer. In even worse cases, viewing these two processes as mutually exclusive, they will be left with no solution, only to find themselves in a never-ending struggle, the result of which is to benefit from and to have faith in neither of the processes.

Since permitting oneself to be slavishly ruled by the dominating globalization trend in its pure sense has been proved counterproductive (Kim, 2010), what should be done is to take into account the factors like national cultural values, local needs and resources, during the cross-continental, cross-national, and cross-cultural course of globalization. Awareness of the existence of such factors and considering them while employing the techniques that are accepted globally, and hence, taken for granted by many, can assist the theoreticians, as well as the practitioners to redirect the process into that of glocalization. Modeled on Japanese word dochakuka, meaning adapting farming technique to one's own local condition, the term glocalization denotes the need for global products and processes to be tailored to suit the local cultures (Khoondker, 2004). Thus, glocalization not only encourages acknowledging the effects of local factors, but also makes many of the desirable local particularities salient (Marquis & Battilana, 2009). Preserving local divergence, in terms of values, needs, the means to accomplish those needs, as well as the available expertise is not an easy task to do when individuals on top of the societies and nations are day by day overshadowed by the seductive globalization. Nonetheless, given the fact that some actions and choices cannot be understood and justified outside the cultural and historical frameworks in which such choices and actions are embedded, the maintenance of such context-specific divergence seems vital to the survival and development of organizations and systems. Unless attempts are made to preserve those local aspects that are vital to the survival of systems, globalization is prone to have serious differentiating effect in the non-Western countries rather than the unifying ones, “dividing each national community from within by generation, by class, by political stance, and so forth” (Kim 2010, p. 7367). In other words, globalization and the convergence of cultures, methodologies, approaches, and ideologies bear a number of adverse consequences for individuals who do not reside in the Western part of the globe that comprises the norm providing "inner circle" as termed by Kachru (1985).

Syllabus design and curriculum development are not exceptions to this rule. Both curriculum developers and syllabus designers are required to show sensitivity to and awareness of the local needs, localized solutions, and the aforementioned merits of glocalization. In other words, failing to acknowledge the role of the dominant learning style and habits, cultural values, power relationship within classrooms shaped by societal factors, as well as the local
needs and resources while designing a curriculum and syllabus, either nation-wide or institute-wide, the designers are prone to gain less than desired results.

GLOBALIZATION AND GLOCALIZATION IN SYLLABUS DESIGN: SELECTION FROM THE GLOBAL OR DESIGNING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL?

For the reasons mentioned above, glocalization, the localization of the global principles, has been considered desirable when preparing educational programs and designing syllabi. However, to realize how such glocalization is feasible in syllabus design process, we need first to define globalization in the context of designing syllabi, so that we can discuss how the globalization process can be directed towards glocalization.

When globalization is discussed with respect to syllabus design in English language teaching and learning, various interpretations of globalization and its impact on various aspects in language teaching and learning are conceivable. Such interpretations may range from a desired convergence in pronunciation, accent, and lexis to be incorporated in materials and to be prescribed to the end-users of English materials, to a wider scope including the preferred convergence in learning styles, approaches to, and theories of learning and teaching, and approaches to syllabus design recommend to syllabus designers in various parts of the world. In other words, some limit their scope by viewing globalization in syllabus design as a matter of advocating similar content to be found in the materials (e.g. Honey, 1997), while others regard it as a movement aiming at unifying the syllabus design policies and to diminishing the local diversities in the routes taken in the syllabus design process. Adopting the latter view and the broader scope, in this paper, we aim to investigate the process of globalization in syllabus design in ELT with respect to the fact that decision makers in the language programs are encouraged to choose from the existing approaches to syllabus design and types of syllabi rather than design a syllabus totally geared to their local, contextual needs. In other words, in this paper, globalization in syllabus design in ELT is viewed as a process in which syllabus designers in various parts of the globe adopt one of the existing approaches to syllabus design and choose from the types of syllabi identifiable in the literature (e.g. structural, topical, lexical, task-based…), rather than glocally design a syllabus totally geared to their local, contextual needs.

A trend that might be noticeable in the present-day syllabus design is a global invitation to and inclination towards task-based syllabus. The task-based syllabus, which puts the emphasis on “means or processes” rather than “ends or products”, has gained considerable popularity (Crookes & Gass, 1993; Long & Crookes, 1992, 1993; Nunan, 1989; Prabhu, 1987; White, 1988; Willis, 1996). It owes, largely, the augmentation in its popularity to Prabhu's (1987) and Breen's (1984) works. In fact, this type of approach to syllabus design has been so welcomed by the decision makers and language program planners that it has successfully imported the concept of “language task” as a vital element to the curriculum (Nunan 1993, P. 66), and a basic unit for language syllabus design (Williams & Burden 1997:168).

Such an approach to syllabus design has been claimed to be compatible with research findings on language learning (Hatch 1983; Ellis, 2003a, Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991). It has also been alleged that task-based syllabus strives to incorporate classroom research findings when designing materials and methodologies (Chaudron, 1988). Such claims should, however, be considered with caution since the research the findings of which have been used to render task-based syllabi legitimate, like the ones mentioned above, has mostly been conducted in the Western settings. Thus, questioning the value of such an approach to syllabus design in other settings seems plausible.

Despite the prevailing urge among the scholars to adopt task as the unit of syllabus analysis (Crookes & Gass, 1993; Long & Crookes, 1992, 1993; Nunan, 1989; Prabhu,1987; White, 1988, 1993) stemming from the popular opinion that the selection of tasks as the unit of syllabus can lead to a coherent approach to program design (Long & Crookes, 1993), adequate evidence proving that such a syllabus is equally productive in all settings and for learners with different learning styles and from different cultures is still lacking. While we do not mean to question the potential of tasks in curriculums, we would like to argue that prior to accepting it as a solution to all contexts and problems, practitioners are needed to gather empirically backed evidence that drives from their own local context. This concern is echoed in the ideas of Ellis (2003b, p. 331) who viewed tasks as "an Anglo-American creation" and stated that there are hidden socio-political messages of task-based teaching which could result in hesitations in and resistance to the application of the task-based syllabus in non-Western contexts. Ellis (ibid) argued that both the content of the tasks available in language teaching materials and the classroom practices necessitated by such a
method of teaching, such as the imposition of the participant role on teachers, might not always be congruent with non-Anglo-American cultural norms.

Demonstrating awareness of the adverse consequences of pure globalization and believing that the process of globalization should be redirected to that of glocalization will take us merely half the way. What is still lacking is the knowledge of how to implement glocalization in syllabus design. One further question, yet, is whether mixed syllabi (Brown, 1995) can be the proper means to glocalizing syllabus design.

As it was discussed earlier, globalization and in this case choosing from the options offered by scholars whose theories and ideas are likely to come from their experiences in their own educational contexts does not appear to be the right thing to do. Given the diversity in learning styles of the learners across cultures (Oxford, 1996), and considering the fact that not all learners in various contexts have the same needs and learning objectives, it cannot be claimed that one type of syllabus in its full-fledged form can cater for the needs of a group of learners in a language program. Therefore, better ways are required to be sought to empower the curriculum developers and syllabus designers to maintain and appreciate the local diversities within the process of syllabus design.

Brown (1995) proposes the mixed syllabuses, in which two or more types of syllabuses are incorporated to form one syllabus. Brown (ibid) viewed syllabuses like situational-topical syllabuses as belonging to this category of syllabuses.

In practice, this can be done in two main ways: incorporating different types of syllabuses in each lesson/unit all throughout the course, or allocating each lesson/unit to one specific type of syllabus. Nonetheless, neither of the aforementioned techniques is seemingly prolific in all contexts. One may also argue that juxtaposition of the syllabi which are rooted in very different theories and have been designed to trigger different types of competences do not result in a coherent syllabus.

A third solution is, thus, required. We would like to argue that, in order to preserve the local identity and cater for the local needs of the learners in a language program, glocalization needs to be reflected in the new plan for the design of the syllabus. Such a plan can be informed by the existing syllabi. It, however, should be anchored on the findings of the research carried out in the local context. As the aim of glocalization is not to totally deny the value of global convergence but to garnish it with the preservation of the local divergence when considered necessary, such a plan can be led by both local needs analysis and global considerations. The key point here is to study the similar contexts closely to gain insights with the potentials of the possible solutions. Affinities in racial, cultural, and political background among various groups of learners can particularly assist and guide the designers in the process of forming a new type of syllabus specially tailored to the needs and goals of a certain cohort of learners. In such a process, the global principles of syllabus design can be investigated and then incorporated in the local. In what has been referred to as the "post method area" in ELT (Kumaravadivelu, 1994), principled eclecticism in all aspects of educational programming seems to be more productive than blindly following the dictated rules that mostly come in a package. To apply glocalization in curriculum and syllabus design, the globally well-grounded principles are required to be applied with a local touch informed by the local studies.

While to some, mostly American, scholars, syllabus design and curriculum development can be used interchangeably (Hall, 2011), in the British usage, syllabus design is not identical to curriculum development and is defined as a specification of the content of a course of instruction, listing what will be taught and tested (Richards, 2001), and providing a rationale for how the content should be selected and ordered (Brown, 1995). The latter group of scholars refers to curriculum development as the totality of content to be taught as well as the goals to be realized and achieved within one educational system (White, 1988). Adopting the latter view, in this paper, we consider curriculum development to have a broader scope and to entail syllabus design, viewing the syllabus as the part of a curriculum related to the decisions pertaining to the content of a program. The principles of curriculum design to be discussed below, therefore, will entail the principles pertaining to syllabus design. Those principles related to the selection and sequencing of the content can be regarded as those of syllabus design. The rest of this paper is dedicated to naming and briefly discussing the ten global principles that possess the potential of functioning as a framework within which curriculum and syllabus designers can make their local decisions in order to have a "glocal" model of curriculum development.
In the present paper, the globalization in the curriculum development has been investigated with respect to persuading the curriculum developers and practitioners to adopt one of the existing curriculum models available in the literature (e.g. the model proposed by Nation and Macalister (2010), or the one proposed by Graves (2000), to name only two). However, as with the process of syllabus design, some problems lie in such pure globalization in curriculum development. As far as the theoretical aspects are concerned, none of the available models seems to offer a complete picture of the process of curriculum design. Moreover, they impose the number and/or sequences of stages in curriculum development to the local designers. Nation and Macalister's (2010) model, for instance, which is one of the most recently designed ones, appears to rely heavily on the role of objectives and goals in curriculum development as it's designers have located the "Goals" in the center of the inner circle in their “Mercedes” symbol shaped model. This over-reliance may lead the developers to adopt an "objective" or "outcome-oriented" approach, as opposed to a "process" one (Littlewood, 2008). An out-come based approach to designing a curriculum is not devoid of drawbacks as practitioners and teachers are prone to be restricted by the objectives set at a superficial level or narrow specification (McKimm, 2009). This can, in turn result in the loss of valuable learning experiences and a plethora of learning opportunities otherwise available through allowing the natural course of interaction between learners and the teacher and among learners themselves. Moreover, the model by Nation and Macalister (2010) does not incorporate polity as defined by Rodgers (1989) as political concerns in a broad sense. Their model, in addition, appears to be based on a separationistic view of phenomena involved in curriculum development. In other words, it might be elicited that the dynamism, nonlinearity, and complexity of EFL curriculum development, stemming partly from the complexity of language learning (Larsen-Freeman, 1997) and partly from the complex nature of curriculum development (Doll, 2008), are not core issues.

Other models are not without their problems either. The models proposed by Murdoch (1989) and Graves (2000), as other instances, do not allow the practitioners to start the process of curriculum development with reference to the requirements of the circumstances. Moreover, Murdoch's (1989) model lacks some of the vital components of curriculum such as the assessment of the learners' performance and learning outcome, and the evaluation of the curriculum itself.

Therefore, as discussed earlier, what is required is localizing the global and opting for glocalization in the process of curriculum development. One way to achieve such glocalization is to apply the global principles, not the models themselves, and to build them into a glocal model designed based on the local expertise, resources, goals, and needs. In other words, to replace globalization by glocalization in curriculum development, we should no longer propose and prescribe models but encourage acting locally within frameworks drawing on global principles.

To do so, the first step would be to identify the global principles and to justify the reasons why they have been considered indispensable and valuable to the glocal model of curriculum. What is listed below as the curriculum development principles is merely a tentative list that can be added into as the result of a more through literature review and/or exploring the findings of locally conducted studies. The ten principles discussed below embed nine globally accepted components or sub-processes of curriculum development along with a suggestion of how their mutual interplay should be recognized by and reflected in glocally-designed models. Needless to say, a thorough and comprehensive discussion of the factors discussed within each principle does not fit into one paper. Thus, it has been tried to introduce the concepts and mention their significance in curriculum models briefly, so that the local designers can apply them according to the requirements of their specific context. The readers can refer to the cited sources to gain more information on the discussed concepts.

**Principle One: A Curriculum Based Theory**

The first principle is basing the curriculum on a sound theory of learning and teaching and, adequately stating the theoretical basis of the decisions made in various processes involved in curriculum design. Such a theory should be guided by research in second language teaching/learning (Nation & Macalister, 2010) and should inform the decisions made in various components of glocally designed curriculum models. Not only does making use of the research findings make the connection between the research and theory of language learning and the practice of designing in a curriculum (Nation & Macalister, ibid) but it also provides a defensible ground for decision makers in different stages throughout the process of designing an educational program. Nation and Macalister (2010) use the
Principle Two: Comprehensive Needs Analysis

"Needs Analysis" is another component which is critical for any curriculum to thrive as it not only can function as the basis for determining goals and objectives (Brown, 1995), but also can change the unidirectional mostly top down direction of curriculum design into a more egalitarian direction in which the learners' voice is heard, if done properly.

As defined by Brown (1995, p. 35), "in general terms, needs analysis refers to the activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the learning needs of a particular group of students". The second principle can be stated as including an ongoing needs analysis into the process of curriculum development. In language learning curriculum development, by the analysis of needs, we mean a thorough investigation of both present (Richterich & Chancerel, 1977) and the target (Munby, 1978) situation of the learners which includes the investigation of what the learners need to use the language and function efficiently, what they lack, and what they wish to learn (Hutchitson & Waters, 1987). Such exploration of needs should also include both the "language" needs (Brown, 1995) of the learners and the linguistic behavior they need to acquire to communicate effectively in the target language (language needs) and the psychological affective "learning" needs (Brown, ibid). Such comprehensive assessment of needs should also embed the gathering data about the learners' felt needs – the needs the learners believe they have- as well as their perceived needs – what the teachers and other stakeholder consider as the learners' need (Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989) which are context sensitive. The strategies the learners should be equipped with to handle the process of learning, their learning needs (Hutchitson & Waters, 1987) should not be ignored either. An effective glocal curriculum model should also include the statement of the criteria and methods for evaluating the means used to analyze the various types of needs mentioned above.

Principle Three: Realistically Defined Goals

Thirdly, curriculums and educational programs are required to be directed towards sound, realistic, and well-grounded goals. Program goals are "general statements concerning desirable and attainable program purposes and aims" based on needs (Brown, 1995, p. 71). Although, in fact, he confines his definition of program goals to the ones derived from analysis of the perceived needs of the learners, we believe a well-carried out needs analysis which takes into account the subjective and felt needs of the learners as well as the perceived ones (Berwick, 1989; Brindley, 1989) can help the designer set more realistic goals. A comprehensive analysis can shed lights on the properness of the set goals with respect to the local milieu. In Iran, for instance, realistically viewed, language learning goals might be far from acquiring a native like oral proficiency, as the context necessitates mastery in written skills. Iranian English learners mostly require English to be to continue their studies; therefore, they need to be equipped with the skills to write papers and take part in international conferences.

The important fact that should not be ignored is the emergent nature of the goals, and thus, goal setting needs to be done dynamically in the process of designing a curriculum. Properly set goals can assist the designers to define and set objectives leading them towards the aim of the program.

Principle Four: Attention to the Milieu of the Curriculum

The forth principle pertains to incorporating a thorough analysis of the context in which the curriculum is to be applied. Such a comprehensive analysis should include not only consideration of the factors related to the situation in which the course will be used and determination of how the course should take account of them, but also consideration of factors associated with the participants (e.g. learners, and teachers) (Nation & Macalister, 2010). Crucial to the effectiveness of this stage, is the way learning situation is defined and the factors taken into consideration when analyzing the situation. Not only should the analysis go beyond the physical setting, but also it should include all the contextual factors affecting the decisions made in different stages of designing a program. Merely analyzing the resources offered or the limitations imposed by the context (such as the time and materials available, the teachers' skill and competence, the technological facilities available in classes, and the learners' motivation and interest) does not offer a complete picture to the curriculum designer. Other contextual factors such as the political and economical status of the participants, "polity" (Rodgers, 1989), and the role the society plays in shaping the participants' beliefs about teaching or learning certain subjects, and the philosophical values of the participants including their moral and religious ideas should also be considered while developing a curriculum. Such polity related factors play a crucial role in determining the content of the materials and course books, in particular. However, in real ELT practices, unfortunately, the local social milieu is ignored and the materials designed for other contexts, often quite with quite different socio-political values are applied in the curriculum. In Iran, for instance, the
Chair to the professional development of the teachers provided that they are motivated by the incorporation of teacher training programs into curriculum development process. Johnson (1989) considered a curriculum inside the curriculum. Therefore, the seventh principle pertains to the teacher training programs is one of the global principles that can be integrated into glocal models. Teacher training has been designed course and the huge role the teachers play in the success or failure of a program, we believe "dynamic assessment" to refer to the evaluation of the learning outcome and the term "evaluation" to talk about the evaluation of the program itself. Here, we would like to argue that both forms of evaluation carried out dynamically by both insiders (e.g. the instructors themselves) and outsiders (e.g. groups of educational inspectors) are essential for a program to flourish. In fact, what is desired is what Weir and Roberts (1994) have termed "a broad approach to evaluation" which encompasses both the accountability of the program, through monitoring the learners' improvement, and the development of the curriculum design process to improve the educational quality of the target program. Especially when it comes to glocalization and EFL curriculum, the success of the curriculum might be evaluated with reference to the local milieu and the polity factors inherent in the educational system in general. Thus, a comprehensive local learners' needs analysis along with consideration of the socio-politico-economical factors in the local learning environment, which shape the stakeholders' expectation from, and definition of, a successful curriculum, can inform development of evaluation criteria.

**Principle Seven: Teacher Training Programs to Make Professional Curriculum**

Given that poor recruitment decisions and procedures can easily neutralize the possible desirable impact of a well-designed course and the huge role the teachers play in the success or failure of a program, we believe "dynamic Teacher Training Programs" should be included in any model. In other words, incorporating teacher-training programs is one of the global principles that can be integrated into glocal models. Teacher training has been considered a curriculum inside the curriculum (Johnson, 1989). Therefore, the seventh principle pertains to the incorporation of teacher training programs into curriculum development process. The teacher training programs can lead to the professional development of the teachers provided that they are motivated by the everyday challenges...
EFL teachers in the local milieu are confronted with. If the training programs fail to interest the teachers and engage them mentally, they are unlikely to lead to any improvement. Thus, the content of such courses and programs needs to be decided with reference to a comprehensive analysis of the local teaching environment. Besides, the solutions proposed in these training sessions should also be congruent with the local realities, constraints, resources, and socio-cultural factors. Therefore, unless the decisions made in this stage are directed by the output of teaching and learning environment analysis stages, little change is expected to occur.

**Principle Eight: Glocally-Centered Content Selection**

In this paper, the proper selection and coherent sequencing of content is identified as the eighth principle in curriculum development. Viewing making reasonable, well-justified decisions about content as one of the crucial parts of curriculum design, Nation and Macalister (2010) have argued that poor content selection results in poor learning despite excellent teaching and learning effort. What is important, and global, with respect to the selection and sequencing of the content is the necessity of making sure that the decisions made at this stage are informed and in line with the output of other stages of design and can be defended and justified. The output of the needs analysis and environment analysis stages can provide the designers with valuable information based on which the glocal content can be selected. To be of use and motivating, content should be chosen with reference to the learners' socio-political, cultural, and ideological norms and values, and thus, the content promoting familial and social values congruent with the religious and cultural norms in Iranian, for instance, would not be welcomed among Iran English learners. Designers can maintain local diversities within this principle as long as the above-mentioned condition pertaining to the content selection is satisfied.

**Principle Nine: Proper Presentation of the Lessons**

The next, and the ninth, principle is deciding upon the proper format and presentation of the lessons. The format of the lessons should be commensurate with the locally shaped learning style and interest of the learners in a way that is attractive and encourages investment. To make globally informed decisions at this stage of curriculum design, the designers of the language programs can benefit from the ten principles proposed by Nation and Macalister (2010). To them, an optimal presentation of the lesson necessitates keeping the learners motivated, including an even balance of meaning-focused input, language-focused learning, and meaning focused output and fluency activities. It also requires providing interesting comprehensible input, providing activities aimed at increasing the learners’ fluency. Nation and Macalister (ibid) have also argued that the learners to produce the language, including language focused learning activities, spending as much time as possible on the learning tasks, promoting the depth of processing, presenting the course in a way that the learners have the most favorable attitudes towards the language, language users, the teacher’s skill in teaching the language, and their chance of success in learning the language positively affect the presentation of the lesson. Finally providing the opportunity for learners to work with the learning material in ways that most suits their individual learning style has also been known to lead to optimal presentation of the lesson (Nation & Macalister, 2010). By the same token, the principles of language teaching put forward by Ellis (2005) can provide guidelines for the curriculum developers at this stage.

**Principle Ten: The Interplay between the Components in the Glocal Model**

Finally, the tenth principle is the bi-directionality principle which can be gained through the recognizing the interplay between and the mutual effect of the components mentioned in the above principles when designing a glocal curriculum model. The glocal models of curriculum should be designed in such a way that all participants including syllabus designers, material designers, teachers, learners, and even other stakeholders like publishers, parents… can have the opportunity to be heard and taken into accounts. The glocal models should be designed in a way that they are not referred to as “top down” and unidirectional. This can be achieved through adding a feedback loop among all the components of the model, so that the output of each component can feed into and inform the decisions made in other stages or components of curriculum design. Another way to prevent a unidirectional decision making process in glocally-designed curriculums would be to avoid prescribing any pre-specified order in the selection and application of abovementioned stages.

Having named and briefly discussed the above principles, we should also note that the order of the presentation of principles in this paper by no means reflects their importance, and, as it was mentioned earlier, the above list can be added to as a result of further studies in educational program development.

**CONCLUSION**

In the present paper, it was argued that considering the diverse consequences of globalization in syllabus design process for people in different parts of the world (Schaeffer, 2003), striving for altering globalization process into the glocalization seems plausible in such countries.
Besides, such glocalization is required in the process of curriculum development and syllabus design. This can be achieved through a sort of principled eclecticism in the form of ten principles namely: basing the curriculum on a defensible theory of learning and teaching, incorporating needs analysis to the model, analyzing the socio-economic as well as the political context, setting goals and objectives, incorporating ongoing learner and program evaluation, including teacher training programs, dynamically developing and evaluating the materials, properly selecting and organizing the content, properly presenting of the lessons, and considering the interplay of various components of the model. The aforementioned principles can serve as a framework within which curriculum and syllabus designers can maintain the local divergence. It is argued that as long as the global principles are not violated, local diversities can be maintained in curriculum development so that the outcome would be a "glocally designed" model.

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ABSTRACT

Besides putting forward an account of the empirical facts of language, a theory that carves to illuminate language from a biolinguistic perspective should aspire to an elegant corporation of linguistic phenomena with other known cognitive capacities and about the essence of human brain architecture. That is, biolinguistics seeks to shed light on the specifically biological nature of human language focusing on five foundational questions: (1) what are the properties of the language phenotype? (2) How does language ability grow and mature in individuals? (3) How is language put to use? (4) How is language implemented in the brain? (5) What evolutionary processes led to the emergence of language? In an endeavor to address the above longstanding questions and touch upon the current issues in biolinguistics, the present study basically focuses on genetics, modern genomics, and minimalism, while raising challenges for future research.

KEYWORDS: Biolinguistics, language phenotype, genetics, genomics, minimalism.

INTRODUCTION

Modern Biolinguistics aroused as a result of the marriage between biologists and linguists half a century ago. Amongst the distinguished scholars who contributed to the field one can mention initially Eric Lenneberg and Noam Chomsky, and later Salvador Luria exemplified in Lenneberg’s Biological Foundations of Language (Lenneberg, 1967). In 1974, at an MIT international meeting, called “Biolinguistics”, Piattelli-Palmarini launched this interdisciplinary field further. Nowadays, new books and papers scrutinizing the domain have loomed up (e.g. Jenkins 2000, 2004) and Givon (2002) who has pondered the domain from a new window. What is more, worldwide conferences in consonant with the launch of a topical journal, Biolinguistics and foundation of an international network on Biolinguistics.

Amongst the many questions brought up from the biological point of view one stands out. That is, the extent to which the declared principles of language are exceptional to this cognitive system. Besides, an even more foundational question in biolinguistics is how much of language can be given a principled explanation. The effort to
investigate such questions happened to be called the “Minimalist Program” recently. Answers to these questions can shed light on not only the nature and functioning of organisms but also on probing their growth and evolution.

As the co-founder of modern evolutionary theory, Alfred Russel Wallace, asserts, language faculty is one constituent of what he called “man’ intellectual and moral nature”. In opposition to Darwin, the other founder of evolutionary theory, Wallace claims that human faculties cannot be illuminated just in terms of variation and natural selection, but desires other sources as well including gravitation, cohesion and others at the absence of which the material universe cannot abide.

It is an agreed upon fact that, putting the human intellectual capacity aside, the faculty of language is crucial to it. Based on the paleoanthropologist Ian Tattersall, the invention of language provokes the blossoming of human capacity in the evolutionary record. However, the question of language evolution should be dealt with through inspecting the organizations of disparate precursors into the faculty of language, conceivably arising from a modest genetic event that tended towards an essential innovation.

Salvador Luria in consonant with Frncois Jacob were the compelling advocates of the view that uniqueness of language doesn’t lie in its role as a communicative system as it does in symbolizing and evoking cognitive images and mental construction of accomplishable worlds.

In the same vein, in biolinguistic domain, from the very outset the view of “modular nature of learning” was adopted. In the sense that in all animals, there exists a kind of instinct to learn in specific ways. However, this modular view doesn’t predetermine that the elements of the module are unprecedented to it.

According to Chomsky (2004), regarding the language faculty as a biological system, three factors interfere with the growth of language in the individual:

**Genetic Factors:** The identical principles across species, e.g. UG. The rationale behind children’s language acquisition uniformly at the same level of complexity.

**Experience:** The origin of variation within a narrow range.

**Principles** not unique to the faculty of language.

In line with the aforementioned statements I will elaborate on some related concepts in detail and introduce some new ones.

**BIOLINGUISTIC REHABILITATION**

It is the nature of each novel science to enjoy a temporary period of popularity. The same proves to be true for biolinguistics. However, there are many a factors that contribute to the revival of this field in the world of science. What these two periods (before biolinguistic revival and after that) share is addressing some foundational questions:

a. What accounts for linguistic competence in humans?
b. How does this capability cultivate in the individual?
c. How is this competence put to use?
d. How is this qualification accomplished in brain structures?
e. How did this competence evolve in human species?

Current biolinguistics is still involved with these questions. However, it advantages from recent improvements in different areas of linguistics and biology. Those breakthroughs are supposed to triumph over the old hindrances at the outset of biolinguistic appearance. Let us now delineate some of these ameliorations concisely.

Conceivably, the most fundamental progress in biolinguistics has been the exploration of the FOXP2 gene and subsequently, its interactome. Apparently, FOXP2 is not the language gene. Nonetheless, this gene in consonant with the ones with which it interacts, accommodate the concrete example of the genetic basis of language (Lenneberg 1967). It is where biolinguistics connects with the fervid genomic research in biology. FOXP2 experiments with other species yielded the result that in deed, there are many parallelisms between human speech and birdsong at various levels. Furthermore, the discovery of FOXP2 is apt to illuminate disparate linguistic deficits and disorders.
Comparably noticeable in the reappearance of biolinguistic concerns has been the outlook modification in comparative psychology. That is, based on Chomsky, Hauser, and Fitch (2002), investigation into the essence of human language may yield more rewarding outcomes if one differentiates between faculty of the language in the narrow sense (FLN), that which is unique to language and a faculty of language in the broad sense (FLB) that which is not.

In the same vein of utmost importance is an advanced synthesis in biology, the one that resonates strongly with the anti-behaviorist; innatist stance in Chomskyan linguistics.

A forth factor that expedited the reemergence of biolinguistics is the so-called problem of “interdisciplinarity” in the context of language, particularly in the context of neurolinguistics. To put it in other words, the two disciplines of linguistics and neuroscience are deprived of a common level of representation at which to esquire into processes and fundamental elements. This successively, averts the formulation of biologically grounded categorical descriptions of language processes in the brain.

The fifth factor that contributed to the renaissance of biolinguistics is the formulation of a “minimalist program” in theoretical linguistics.

In the words of Chomsky (2007):

At the time [pretty much throughout the history of generative grammar], it seemed that FL must be rich, highly structured, and substantially unique. [...] Throughout the modern history of generative grammar, the problem of determining the character of FL has been approached “from top down”: How much must be attributed to UG to account for language acquisition? The M[iminalist] P[rogram] seeks to approach the problem “from bottom up”: How little can be attributed to UG while still accounting for the variety of I-languages attained.

Minimalist ideas if cultivated firmly, can wind up the governing of isolationism in theoretical linguistics. It promises to reconcile linguistics with other branches of cognitive (and biological) sciences.

**THE GENETICS AND EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE: PROMISES AND PITFALLS OF MODERN GENOMICS**

Genetics and evolutionary analysis have benefited from comparative approach. In the sense that, through inspecting other species, parallel affinities and clashes have been instituted. Nevertheless, in the case of language this approach doesn’t seem to bear any fruit as no other animal species appears to be endowed with language phenotype. As a result, what are the achievements of classical and modern genomics about language’s genetic and evolutionary properties? This question has been addressed from two novel lines of research.

One approach seeks to investigate the systematic heritability of the subcomponents of language via twin studies, uncovering a closer coincidence between syntax and sound structure (phonological) abilities and fine motor control than syntax and the lexicon. Put it differently, for some very particular syntactic ability, they may be able to identify a candidate gene set correlated to this trait.

Another line of research has opted for a more explicit genetic and functional inspection of language. This was the discovery of FOXP2 gene by researchers as the one supposedly linked to language ((Hurst et al. 1990, Vargha-Khadem et al. 1995, Fisher et al. 1998, Lai et al. 2000, Lai et al. 2001, Vargha-Khadem et al. 2005). Initially, this exploration enjoyed a magnificent popularity as the one genetic window into human language development and evolution. It was hoped that, this gene could be implemented in animal studies beside human ones. In spite of this, such discovery didn’t prove to be fruitful in the central computational aspects of human language. Based on Vernes et al (2006), a study on a family with language disorder revealed that FOXP2 affects the regions involved in general planning of fine motor output, sensorimotor integration, and multimodal sensory processing, as opposed to circuitry controlling mouth and lower face movements.
Furthermore, FOXP2 discovery is regarded as the starting point of modern evolutionary biolinguistics. There are two functional amino acid differences between FOXP2 and its variant in chimpanzees. Consequently, such accelerated evolutionary change led to human segregation from other species, and hence the emergence of language in Homo sapiens.

The researchers’ understanding of FOXP2 has also undergone a change. From a one phenotype picture, FOXP2 has turned into a molecular network (Fisher and Schorff in press). In addition, the relation between FOXP2 and procedural memory has been confirmed (Ullman and Pierport, 2005). But as researchers assert, such ever-increasing understandings of FOXP2 are just advances not departure. Since they serve as foundations for future genomics research about language. While there is a long path to pave for identifying the causal links of this gene to language impairment, its exploration provides an extremely worthwhile example of how to overcome the obstacles on the way of resolving the complicated human language phenotype.

MINIMALISM AND MODERN BIOLINGUISTICS

Minimalism as proposed by Noam Chomsky lately endeavors to study the internal architecture of the mind in general and language in particular. In other words, it seeks to investigate how much of language can be given a principled explanation. Looking through the steps followed on the way to constituent structures creation, one finds out that it is where biolinguistics links to minimalist program. In the sense that, firstly, lexical items are merged externally; next due to internal merge, movement is generated and constituent structures are formulated. Making use of this mechanism, people are able to combine words into infinite strings. If all this are on the right track, then biolinguistics enquires to ascertain the principles underlying mental recursion.

According to the perspective of several linguists (Boeckx 2006, Hornstein 2009, among others), the minimalist program brings about an opportunity to address “granularity mismatch” proposed by Poeppel. That is, as mentioned previously, different levels of representations used in linguistics and neural science lead to vague metaphors linking brain structures to linguistic components. In addition, it is in line with the new themes in biology like optimization, specificity and laws of form based on Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini (2010). It adopts a bottom-up approach to cognitive faculties like the new comparative psychology.

Moreover, nowadays, one central theme stands out in minimalism. In the sense that, there is a basic asymmetry between the way syntax subserves the sound and the meaning components it interfaces with (Chomsky 2007, 2008; Berwick and Chomsky 2011).

Based on Eric Reuland (2011), before the emergence of minimalist program, the linguistic principles were too language specific. They were considered as firmly modular in nature, hence, not welcoming the interaction between language, biology, and cognition until the advent of minimalism.

Summarizing, the minimalist program, framed within the circumferences of linguistic theory in line with other forces, resulted in the reemergence of biolinguistic concerns. In addition, as Jackendoff (2002) claims, minimalism guarantees to stop the “separation” of linguistics from other branches of cognitive (and biological) sciences.

CONCLUSIONS

The breakthroughs witnessed in theoretical linguistics, comparative ethology, genetics, and evolution of language adds to our knowledge of biological foundation of language and paves the ground to upcoming discoveries in biolinguistics. Needless to say, the recent achievements and theories will be modified in the light of ongoing research. The significance of this review lies in its representation of how the study of language can converge with other scientific disciplines like genetics and biology.

Put differently, linguists can contribute to biolinguistics a great deal: they can provide the elements that researchers from other fields must seek at the neural and genetic levels. However, it is only feasible if the linguists are willing to turn into genuine biolinguists.

Although minimalist program has proved to be illuminating in biolinguistics, further neurobiological experiments are necessary. Moreover, due to the promises and pitfalls of modern genomics, additional lines of research are required in order to discern the pathways from genes to linguistic phenomena. Addressing justified questions and creating
hypotheses that are testable on diverse populations would lead us to more thorough understanding of the biology of human language.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As Dobzhansky (1973) puts forward, nothing in language makes sense except in the context of the biology of grammar. The renowned figures like Chomsky and Lenneberg have initiated the effort to institutionalize linguistics as a natural science and instantiate the biolinguistics enterprise as a title for disparate courses and workshops. Due to this, the researchers in the field hope that the term biolinguistics will make its way into institutional categories.

In spite of many problems of communication and misunderstandings arisen by the uniquely interdisciplinary essence of biolinguistics, there is a possibility of calling for a growing community of scientists of diverse backgrounds. For instance, linguists, evolutionary biologists, molecular biologists, neuroscientists, anthropologists, psychologists, computer scientists, (language or speech and hearing) pathologists, and so on. This way, through cooperation and mutual respect hurdles can be mastered and satisfactory outcomes will be achieved.

REFERENCES


ABSTRACT

Human beings are recognized as social beings, communicating with each other in order to fulfill their needs. To become social members with specific abilities, children acquire some pragmatic skills from early childhood; in other words, they become socialized first by direct and indirect helps of their caregivers and later on by learning from their environment. So caregivers who are mostly children’s parents play an important role at the first stages of children’s pragmatic development and their socialization. In this study, the pragmatic development of 26 children (4 to 5 years old boys and girls) was analyzed by means of a pragmatic profile especially prepared for every day communication skills of children by Dewart and Summers (1995). The information needed for the profile along with the family’s educational and economical information was gathered through several interviews with each child’s parent. The obtained results showed that parents’ educational level and also the family’s economical condition can be among the factors that affect the socialization process and the pragmatic competence.

KEYWORDS: Pragmatic skill; Socialization; Culture; First language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

Social life and social communication are among the features which distinguish human beings from other types of creatures. The key factor that enables humans to communicate is the ability to talk and to interact with each other. In fact all normal people learn at least one language and use that language to communicate with others in order to convey their intended meanings or to fulfill their needs. Using linguistic abilities for communicational purposes in social contexts is related to the field of pragmatics.

Yule (1996) defined pragmatics as the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms. In the Handbook of Pragmatics, Horn and Ward (2004) mentioned joint attention, common ground, convention and contrast, speech acts, speaker intentions, taking account of the addressee, taking turns and politeness as eight main aspects of pragmatic development. They claimed that by age six children have acquired considerable knowledge about how to use the language and they can also make inferences from what other people do or do not say. Mainly parents are those who guide children and help them to acquire these pragmatic skills. According to Verschueren (1999), pragmatics studies mainly focus on people’s use of language which is either in form of behavior or in form of social action. He further described pragmatics as a general socio-cultural phenomenon. Therefore pragmatic development and socialization are two related factors and one cannot ignore one concept while considering the role of the other.

From the first moment that a child enters the first social group (i.e. the family) until s/he grows up and communicate with different people in different situations, s/he learns how to interact with other people; i.e. how to become socialized. So the process of pragmatic development and socialization start from early childhood. When children learn a language, not only do they learn the semantic or syntactic features of that language but also they learn how to use that language in different situations. As it is mentioned in Bavin (2009), pragmatic competence consists of more than one skill because the language is also used for more than one purpose. Considering this fact, Bavin continues to
say that although acquiring pragmatic competences is difficult, children learn them by helps of their caregivers whether in school or in the family. In Bavin’s words: “it can be said that caregivers ‘socialize’ language” (p.348).

Blum Kulka (1997) defined pragmatic socialization as a way in which children are socialized to use language in context in an appropriate social and cultural way. When children start learning the basic pragmatic competence, they become able to participate in early social communication with their caregivers and little by little they expand their acquisition by means of some communication processes. According to Ochs (1990), these socialization processes are divided into explicit and implicit types. The former type is a process in which the social norms of the society are directly taught by the caregivers while in the latter process the children learn how to use the language by observing and interacting with other society members.

As Fletcher and Macwhinney (1995) cited from Ochs and Schieffelin, although cultural factors can be neglected in grammatical learning of a language, no one can deny the important role of culture in the process of socialization and in children pragmatic development. While according to Universal Grammar theory of language learning, all children have the capacity to learn a language, and they do so in similar stages regardless of their culture, the case is not the same for pragmatic development or for the process of socialization. Culture of each country is considered as a unique characteristic of that country and even within one society there are families with different sub-cultures. Therefore children are prepared in different family environments to acquire pragmatic skills and become ready to engage in social activities.

As Bavin (2009) mentioned, pragmatic skills play an important role in children’s lives and since some aspects of preschoolers and young children pragmatic behavior are indicator of their future achievements, therefore the researchers hoped that the answers to the research questions of this study may shed light on the cases dealing with pragmatic developments in the process of first language acquisition.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
Based on Li’s (2012) studies, most of the pragmatic socialization research has been on child’s developmental pragmatics and the interactions between normal or abnormal children and their caregivers. The following are some of these studies along with their findings:

In a study by Vasques et al. (2013), four and six year old children were observed to discover whether they use their pragmatic competence to learn from others and produce valid labels for novel objects or not. They observed that four year olds used this pattern for quality maxims while six year olds follow the learning pattern for both quality and relation maxims. The researchers found that children use the pragmatic history of other people when they are faced with new information. This study reveals the important role of people who are training young children (i.e. caregivers, teachers, family, etc.) especially in the process of novel word learning.

Regarding pragmatic comprehension, a study was conducted by Loukusa et al. (2007) within a relevance theory framework. The results of the study showed that age of children had a direct relationship with their ability to use contextual information in comprehension which in turn supported the processing model which is suggested by relevance theory. As it is revealed from these studies, caregivers and age are among the effective factor that may result in different pragmatic competence outcomes. The above mentioned studies and many studies of these types observed the subjects, children or the caregivers, for a rather short period of time, since learning the pragmatic skills is an ongoing process, the findings of longitudinal studies are of great value. The following information is taken from the observation of two researchers who study the socio-cultural aspects of pragmatic development:

In ‘Dinner Talk’ by Blum Kulka (1997), a six year old longitudinal cross-cultural study was performed in which cultural patterns of socialization used by American vs. Israeli vs. American-Israeli family members at dinner time were observed and analysed. The observation revealed that during the dinner conversations, meta-pragmatic comments used by the parents had effective role in the process of children’s language acquisition as well as their pragmatic development. Another fact revealed in the study was that the utilization of pragmatic aspects, such as turn taking, by family members was representative of the society they lived in and the dominant culture of that society. Finally by comparing the socialization process of the three groups of the study and also by considering other cultural and linguistic factors, the researcher made so many conclusions among which was the fact that parents listen more to their children while dinner talk compared to their listening to their own parents. This shows that almost in all cultures and countries, parents play an important role in children’s socialization.
In another study by Ochs (1988) which is presented in a book entitled ‘Culture and Language Development’, children in Samoa were observed and interviewed very closely. Ochs believed that language acquisition and the socialization process occur along each other; therefore, she observed and examined both cognitive and socio-cultural features of language acquisition. Ochs found out that language could socialize children and also by living in a society child learn to use the language. Based on her results and findings, socialization and language acquisition were two related concepts and one could not hold to one while ignoring the other.

As it was shown in the available literature, parents play an important role in children’s socialization and also their pragmatic competence process. In this study the family’s educational and economical situation will be considered in details to see whether they can affect children’s socialization or pragmatic competence process.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
Considering the importance of caregivers’ role in the process of children’s socialization and pragmatic competence, this study takes economical situation and educational level as two from many cultural setting developers (Hood et al., 2005) and tries to answer the following research questions through a qualitative research method:

- What are the effects of parents’ education on children’s pragmatic competence and socialization?
- What are the effects of a family’s economical conditions on children’s pragmatic competence and socialization?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
There is some evidence from the studies of Dale (1991) and Camaioni et al. (1991), that parents have reliable and valid information about the process of the language development of their children. The participants of this study were the parents of 26 children (15 girls, 11 boys, who were 4 to 5 years old). To choose the participants of the study, first about 8 kindergartens in Shiraz were selected. From among these kindergartens, three of them accepted to take part in this research and allowed the researchers to interview with teachers and children’s parents with the condition to remain anonymous. From the children attending these three kindergartens, only 29 parents accepted to take part in the research and 3 of them changed their mind at the time of the interview and considered the questions too personal to be answered. While parents’ answers to interview questions were used to evaluate children’s pragmatic competence and socialization level, teachers’ interviews aimed on confirming the answers provided by children’s parents.

Instruments
The instrument used in this study in order to gather data and then to analyze the data, was an interview taken from the revised edition manual of ‘The Pragmatics Profile of Everyday Communication Skills in Children’ prepared by Dewart and Summers (1995) (Appendix A). All of the questions of this interview were first asked from children’s parents and then were asked from children’s teachers to make sure that parents’ answers were accurate. The questions were all translated into Persian by the researchers and to make sure that the translated version was as reliable as the original version, it was double-checked by two English teachers. In cases that there was a difference between researchers’ translation and English teachers’ translation, revisions were made.

The profile’s questions focus on three major aspects of the development of pragmatics: development of communicative functions, child’s response to communication and child’s participation in interaction and conversation. The profile’s information about the major developments of children between 4 to 5 years old in each of the above mentioned areas is presented at the end of the study (Appendix B).

Dewart and Summers (1995) also highlighted that the profile adopts a descriptive, qualitative approach. They added that reliability and validity of the profile are approached in terms of the use of the profile with an individual child (i.e. reliability is the consistency of an interviewee’s responses and can be checked by asking a similar question again at a later time while validity can be obtained by obtaining information from additional sources, for example checking the answers with the child’s teacher).
Procedure of the study
At the beginning of the study, 8 kindergartens were randomly selected for the study. Only the principals of three of them agreed to cooperate in this study. After getting permission from the principals, the researchers talked with the teachers of children between 4 to 5 years old and asked them to give the research participation request letters to children’s parents. In the request letter, the aim and the process of the study and also the estimated time of the interview for parents were explained in detail and parents were assured that their personal information (e.g. name, phone number, number of children, etc.) would be kept confidential. 29 parents from the three kindergartens accepted to participate in the study. Then based on their free time, dates of interviews were specified and announced to them.

At the time of the interview, the pragmatic profile questions that were all translated to simple Persian along with some questions about the parents’ educational level and their average income were asked from each child parent. The parents were provided with relevant examples to better understand the purpose of the questions. 3 parents refused to answer the interview questions at the time of the study and claimed that they prefer not to talk about their personal issues. Gathering the information from 26 parents took about four months due to kindergarten special programs on special occasions, the delayed arrival of parents and therefore shortage of time, bad weather and etc.; then the parents’ answers to questions of interview were checked with the relevant teachers to avoid the probable inaccurate emotional answers of parents.

After gathering the necessary information, the pragmatic profile’s milestones of the relevant age were used to determine the characteristics of each child’s pragmatic competence. Then the children’s profile results and answers to the 46 questions of the interview were grouped based on parents’ educational level (with or without university degree) and parents’ average monthly income (below 1 million tomans, above 1 million tomans), respectively. Then the findings of each group were presented in a qualitative form and were illustrated separately in different tables. The results of the obtained data are presented in the following.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS
As it was mentioned earlier, the profile used in this study adopts a descriptive, qualitative approach. Regarding this fact, the parents’ answers to interview questions were analyzed and then considering the milestone for the development of pragmatics for children of 4 to 5 years old (Appendix B), the following results were observed:

According to the data obtained from the interviews, in case of communicative functions almost all the children had shown an acceptable pragmatic competence in fifteen out of eighteen categories. The categories in which the pragmatic skills were not fully acquired were: rejecting, greeting on arrival and on departure and commenting. In case of rejecting, 19 (out of 26) of the children reject the undesirable situation or thing in a rather polite way while in 7 cases shouting and crying were reported. In case of greeting on arrival, 2 of the children had the habit of hiding and in case of greeting on departure, one of the children had the habit of crying. Regarding commenting on disappearance, 6 of the children were reported to start crying or nagging.

To compare children based on their parents’ educational level, first an educational categorization was made (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number of children</th>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Educated parents</th>
<th>Educated father</th>
<th>Educated mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21 (80.76%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>3 (11.53%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This categorization consisted of 3 groups:

1. 21 Children with both parents educated in university
2. 2 children with their father educated and their mother with no university education
3. 3 children with their mother educated and their father with no university education

From among the 7 children who did not acquire ‘rejecting’ skill, 3 were from the first group, 2 from the second and finally 2 were from the third group (Table 2).
Table 2: Frequency of children who do not acquire communicative functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children problem</th>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Educated parents</th>
<th>Educated father</th>
<th>Educated mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>with rejecting</td>
<td>7 (26.92%)</td>
<td>3 (11.53%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with greeting</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On departure</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with commenting</td>
<td>6 (23.07%)</td>
<td>3 (11.53%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the children who did not acquire greeting on arrival was from the second group while the other one was from the first group. The only child who cried on departure was from the first group.

Both children of the second group, one of the third group and three children of the first group had difficulty with commenting on disappearance.

Considering the abilities in ‘response to communication’ category, all the abilities were acquired by the children except ‘responding to no and negotiation’. 9 of the children did not have the proper pragmatic skill of their age to respond to no. It was reported that crying and repetition of the same word or phrase were used instead of the proper action. Both children of the second group along with 7 of the first group were those who need further instructions for responding to ‘no’ and for negotiation (Table 3).

Table 3: Frequency of children who do not acquire response to communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children with responding to no and negotiation problem</th>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Educated parents</th>
<th>Educated father</th>
<th>Educated mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 (34.61%)</td>
<td>7 (26.92%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In case of interaction and conversation, it seemed that conversational breakdown was the only problematic category (Table 4).

Table 4: Frequency of children who do not acquire interaction and conversation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children with conversational breakdown problem</th>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Educated parents</th>
<th>Educated father</th>
<th>Educated mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 (15.38%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One child of the first group, both of the second group and one child of the third group were reported to have no concentration and therefore they were not able to fully understand the conversation.

Considering the contextual variation category, the differences aroused in pragmatic skills related to peer- interaction and books as a context for communication (Table 5).

Table 5: Frequency of children who do not acquire contextual variation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children with peer interaction problem</th>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Educated parents</th>
<th>Educated father</th>
<th>Educated mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 (30.76%)</td>
<td>6 (11.53%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
<td>1 (3.84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children with problem of accepting books as a context for communication</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The only children who did not show an interest in books were the two children of group two. In case of peer interaction, the data revealed that 5 of the children tried to be dominant (one from the second and 4 from the first group), two of them preferred to play alone (one from the first and one from the third group), 4 of them joined with enjoyment (one from second and 3 from the first group), 3 of them suggested an activity (from the first group), one of them clung to an adult (from the first group) and 11 of them play alongside others (2 from the third group and 9 from the first group).

To compare the children from an economical view point, the children were divided into three groups (Table 6):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of children</th>
<th>Average income of 1 million toman</th>
<th>Average income more than 1 million toman</th>
<th>Average income more than 2 million toman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children with educated parents</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16 (61.53%)</td>
<td>7 (26.92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children with educated father</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children with educated mother</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (7.69%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Living in a family with less than the monthly average income of 1 million tomans (N=16).
b) Living in a family with more than the monthly average income of 1 million tomans (N= 7).
c) Living in a family with more than the monthly average income of 2 million tomans (N= 3).

It was revealed that both children of the former second group along with one of the first groups’ child were placed in the economical group c. Children who were in group b, were all in the former first group. And finally group a consisted of two children of the former third group in addition to the rest of the first group’s children.

CONCLUSION
Discussion and conclusion
Similar to the findings of Vasques et al. (2013) and Loukusa et al. (2007), the results of this study also indicated that children learn from their caregivers and people around them. In the present study, children with educated parents, especially with educated mothers, showed better results in pragmatic competence and also in becoming socialized. Therefore similar to Vasques et al. and Loukusa et al.’s findings, it was revealed that children are affected by their caregivers and people who are around them (i.e. their parents).

Along with the results of the study by Blum Kulka (1997), the results of the present study highlighted that the role of parents in children’s socialization cannot be neglected. The present study also showed that factors such as education or economical situation of parents, as the most important caregivers, would affect children’s early pragmatic competence and also their socialization.

An in depth analysis of the data gathered from this study showed that the two children who were in families with the most monthly income and who had an educated father and an uneducated mother, had less acquired the pragmatic competence and the socialization skills of their age. The common characteristic of these children was the use of crying in any undesirable condition.

Just one of the children who had an educated mother along with an uneducated father showed difficulties in more than two pragmatic skills. This child was placed in economical group a.

The pragmatic competence difficulties of the rest of the children were in case of just one or two pragmatic skills.

Considering the results of the study the following conclusions were made:

- Parents’ education, especially mother’s education, can affect children’s socialization process and also children’s pragmatic competence.
- Children who live in families with better economical conditions, learn the pragmatic skills related to tolerance of unwanted situations later than those children of their age who live in families with average economical conditions.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
The participants of this study were parents and teachers of 26 children of 4 to 5 years old in Shiraz, Iran. In this study only the effects educational level and economical situation of parents on the socialization process and pragmatic
competence of children were observed. It is recommended that the future studies consider the role of other parents’ characteristics on children’s pragmatic competence. It is also recommended that future studies analyze a greater number of subjects if possible.

REFERENCES

Appendices
Appendix A. A brief list of interview questions taken from the pragmatic competence profile

<p>| Questions of Communicative functions |  |
|--------------------------------------|  |
| <strong>1</strong> How does (child’s name) usually get your attention? (To Self) |  |
| <strong>2</strong> Attention Directing | If you and (child’s name) were going along the street or walking in a park and (he/she) saw something interesting, what would (child’s name) be likely to do? (To Other things) |
| <strong>3</strong> Requesting | If you were in the kitchen and (child’s name) saw something (he/she) wanted to eat that was out of reach, how would (he/she) let you know? (Request for Object) |
| <strong>4</strong> Requesting | How does (child’s name) let you know if (he/she) wants to be picked up? (Request for Action) |
| <strong>5</strong> Requesting | If (child’s name) needs your help, for example, if (he/she) was on a toy on wheels and got stuck, or needed straps undone to get out of the buggy, what is (he/she) likely to do? (Request for Assistance) |
| <strong>6</strong> Requesting | If you were bouncing (child’s name) up and down on your lap and (he/she) wanted you to do it again, how would (he/she) let you know? (Request for Recurrence) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>If (child’s name) notices something new at home, how does (he/she) ask about it? (Request for Information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>If (child’s name) is at the table and you are giving (him/her) some food that (he/she) doesn’t want, what is (he/she) likely to do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>If a familiar person comes to your home, how does (child’s name) usually react? (Greeting on Arrival)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>What does (child’s name) do when someone is going away? (Greeting on Departure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>If (child’s name) is enjoying something, how does (he/she) show it? (Pleasure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>If (child’s name) is hurt or upset by something, how does (he/she) let you know? (Upset)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>If you are trying to help (child’s name) do something like get dressed and (he/she) wants to do it without help, how does (he/she) let you know? (Asserting Independence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>When (child’s name) identifies something (he/she) recognizes, how does (he/she) give it a name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>If you are putting things away and (child’s name) sees something (he/she) is interested in, what type of comment might (he/she) make? (Comment on Object)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>If (child’s name) notices that something has gone from where (he/she) would usually expect it to be, what sort of comment would (he/she) make? (Comment on Disappearance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>If something happened while you weren’t around (for example, something got broken, someone got hurt), how would (child’s name) let you know about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>If you want to get (child’s name) attention, how do you do it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>If you are sitting close to (child’s name) and talking to (him/her) how does (he/she) generally respond?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>If you point to something you want (child’s name) to look at, what does (he/she) usually do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>When you are speaking to (child’s name), how do you know that (he/she) realizes that you are speaking to (him/her)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>If you give (child’s name) an instruction, such as ‘Go and get your shoes’, then how does (he/she) respond? (Response to Request for Action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>If you ask (child’s name) for information, for example, ‘What have you been doing?’ how is (he/she) likely to respond? (Response to Request for Information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>How does (child’s name) react to something like ‘Round and round the garden’ or a favorite action-rhyme?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>What kind of things make (child’s name) laugh?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 26   | a) If you have to say ‘no’ to (child’s name) how does (he/she) usually respond?  
   b) If you say ‘in a minute’ how does (child’s name) respond? |
<p>| 27   | Questions of Interaction and conversation |
| 28   | When you and (child’s name) are playing or interacting together, how does (he/she) take part? |
| 29   | If (child’s name) ever starts up a conversation or a little game with you, how does (he/she) do it? |
| 30   | When a conversation or game gets started, how does it keep going? |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversational Breakdown</td>
<td>When a conversation between you and (child’s name) gets into difficulties, what is the usual reason for it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversational Repair</td>
<td>If (child’s name) is trying to tell you something and you haven’t understood, what does (he/she) do about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for Clarification</td>
<td>If (child’s name) doesn’t understand something that is said to (him/her), how does (he/she) show it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminating an interaction</td>
<td>How does an interaction between you usually end?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhearing Conversation</td>
<td>How does (child’s name) react to conversations that (he/she) overhears?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining a Conversation</td>
<td>If (child’s name) ever tries to join in a conversation that other people are having, how does (he/she) go about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of Contextual Variation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Are there people that (child’s name) likes to be with or talk to more than others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>Are there situations in which (child’s name) is more communicative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>At what times of day is (child’s name) most likely to be communicative?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) What things does (child’s name) like to talk about?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Are there times when (child’s name) will ask questions about abstract ideas such as God, death, how the world began? What sort of things does he/she discuss?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books as a Context for Communication</td>
<td>How does (child’s name) respond to books?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Language in Play</td>
<td>When (child’s name) is playing, what kind of talking goes on or what kind of sounds is (he/she) making?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Interaction</td>
<td>When (child’s name) is with other children, how does (he/she) take part?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with Social Conventions</td>
<td>To what extent does (child’s name) show an awareness of needing to be polite and fitting in with social conventions to do with talking?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B. The development of pragmatics for children of four to seven years.

Children characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicative functions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learns to express intentions in a variety of forms to fit the communicative needs of the listener and politeness constraints. Begins to use indirect requests. Uses language to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• gain and hold adults’ attention, for example ‘know what?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• give information;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• seek information from other people;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• give instructions to peers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• state rules;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• negotiate and bargain;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• express a range of feelings/emotions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• state beliefs and opinions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• taunt and threaten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begins to tell jokes (punch line often misses the point). Uses narrative to report experiences, complain about others’ actions and to tell simple stories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response to communication</th>
<th>Understanding of indirect requests developing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning to rely less on context for understanding, for example, in classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Requests clarification when hasn’t understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takes instructions from peers and responds to their questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Becomes able to treat language as an object of analysis and to use language to talk about language (metalinguistic awareness).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoys jokes but doesn’t fully understand play on words/puns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listens to extended stories from books and can read simple ones.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction and conversation</th>
<th>Can initiate conversation by verbal strategies, for example, vocative + comment or question.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Becomes more able to communicate with strangers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With peers, talk may alternate between private talk to self and talk to partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can participate in pretend conversations and switch from one speech code to another when taking stereotypical roles in play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will respond to things overheard in other people’s conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rapid change of conversational topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When child is not understood, tends to repeat without modification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDE ON SPEAKING IN ACADEMIC CONTEXTS: A CASE OF IRANIAN EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
This study aimed at investigating the interlaced relationship between attitude and motivation on the one hand, and speaking within the context of Iranian EFL university students on the other hand. The participants of the study consisted of 65 freshmen majoring in English Translation, English Literature, and Electrical Engineering at the University of Isfahan. Three instruments were used to gather the needed data: Oxford Placement Test (OPT) for homogenizing the students in terms of their English proficiency level, two subscales of AMTB (Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery) designed by Gardner (1985), to measure students’ motivation and attitude toward learning English, a kind of indirect interview with the 65 chosen students in order to assess their speaking ability. Analysis of the results revealed that there were significant differences between the students with positive attitude and those with negative attitude regarding their speaking ability; namely, the students with positive attitude had higher speaking scores than the students with negative attitude. Further analyses showed that there was a significant difference between the speaking scores of integratively-motivated students and the instrumentally-motivated ones. That is, integratively-motivated students scored higher than instrumentally-motivated ones on speaking test. Moreover, gender did not make any differences amongst EFL learners as far as attitude, motivation, and speaking ability were concerned.

KEY WORDS: attitude, motivation, speaking ability

INTRODUCTION
It is taken for granted that English is important due to its international nature. This conclusion logically leads to the acceptance that English should be taught around the world. The universal nature of this trend can be seen in all industrial and developing countries. Asia is not an exception, as English is a required topic of study in high schools and is often used in university entrance exams. It is acknowledged in academic circles that English training is a prerequisite for a nation’s industrial development. There are far more non-native English learners than native speakers—the underlying assumption that English has become an international language. In being an international language, the motivations for studying English may be quite different in the international context of a person joining a native English speaking culture.

If we take a look at the situation in Iran, English is taught as a foreign language from guidance school. That is, at least six years of compulsory EFL instruction for all students. With all the hard work we put into teaching English, many of the students will not be able to acquire the skills they need to communicate. Nakanishi (2002) believes that motivation and attitude to learn have something to do with this situation. He states that motivation and attitude determine the degree of effort one puts into foreign/second language learning. The more motivation one may have, the more efforts s/he tends to put into learning the language, and this could lead to success. Moreover, a learner with positive attitude would outperform the one with negative attitude as far as learning a foreign/second language is concerned.

Identifying factors that influence student learning in the classroom continues to be an important objective for teachers and administrators at all levels. Many researchers have investigated a multitude of instructional variables that impact students’ motivation and attitude to learn. There is considerable interest today in the notions of
motivation and attitude to learn a foreign/second language, but it was not always this way. In 1956 when R.C.
Gardner and Wallace Lambert began their research, it was generally agreed that learning another language involved
intelligence and verbal ability. Concepts like attitude, motivation and anxiety were not considered to be important at
all. Today, much of this has changed, and one sometimes gets the impression that affective variables are the only
important factors involved in foreign/second language learning.

Most researchers and educators would agree that motivation and attitude are very important, if not the most
important factors in language learning, without which even gifted individuals cannot accomplish long-term goals ,
whatever the curricula and whoever the teacher may be. Thus the concepts language learning motivation and attitude
have been accepted by teachers and researchers as the two of the key factors influencing the rate and success of
foreign/second language learning, often compensating for deficiencies in language aptitude and learning. It could be
said that all other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation and attitude to some extent.

In fact, motivational strategy for learning is an important aspect of students’ academic performance in the classroom,
especially for the college students. Despite much excellent research during the last two decades there is still a great
deal we do not know about motivation and attitude. Many researchers consider motivation and attitude as the main
elements that determine success in developing a foreign/second language, believing that these factors determine the
extent of active, personal involvement in a foreign/second language learning.

For language learners, motivation and attitude are important factors for the vital reason that the more motivated
learners will always surpass the unmotivated learners in performance and outcome. Furthermore, the learners with
positive attitude will also outperform those with negative attitude regarding foreign/second language learning. People
have an innate need to be competent and effective in their work, and motivation and attitude are key factors in
helping them reach their goals. Moreover, learners who leave full-time language study motivated about their English
communicative ability are more likely to continue acquiring the language, hence becoming lifelong learners.

The study of affect has thus become increasingly popular since 1980s and from then on it has been considered in the
language teaching/testing domain. Affective variables related to second or foreign language learning include
emotions, self-esteem, risk-taking, inhibition, anxiety, empathy, extraversion and introversion, motivation and
attitude. However, in this study two of the affective variables; that is, motivation and attitude have been focused on
and their relationship with speaking in a foreign language is investigated.

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Recent research has shown special interest in determining what distinguishes successful from unsuccessful language
learners, particularly their use of modifiable second language (L2) variables, in the hope that such information can be
passed onto less successful ones so as to improve their learning abilities. Prominent among these modifiable L2
variables are L2 motivation and attitude toward the second / foreign language. There has been a great deal of
research on the role of attitudes and motivation in second language learning. The overall findings show that positive
attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language learning (Gardner1985). Some would argue that in
the relationship between attitude and second language acquisition , it cannot be definitely proved that one causes the
other , but only that the sometime occur together (Skehan, 1989) . Evidence does exist, however, that points to a
casual relationship. After presenting evidence from Oller and other researchers who criticize Gardner’ s claims of an
attitude/acquisition connection , Skehan (1989) goes on to argue that the weight of evidence seems to be on Gardner’
s side that attitude and motivation truly do appear to be casual factors of SLA based on empirical data. Gass and
Slinker (2001) agree : “It makes sense that individuals who are motivated will learn another language faster and to a
great degree. Furthermore, numerous studies have provided statistical evidence that indicates motivation is a
predictor of language-learning success” (p. 349).They then proceed to validate attitude as one cause of motivation
(Gass & Slinker, 2001).Gardner (1991) presents a logical argument as well- individually , the above-listed
correlations of specific behaviors in language learning and attitude could probably be explained , but, taken as a
whole, they constitute a formidable case for a causal relationship (p.251).

According to Noels (2001), it is generally accepted that motivation to learn an L2 is at least as important as language
aptitude for successful acquisition of such language. An example is a study conducted by Kiss & Nikolov (2005) in
which the researchers explored the relationship between the aptitude scores of 419 Hungarian primary-school
children on English proficiency tests and a designated measure of their motivation. Based on multiple –regression
analysis, the results showed that the variable of language aptitude was responsible for over 20% of the variation in
English language performance, while motivation was also significant as it explained about 8% of the variation. As
such, the researchers suggested that student’s motivation can be raised by improving the quality of the teaching and
learning situation. Noels et al. (2001) explains that scholarly interest in L2 motivation can be traced back well over forty years. Since then, several models of second language motivation have been proposed; each extending our understanding of L2 motivation in its own way. In his influential definition of language learning motivation, Gardner (as cited by Noels et al., 2001) maintains that motivations basically the extent of the effort an individual is willing to exert to achieve the goal of learning a language because of a desire to do so and of favorable attitudes toward such language. Noels et al. (2000) states that several goals, or orientations, have been proposed, but two have received the most empirical attention. The first is instrumental orientation, which tackles reasons for language learning that emphasize the pragmatic consequences of L2 learning, such as job-hunting or improving one's education. The second is integrative orientation, which refers to reasons relating to interaction and communication with members of the second language community for social-emotional purposes.

According to Dörnyei (2005), the first important point to emphasize when exploring the field of second language motivation is that learning an L2 is different from learning other school subjects. The author points out that while an L2 is a "learnable" subject in that discrete elements of the communication code - grammatical rules and lexical items - can be taught explicitly, it is socially and culturally bound; making language learning a deeply social event that requires the incorporation of a wide range of elements of the L2 culture. For example, El-Dash & Busnardo (2001) presents the results of a study of stereotypical perceptions of 164 Brazilian university students studying diverse foreign languages. Socio-cultural stereotypes and motivation were investigated using "bipolar adjective" scales paired in a Likert-type format. The results showed that the students tended to have relatively positive stereotypes of the native speakers of the L2 and were, in most cases, motivated to learn it.

Yet another study which emphasizes the effect of the L2 culture on learner motivation and progress is that of Sasaki (2004). Using multiple quantitative and qualitative data sources, this study investigated possible changes in Japanese students' writing development. The results revealed that over the observation period, all of the students were able to improve their English proficiency, composition, and fluency; and that the experiences of the ESL overseas students were quite helpful in improving their writing strategy, motivating them to write better compositions. Masgoret & Gardner (2003), undertook a metaanalysis of investigating the relationship of L2 achievement to the socioeducational model. In addition, these relationships were examined using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery and other motivational measures. According to the authors, the results showed that "the correlations between achievement and motivation are uniformly higher than those between achievement and integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, integrative orientation, or instrumental orientation.

In the same vain, Dörnyei (2005) mentions a recent extention of motivation research. Having a considerable theoretical and practical potential, this extension covers the study the L2 speakers' willingness to engage in the act of L2 communication. As MacIntyre et al. (2002) explain, all individuals display consistent tendencies in their predisposition toward, or away from, communicating, when one is given the choice. Because of its nature, the willingness to communicate (WTC) construct seems to lend itself to being used to examine specific learning contents. Yashima (2002) has used the WTC construct and Gardner's socio-educational model to investigate the relationship between L2 learning and L2 communication variables among Japanese learners of English. Using structural equation modeling analysis, the author reached the conclusion that motivation appears to affect self-confidence in L2 communication which, in turn, may lead to a willingness to communicate in the target L2.

Furthermore, Csizér and Dörnyei(2005) conclude attitude as an important factor in language learning in their study on the internal structure of language learning motivation and its relationship with language choice and learning effort, which was put forward previously as the Process Model of L2 Motivation (Dörnyei and Otó 1999). There is a great amount of research on attitudes towards different languages (Marley 2004, Balcazar 2003, Villa 2002, Malallah 2000), towards different varieties of English and other languages (Karstadt 2002, Zhou 2002, Assaf 2001). Different aspects of language attitudes have also been studied such as the relation between attitudes and motivation (Donitsa-Schmidt et al.2004, Bernaus et al. 2004, Williams et al.2002), the relationship between attitudes and learning strategies (Gan 2004), the relationship between attitude and level of achievement (Graham 2004), beliefs and attitudes about target language use, first language use and anxiety (Levine 2003), attitudes to language and language learning at secondary and tertiary levels (Yang and Lau 2003), attitudes towards English-language usage among peers (White 2002), the relationship between negative attitudes towards non-native speakers and poor comprehension of those speakers (Lindemann 2002), attitudes towards debatable usages between teachers and their...
purposes of the study the following instruments were used:

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

The population for this study included 32 freshmen from both sexes (male and female) majoring in English Literature and English Translation and 50 freshmen majoring in electrical Engineering which were selected randomly amongst all the English freshmen at Isfahan University. The rationale behind choosing this latter group was just selecting students from majors other than English. Since most of the English students enjoyed positive attitude, for gathering a group with negative attitude, those engineering students were also selected. Finally, having administered the Oxford Placement Test, 65 students were chosen as the participants of the study.

**Instrumentation**

For the purposes of the study the following instruments were used:
(1) Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered to guarantee the subjects homogeneity in terms of their English proficiency level. In fact, it was used to exclude from the study those students whose English proficiency level differed significantly from that of the others and to neutralize the subject selection effect.

(2) Two subscales of AMTB (Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery) designed by Gardner (1985) were used to measure students' attitudes toward learning English and their interest in foreign languages; with each subscale containing a number of likert- type items(see appendix B); that is, 16 items for integrative motivation, 12 items for instrumental motivation, 5 items for positive attitude and finally 5 items for negative attitude. Furthermore, this questionnaire was translated into Persian and piloted prior to the main study. An Alpha Cronbach method was applied to guarantee the reliability of the given questionnaire. The results indicated reliability index of 0.71 for the questionnaire. Therefore, it was acceptable for being used in the study.

The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery is a research instrument which has been developed to measure the major affective components shown to be involved in second / foreign language learning. Its development follows more than 20 years of research and its validity and reliability was estimated by Gardner and Smythe in 1975. Earlier research with this test battery by Gardner and Smythe has showed reliability estimate of .91 and its validity regarding the three types of validity (content validity, predictive validity and construct validity) proved to be high (1975a). In addition, the internal consistency estimate of reliability for the modified questionnaire was calculated, and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.7 in a study by (Moinvaziri 2004) in Iran. In the same vein, the reliability of the questionnaire was estimated (in the pilot study) making use of an Alpha Cronbach method in the specific context of the study(r=0.71). All the items are measured using a Likert scale type.

As it was mentioned before, in this questionnaire there are two separate parts for integrative and instrumental motivation. That is, by considering the students' answers, it is possible to find out which student is mostly instrumentally-motivated and which one is mostly integratively-motivated. However, it cannot be said that instrumental orientation and integrative orientation are the two ends of a continuum. Therefore, it can be regarded as the limitation of this study. Furthermore, the parts related to negative attitude and positive attitude are also distinct; that is, separate parts are devoted to both positive and negative attitudes.

(3) A kind of indirect interview was used with the 65 chosen students in order to assess their speaking ability. (Speaking ability will be assessed based on some already established criteria mentioned in the book written by Farhadi, Birjandi and Jafarpour such as accent, structure, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension) and also Weir (1993). For ensuring reliability, two other raters (M.A students of Teaching English) assessed the recordings. (A sample of the questions which were asked from the students and the criteria for assessing speaking ability were presented in appendices C & D).

Procedures

After randomly choosing the students, Oxford Placement Test (Allen, 1992) was administered in order to decide on the proficiency level of the students. The test contained 100 items. To score the test, correct points were added up to a total sum and incorrect ones were ignored. There was no negative point for the wrong answers or for the items not answered at all (see appendix A for OPT). Having obtained the OPT results, the researcher decided to choose those participants whose score range fell one standard deviation above and below the mean. This being so, 65 students met this homogeneity criterion and were thus, selected to serve as the participants of this study. To decide on the type of the participants’ motivation and attitude two subscales of AMTB (Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery) designed by Gardner (1985) were used. The questionnaire was translated into Persian and then given to the students (see appendix B). Before the administration of the questionnaire the participants received the necessary information about the purpose of the study and how to complete the questionnaire. The participants were free to ask questions or consult with each other while completing the questionnaire. In addition to the administration of the questionnaire, casual interviews were also held with the students whenever possible. The items of this questionnaire then were analyzed and tabulated. The last test was a kind of indirect interview which was administered by the researcher. Four questions about common topics in daily conversations were given to the students, e.g. talk about yourself. What would you like to do in future? (see appendix C). The questions were asked from the students one by one by the researcher. The participants spoke through the earphones after hearing each question within a time limit of three minutes while their voices were recorded. Totally, the speaking test took twenty minutes. First of all a friendly
atmosphere was created, then oral instruction was given in Persian. This method was used for the sake of ensuring its practicality. After that, the results were analyzed by two other M.A students who were experienced and fluent in English and then the average was calculated. Besides, inter-rater reliability was also estimated (0.8). Scoring was based on analytic speaking criteria introduced by Weir (1993) and Farhady, Jafarpoor, & Birjandi (1999) (see appendix D for the two of them). Each of those criteria was divided into six levels (from the weakest to the best) and a number from 1 to 6 was considered for each. Judges listened to the recorded cassettes and graded each student’s performance according to the aforementioned scales. All the scores given by the judges were added up and the average for each student was tabulated. For all the above tests students were given the necessary instructions and the importance of those tests was explained to them.

RESULTS
The findings of the research have been presented based on the stated research hypotheses. In order to analyze the data in addition to the statistical indexes like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, an inferential statistics method series of independent samples t-test has also been used. The raw data obtained from AMTB questionnaire and speaking test were submitted to SPSS program and the subsequent computations were made.

Investigating the Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Group
In this section the descriptive characteristics of the sample group based on gender variable have been investigated (table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Ability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4.6413</td>
<td>.7428</td>
<td>.1095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.7526</td>
<td>.8422</td>
<td>.1932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results
In order to investigate the aforementioned research questions, seven independent samples t-tests were conducted.

Question 1
1) Are there any differences between students with positive and those with negative attitude regarding their speaking ability?
Based on the table, in the independent-samples t-test output box, the results of Levene’s test for the equality of variances are presented (Table 3.). Levene’s test shows whether the variance of scores for the two groups is the same. The Sig. value of Levene’s test is .870, which is larger than .05, so in Table 3., the first line of the table which refers to Equal variances assumed should be used. Under the section labeled t-test for equality of means, the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed), shows the value of .000. It means that there were significant differences between the speaking scores of the students with positive attitude and those with negative attitude. Investigating the means of the two groups showed that the students with positive attitude had higher speaking scores than the ones with negative attitude. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was rejected.

**Question 2**

2) Are there any differences between integratively-motivated and instrumentally-motivated learners concerning their speaking ability?

Based on the results shown in Table 5, the Sig. value of Levene’s test is .143, which is larger than .05, so the first line of the table which refers to Equal variances assumed should be used. Under the column labeled t-test for equality of means, the column labeled Sig. (2-tailed) shows the value of .035. It means that there were significant differences between the speaking scores of the students with integrative motivation and those with instrumental motivation.
Investigating the means of the two groups showed this fact that the speaking scores of integratively-motivated students were higher than those of instrumentally-motivated students. In this way, the second hypothesis was also rejected.

**Question 3**

3) Are there any differences between males and females’ type of attitude when it comes to learning a foreign language?

**Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Positive Attitude**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20.9667</td>
<td>3.5475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21.3429</td>
<td>3.8649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7: Independent Sample t-test for Males’ and Females’ Positive Attitude toward English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Attitude</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>t (2-tailed)</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not assumed</td>
<td>.409</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results indicate, the observed Sig. value of Levene’s test is .710, and Sig. (2-tailed), shows the value of .686. It means that there were no significant differences between the mean scores of males’ and females’ positive attitude. That is, the extent of males’ and females’ positive attitude was approximately the same.

**Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of Negative Attitude**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.1667</td>
<td>5.9543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10.4000</td>
<td>6.7658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 9: Independent Sample t-test for Males’ and Females’ Negative Attitude toward English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Attitude</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td>t (2-tailed)</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not assumed</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the results, the observed Sig. value of Levene’s test is .483. The Sig. (2-tailed) shows the value of .884. That is, there were no significant differences between the mean scores of males’ and females’ negative attitude. That is, the extent of males’ and females’ negative attitude was almost the same. In this way, the third hypothesis was confirmed.

Question 4

4) Are there any differences between males and females’ type of motivation concerning their foreign language learning?

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics of Integrative Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Motivation Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>53.5000</td>
<td>14.1951</td>
<td>2.5917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Motivation Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>55.9143</td>
<td>10.8367</td>
<td>1.8317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Independent Sample t-test for Males’ and Females’ Integrative Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative Motivation Equal variances Assumed</td>
<td>7.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances Not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is shown in the table, the Sig. value of Levene’s test is .008, and Sig. (2-tailed) shows the value of .440. It means that there were no significant differences between the mean scores of males’ and females’ integrative motivation. That is, the extent of males’ and females’ integrative motivation was almost the same.

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics for Instrumental Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Motivation Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43.1667</td>
<td>5.4903</td>
<td>1.0024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Motivation Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43.4286</td>
<td>4.7914</td>
<td>.8099</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Independent Sample t-test for Males’ and Females’ Instrl Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental Motivation Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the results, the Sig. value of Levene’s test is .447, and the observed Sig. (2-tailed) depicts the value of .84. That is, there were no significant differences between the mean scores of males’ and females’ instrumental motivation. In other words, the extent of males’ and females’ instrumental motivation was almost the same. In this way, the forth hypothesis was also confirmed.

**Question 5**

5) Are there any differences between males and females regarding their speaking ability?

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics for Speaking Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Ability</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.2700</td>
<td>.9315</td>
<td>.1701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.4771</td>
<td>.8110</td>
<td>.1371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: Independent Sample t-test for Males’ and Females’ Speaking Ability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for equality of means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking assumed</td>
<td>1.694</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it is seen, the observed Sig. value of Levene’ test is .198, and Sig. (2-tailed), shows the value of .341. It means that there were no significant differences between males’ and females’ speaking ability. In other words, the extent of males’ and females’ speaking ability was approximately the same. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was also confirmed. Taking these points into consideration it was found that gender indeed, does not make any changes amongst EFL learners as far as attitude, motivation, and speaking ability are concerned.

**DISCUSSION**

The first research question was whether there are any significant differences between students with positive attitude and those with negative attitude regarding their speaking ability. The means of the scores and the t-test revealed that at P<0.05 level, the t value shows a significant difference between the speaking scores of students with positive attitude and those with negative attitude. Having investigated the means of the two groups indicates that the Sig. value was 0.00. It means that students with positive attitude have got higher scores on speaking test than the ones with negative attitude.

In the same vein Munoz & Tragan (2001) obtained similar results in their study in which they analyzed the answers to a questionnaire in which learners of different age-groups and different proficiency levels were asked about their attitudes and types of motivation towards the L2 (EFL). First, motivation was seen to increase with school experience. Second, the younger learners showed more intrinsic types of motivation, while the older groups showed more extrinsic types and a preference for an instrumental type of motivation. That is, while the younger students did not, as a group, present higher motivation than the older students, they had a qualitatively different type of motivation. Third, significant statistical relations were shown between positive attitude towards language learning and achievement in some language tests, but not all. Significant relations were also found between achievement at the first measurement time and positive attitudes at the second in those students who were traced longitudinally, raising the issue of the directionality of the relation between motivation and second language achievement.
Still, recognizing the importance of student attitudes and motivation, several surveys have recently been conducted in Japan concerning this topic. Berwick and Ross' (1989) longitudinal study of Japanese college freshmen examined the correlation between learner positive attitude and motivation with proficiency in English. The results of the study showed that motivation to "learn English" peaked in the last year of high school and then dropped upon entering college. The authors attribute this drop to the college entrance exam system and to colleges themselves. They state that once the entrance exams are over, "there is very little to sustain this kind of motivation, so the student appears in freshmen classrooms as a kind of timid, exam-worn survivor with no apparent academic purpose at university" (p. 206). However, they also found that positive attitude and high motivation contributes to the task of second/foreign language acquisition to a great deal.

The obtained results of this study is also in line with the obtained findings of the study carried out by Sadighi and Zarafshan (2006) in which they explored the fact that learners with positive attitude used language learning strategies more frequently than those with negative attitude.

The discussion now turns to the second question; namely, whether there are any significant differences between integratively-motivated and instrumentally-motivated learners concerning their speaking ability. Based on the results, it was shown that at P<0.05 level, the Sig. value was 0.03, representing that there is a significant difference between the speaking scores of integratively-motivated learners and those of instrumentally-motivated ones. That is, integratively-motivated learners have higher scores on speaking test than the instrumentally-oriented ones. This result shows parallelism with the study of (Gass & Selinker, 2001; Lambert, 1952& 1972). This study supports the findings in these studies, in that integrative motivation is superior to instrumental motivation for predicting the success of second/foreign language learning. In other words, success in a foreign/second language is likely to be lower if the underlying motivational orientation is instrumental rather than integrative.

In line with the aforementioned outcomes, Sadighi and Zarafshan (2006), found out that regarding the factor of motivation, integratively-motivated students employed more strategies than instrumentally-oriented ones.

The third research question was: Are there any differences between males and females as far as attitude, motivation, and speaking ability are concerned? Based on the results of this study it was found that there are no significant differences between males and females regarding the mentioned variables (attitude, motivation, and speaking ability).

The findings of this study are also in parallel with the ones obtained in a study carried out by Fazlul in 1989. In his study he investigated the interaction of attitudes, motivation and achievement in English as a foreign language in a new social and monolingual setting. More specifically, the study examined the relationship between Bangladeshi high school students' motivational orientation and their achievement in English as a foreign language. The study further investigated the possible effect of gender and academic major on students' attitudes and motivation and examined the influence of parents and teachers on students' attitudes and motivation to learn English.

The data for the investigation were gathered from 240 tenth grade students randomly selected from high schools in Dhaka City, Bangladesh using a modified version of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery developed by Gardner (1985b) and an Achievement Test prepared by an English Language Teaching Task Force set up by the Government of Bangladesh in 1975.

Analysis of the data revealed that the students in the study were instrumentally oriented towards learning the English language and that an instrumental orientation was a better predictor of achievement than an integrative orientation. Achievement in English was facilitated by favorable attitudes towards and a strong motivation for learning the language. The results further showed that attainment in English was related significantly and positively to students' attitudes and motivation to the learning situation. The sex of the learners was not found to have a significant effect on either attitudes/motivation or achievement. Although the academic major did not have any significant effect on students' attitudes and motivation, it affected their attainment significantly.
CONCLUSIONS
The present study was carried out with the intention of investigating the interlaced relationship between attitude, motivation and speaking within the context of Iranian EFL university students. Moreover, it sought to find out which type of motivation (instrumental or integrative) is superior as far as face to face communication is concerned. The results of this study indicated that first, students with positive attitude have got higher scores on speaking test than the ones with negative attitude. Second, integratively-motivated learners have higher speaking scores than instrumentally motivated ones. Third, there are not any significant differences between males and females as far as attitude, motivation, and speaking ability are concerned.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY
The results of the present study have led to the following pedagogical implications:
1) Teachers should promote the students’ positive attitude toward academic English learning. They should create a lively, challenging and non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom where the affective barriers are kept at minimum.
2) Teachers should increase the students’ positive attitude to the English culture through any possible medium such as promoting students’ interaction with the native speakers.
3) Language teachers have an important role in maintaining and enhancing the students’ motivation and attitude.
4) Teachers should use the best of the students’ high motivation in order to contribute to the success in language learning.
5) Since attitude and motivation are interwoven, any kind of boost in attitude will increase students’ motivation in learning English.
6) It is essential to make the students sure that it is not just the place of study and cognitive factors but affective factors such as high motivation (especially integrative motivation) and positive attitude that play an important role in language learning and in particular acquiring a high command in speaking.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
This study faced some limitations throughout the accomplishment of different phases:

The first limitation of this study seems to be its limited number of participants. If more subjects had taken part in the study, the results would have been more reliable and closer to reality.

The second limitation that restricts the generalizability of the findings is that although the participants were supposed to answer the questions quite carefully and honestly, while answering the questions, they might not have taken the study seriously and they may have answered without thinking thoroughly, which may also have influenced the results.

The third limitation was the questionnaire used in this study. Different questionnaires might lead to different results. The Oxford Placement Test was not verified in terms of reliability for this particular context as it is widely used in many situations. Any how it can be regarded as another limitation.

The last point to be mentioned here is the difficulty of evaluation along with generalization of findings in human issues. One can hardly claim that all the variables have been controlled throughout the study, since some uncontrolled variables like fatigue, unwillingness to participate, and the affective mood may have affected the obtained results.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
This study aimed to answer a limited number of questions raised previously. This is while many other questions may be raised as the following in relation with the findings of this study:
1) This study investigated the impact of attitude and motivation on speaking in a foreign language. Other studies can focus on the impacts of motivation and attitude on other skills including listening, reading and writing.
2) The present study focused on the impact of attitude and motivation on speaking in a foreign language. Similar studies can be conducted to examine the impacts of other personality factors, namely, anxiety, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, empathy, extroversion, introversion on speaking.
3) Further studies can investigate the impacts of the mentioned personality factors (anxiety, self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, empathy, extroversion, and introversion) on other skills such as listening, reading and writing.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

Look at these examples. The correct answer is underlined.
a. In warm climates people (like, likes, are liking) sitting outside in the sun.
b. If it is very hot, they sit (at, in, under) the shade.

Now the test will begin. Underline the correct answers.
1. Water (be freezing, is freezing, freezes) at a temperature of >0°C.
2. In some countries (there is, is, it is) dark all the time in winter.
3. In hot countries people wear light clothes (for keeping, to keep, for to keep) cool.
4. In Madeira they have (the good, good, a good) weather almost all year.
5. Most Mediterranean countries are (more warm, the more warm, warmer) in October than in April.
6. Parts of Australia do not have (the, some, any) rain for long period.
7. In the Arctic and Antarctic (it is, there is, it has) a lot of snow.
8. Climate is very important in (most of, most, the most) people's lives.
9. Even now there is (little, few, less) we can do to control the weather.
10. In the future (we'll need, we are needing, we can need) to get a lot of power from the sun and the wind.
11. Pele is still perhaps (most, the most, the more) famous footballer in the world.
12. He (had been, is, was) born in 1940.
13. His mother (not want, wasn't wanting, did not want) him to be a footballer.
14. But he (used, ought, has used) to watch his father play.
15. His father (made him to, made him, would make him to) practice every day.
16. He learned to use (or his left foot or, and his left foot and, both his left foot and) his right.
17. He got the name Pele when he (had only ten years, was only ten, was only ten years).
18. By 1956 he (has joined, joined, had joined) Santos and had scored in his first game.
19. In 1957 he (has been picked, was picked, was picking) for the Brazilian national team.
The World Cup Finals were in 1958 and Pele was looking forward (to play, to playing, to be playing).

He thought he (is not going, couldn't, was not going to) be able to play in the finals in Sweden.

If he (had not been, were not, would not be) so important to the team, he would have been left behind.

But he was (a such, such a, a so) brilliant player, they took him anyway.

And (even though, even so, in spite of) he was injured he helped Brazil to win the final.

The history of the World Cup is (quite, a quite, quiet) short one.

Football (has been, is being, was) played for (above, over, more than) a hundred years, but the first World Cup competition (did not be, was not, was not being) held until 1930. Uruguay (could win, were winning, had won) the Olympic football final in 1924 and 1928 and wanted (be, being, to be) World Champions for the third time.

Four teams entered from Europe, but with (a little, a few, little) success.

It was the first time (which, that, when) professional teams (are playing, would play, had played) for a world title.

It wasn't until four years (later, more, further) that a European team succeeded (to win, in winning, at winning) in its first time. The 1934 World Cup was again won by (a, the, one) home team.

The 1934 final was (among, between, against) two European teams, Czechoslovakia and Italy. Italy (which, that, who) won (to win, winning, to have won) the 1938 final. Winning successive finals is something that (is not, was not, has not been) achieved again until Brazil did (these, them, it) in 1958 and 1962. If Brazil (would have won, would win, had won) in 1966, then the authorities would have needed to (have, let, make) the original World Cup replaced.

But England stopped the Brazilians (to get, getting, get) a third successive win. And England player Geoff Hurst, scored three goals in the final and won it almost (by his own, on himself, by himself). 1966 proved (being, as being, to be) the last year that England (would, will, did) even qualify for the final till 1982, though they got in as winners in 1970.

Grammar Test Part 2

Many (persons, people, peoples) nowadays believe that everyone should learn to use computers.

The Majority of Children in the UK (have, has, are having) access to a microcomputer.

There are more computers per head in England than (anywhere else, somewhere else, anywhere other) in the world.

Learning a computer language is not the same (as, like, than) learning a real language.

Most people start off 'basic', (who, what, which) is the easiest to learn.

Children seem to find computers easy, but many adults aren't used to (work, the work, working) with micro technology.

There are not (no, any, some) easy ways of learning to program a computer.

The only way to become really proficient is to practice a lot (on your own, by your own, on yourself).

You can pick up the basics quite quickly if you (want to, would, are willing to) make an effort.

Most adults feel it would be easier if only they (would have started, would start, had started) computer studies earlier.

Some people would just (rather, prefer, better) not have anything to do with computers at all.

A lot have resigned themselves to never even (know, known, knowing) how a computer works.

Micro technology is moving so fast that hardly (anybody, nobody, no one) can keep up with it at all.

It's no use (in trying to, to try, trying) to learn about computers just by reading books.

Everyone has (difficulty in learning, difficulties to learn, it difficult to learn) if they cannot get 'hands-on' experience.
Below is a letter written to the advice column of a newspaper. Underline the correct answer.

Dear Merge,

66- (I am writing, I will write, I should write) to you because I
67- (am not knowing, don't know, know not) what to do. I am twenty-six and a teacher at
68- a primary school in Norwich where (I'm working, I've worked, I work) for the last five years.
69- When I (was, have been, had been) there for a couple of years, one of the older members of staff
70- (would leave, left, have been leaving), and a new teacher
71- (would be, become, was) appointed to work in the same department as me.
72- We (worked, have worked, should work) together with the same classes during her first year
73- and had the (opportunity for building, possibilities to build, chance to build) up a good professional
74- relationship. Then, about eighteen month after (she had arrived, to have arrived, arriving)
75- in Norwich, she decided to buy (her own, herself, her a) house.
76- She was tire of (to live, living, live) in rented accommodation and wanted a place
77- (by her own, of her own, of herself). At about the same time, I
78- (was given, have been given, gave) notice by the landlord of the flat
79- (what I was living, that I have lived, I was living) in
80- and she asked me if I (liked, had liked, would like) to live
81- with her. She (said, told, explained) me that by the time she
82- (would pay, would have paid, had paid) the mortgage
83- and the bills (it, there, they) wouldn't be
84- (a lot, many, few) left to live on. She suggested
85- (us to, we should, may) share the house and share the costs.
86- It seemed like a good idea, so after (we'd agreed, we could agree, we agreed with) all the details
87- (what, that, who) needed to be sort out, we moved into the new house together.
88- At the end of this month, (we have lived, we have been living, we'll have been living)
89- together for a year and a half. It's the first time (I live, I'm living, I've lived) with anybody before, but
90- (I should guess, I might have guessed, I'd have guessed) what would happen. I've fallen in love with her and now
she's been offered another job 200 miles away and is going to move. I don't know what to do. Please give me some
advice.

Look at the following examples of question tags in English. The correct form of the tag is underlined.

A. He is getting the 9.15 train, (isn't he, hasn't he, wasn't he)?
B. She works in a library, (isn't she, doesn't she, doesn't he)?
C. Tom didn't tell you, (hasn't he, didn't he, did he)?
D. Someone's forgotten to switch off the gas, (didn't one, didn't they, haven't they)?

Now underline the correct question tag in the following 10 items:

91- Steve's off to China, (has she, hasn't he, isn't he)?
92- I'll be a year before we see him again, (won't it, won't we, shan't it)?
93- I believe he has given up smoking, (isn't he, don't I, hasn't he)?
94- I'm next on the list to go out there, (am not I, are I, aren't I)?
95- No doubt you'd rather he didn't stay abroad too long, (shouldn't you, wouldn't you, hadn't you)?
96- He's rarely been away for this long before, (is he, hasn't he, has he)?
97- So you think he will be back before November, (shall he, will he, do you)?
98- Nobody disagreed with the latest proposal, (did he, has he, have they)?
99- We'd better not delay reading this any longer, (should we, did we, had we)?
100- Now is hardly the time to tell me you did not need a test at all, (did you, is it, isn't it)?

Appendix B

AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery)
**سوالات این قسمت از پاسخنامه دارای 5 گزینه به صورت عد (1، 2، 3، 4، 5) بوده که از "خیلی زیاد" شروع به همه تا "خیلی کم" در پایان می‌کند که شما تا چه اندازه با سوال موافق و یا مخالف هستید را خط با تنش فراوان از همکاری شما تا چه حد……..

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>تا چه حد</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>زیاد</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>دوست دارید که یک دوست انگلیسی داشته باشید؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>پایداری زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>دوست دارید که زبان انگلیسی زبان باشد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>دوست دارید که زبان انگلیسی زبان باشد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>دوست دارید که زبان انگلیسی زبان باشد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>دوست دارید که زبان انگلیسی زبان باشد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>اگر که زبان انگلیسی به شما کمک کرد؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>با این عبارت موافقی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>برای فرامیلرسیدن کلیدشنابی به تدریس از سوی زبان انگلیسی را بیفکردی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>جلوگیری به کلمه‌ای اینسته؟</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>در خودکاری بیشترینی؟</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>برای اعتماد کدر زبان انگلیسی اینسته؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>در خودکاری بیشترینی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>اعتماد دارید که زبان انگلیسی در خودکاری بیشترینی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>مطالعه زبان انگلیسی به مکانهایی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>مطالعه زبان انگلیسی به مکانهایی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>با این عبارت موافقی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>از پایداری زبان انگلیسی لذت برده‌ای؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>با این عبارت موافقی؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>درس‌ها در این زبان را اشتیق و علاقه‌ای؟</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

131
Appendix C

Interview Test

1. Talk about yourself (your name, age, address). How many brothers and sisters do you have?

2. What would you like to do in future?

3. Talk about your university and professors. Are they good or not?

4. Which job is more important; being an engineer, a doctor, or a teacher?

5. 

6. Appendix D

Criteria for Assessing Speaking

Analytic Speaking Criteria (Weir 1993)

Fluency
4. Generally natural delivery, only occasional halting when searching for appropriate words/expressions.
3. The student hesitates and repeats himself at times but can generally maintain a flow of speech, although s/he may need an occasional prompt.
2. Speech is slow and hesitant. Maintains speech in a passive manner and needs regular prompts.
1. The student speaks so little that no ‘fluent’ speech can be said to occur.

Pronunciation
4. Occasional errors of pronunciation a few inconsistencies of rhythm, intonation and pronunciation but comprehension is not impeded.
3. Rhythm, intonation and pronunciation require more careful listening; some errors of pronunciation which may occasionally lead to incomprehension.
2. Comprehension suffers due to frequent errors in rhythm, intonation and pronunciation.
1. Words are unintelligible.

Vocabulary
4. Effective use of vocabulary for the task with few inappropriacies.
3. For the most part, effective use of vocabulary for the task with some examples of inappropriacy.
2. Limited use of vocabulary with frequent inappropriacies.
1. Inappropriate and inadequate vocabulary.

Grammatical accuracy
4. Very few grammatical errors evident.
3. Some errors in use of sentence structures and grammatical forms but these do not interfere with comprehension.
2. Speech is broken and distorted by frequent errors.
1. Unable to construct comprehensible sentences.

Interactional strategies
In this criterion, the term ‘interactional strategies’ means using strategies such as initiating the discussion, asking for clarification, expanding the topic, turn taking and concluding the discussion.
4. Interacts effectively and readily participates and follows the discussion.
3. Use of interactive strategies is generally adequate but at times experiences some difficulty in maintaining interaction consistently.
2. Interaction ineffective. Can seldom develop an interaction.
1. Understanding and interaction minimal.
Farhadi, Jafarpoor, Birjandi (1994, p. 239) give guidelines for assessing rating speaking:

**Accent**
6. Phonetically acceptable pronunciation throughout
5. Few phonemic errors but never hindering comprehension
4. Occasional phonemic errors necessitate attentive listening
3. Frequent phonemic errors require frequent demand for repetition
2. Constant phonemic errors make comprehension very hard
1. Severe errors make understanding virtually impossible

**Structure**
6. Almost no error
5. Few insignificant errors only
4. Occasional petty errors but no problem with understanding
3. Frequent errors occasionally interfere with meaning
2. Constant errors interfere with understanding
1. Severe errors make understanding virtually impossible

**Vocabulary**
6. Appropriate and extensive use of words in any domain
5. Appropriate use of adequate vocabulary to discuss general topics and special interests
4. Occasional use of inappropriate words, which do not, however, affect the meaning
3. Frequent use of inappropriate words distort the message
2. Constant use of wrong words, limited vocabulary
1. Inadequate basic vocabulary

**Fluency**
6. Fluent and effortless speech like a native speaker
5. Natural and continuous speech with pauses at unnatural points
4. Fluent speech with occasional problems
3. Frequent problems hinder fluency and demand greater effort
2. Slow speech, hesitant, and sometimes silent
1. Virtually unable to make connected sentences

**Comprehension**
6. Comprehends everything
5. Comprehends everything except for every colloquial or rapid speech or low frequency items
4. Comprehends nearly everything but needs occasional rephrasing
3. Comprehends slower-than-normal speech
2. Comprehends only slow and simple speech
1. Comprehends very little of even simple and slow speech
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING SHORT STORIES AND THE WRITING PROFICIENCY OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

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Firooz Sadighi  
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ABSTRACT  
Despite the importance of writing in both academic and daily lives of people, most students suffer from difficulties of writing in a foreign language. What people write, represents their idea and their knowledge about a subject, so a poor writing can hide the actual viewpoint of a person or even can lead into misinterpretation of the message. Accordingly, there is a need to use a method that motivates the English as a foreign language (EFL)/English as a second language (ESL) students and helps them to improve their writing ability. This study examined two groups of students to find out the effects of short story reading on their writing ability. Within two months, the control group (N=23) was taught the school book, while the experimental group (N=24) was taught the school book and also was supposed to read three short stories. Relevant findings illustrated that the experimental group’s writing had improved more than the control group’s writing (gain score= 5.7 vs. 2.7; effect size=.31). Questionnaires were also given to the students who had read the stories and the teacher to evaluate the course design. The results showed that almost 79.17% of the students had found the course beneficial; furthermore, the teacher was also satisfied with the course program. Based on the obtained results, the study considered reading short story as an effective and beneficial tool for improving the EFL students’ writing ability. The study has pedagogical implications for English writing classes aiming at educating EFL students.

KEYWORDS: writing proficiency; reading short story; schemata; reading strategies

INTRODUCTION  
Over the past decades, EFL reading and writing have undergone dramatic changes. Reading has moved toward a complex psycholinguistic, interactive model consisting of both bottom-up and top-down processes (Goodman, 1970). Accordingly, reading theories have in turn affected other language skills, including writing. Thus, reading is now viewed as a means for improving communicational skills, in which readers seek meaning and try to reconstruct writers’ messages. One of the language skills is writing, an important skill that helps learners acquire language, content, culture and literacy in a second language.

L2 writing research has indicated that lack of competence in composing, rather than lack of linguistic competence, is the main source of difficulty (Jones, 1982; Jacobs, 1982). Studies have also identified difficulties in relation to the lack of composing competence. For example, L2 composing is more constrained, more difficult, and less effective. The process is more laborious, less fluent, and less productive. More revisions are needed and more difficulties are experienced in revising. Additionally, L2 text is less fluent, less accurate, less effective and with simpler structure (Silva, 1993).

In recent years, narrative and stories have been the focus of increasing attention. Researchers (Fitzgerald and Teasley, 1986; Cassell, 2004; and Collins 2010) who have talked about the use of short stories in the EFL classes have mentioned various benefits of short stories such as motivational, literary and cultural benefits. According to Murdoch (2002) if the instructor selects the short story appropriately, it can provide quality text content which will greatly enhance ELT courses, especially at the intermediate and advanced levels of proficiency. If instructors choose the correct story book, it will correspond to the comprehensible input that ESL theorists emphasize in the communicative classrooms. One of the main advantages of short stories is their proper length. They are neither like novels nor like small notes. Instructors are usually faced with lack of time for teaching the materials and therefore the length of short story permits them to bring literature into the classroom’s syllabus. Students will not get bored of reading short stories because these stories are not too long.
Short stories motivate students to read, think and get involved. According to Celce-Murcia (1988), among many texts, story is in such an appealing position that everyone, including EFL students, loves it. Short stories can be used both for providing students with a proper input and for making the language learning process more interesting. Short stories, as a general and natural teaching tool, can provide the basis for effective communicative activities in an EFL class.

No one can neglect the role and importance of writing proficiency in daily, academic and business lives of all people. Nowadays there are many methods for improving writing proficiency of EFL students, among which we can mention computer task based strategies (Ortega, 1997), using online writing systems (Miyazoe and Anderson, 2010), etc. Most of these methods require special and expensive instruments and therefore they can be used just in special learning environments with the required equipment. Since learning English as a second language and therefore writing in English does not belong to a certain group of people, in this study the researchers tries to introduce a more available tool: short stories.

**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

**Literature and language learning**

Literature is a tool that can be used in different areas of language learning, and help students with a better comprehension of the points being taught. Erkaya (2009) believed that it is important for EFL instructors to be familiarized with the effectiveness of using literature in language instruction. She mentioned that while some instructors may still believe that teaching EFL encompasses focusing on linguistic benefits only, their students eventually will communicate in the target language, others who have integrated literature in the curricula have realized that literature adds a new dimension to the teaching of EFL. The researcher concluded that in addition to the four skills, short stories help instructors to teach literary, cultural and higher-order thinking aspects. Furthermore, she claimed that integrating short stories into the curriculum will help EFL students to become well-rounded professionals and human beings since short stories teach more than the skills necessary for survival in the target language.

In another study by Hajimaibodi (2008), learning English through short stories has been explored. The findings of her study revealed that to enhance the reading comprehension skill, the learner must have the ability to understand the meaning of individual words and phrases on a local or word-to-word and sentence-to-sentence level and on a global level or constructing meaning from the text as a whole. She concluded that this interacted with the prior knowledge, interest and motivation that the learner brings to the task of reading. Since in general people forget the actual language but remember the message, they would like something that is not only informative but also entertaining, like short stories.

Hismanoglu (2005) aimed at emphasizing the use of literature as a popular technique for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas. The results of the study suggested that literature played an important role in the English programs of many non-English speaking countries. However, there were some problems encountered by language teachers within the area of teaching English through literature.

Considering the new technologies, Cassell (2004) carried out a piece of research on story listening systems and effects of that on young children’s writing. The findings revealed that systems were desirable, the researcher further concluded that the kinds of learning environments enabled by the systems, provided opportunities for children to bridge informal and formal contexts and hence help their learning.

**The importance of writing**

Writing ability in either first or second language is important. According to Tan (2011), students who are poor with written expression are often at serious risks of failure in an academic study program. Close or distant communication with different people is possible through writing. Unlike other language skills, writing is permanent and according to Brown (2001), the process of writing requires specialized skills, skills that not all speakers develop naturally. Brown (2001) maintains that writing is a learned behavior. It means that we learn to write if we are members of a literate society and if someone teaches us. Trupe (2001) maintained that L2 writing is a unique part of language learning.
Learners must attend to both the writing and thinking processes as well as the written product. That is, they must not only consider what they think, but also how best to communicate what they think to readers.

Kobayashi and Rinnert (2002) presented findings from a research on students’ perceptions of first language literacy instruction and effects of that on second language writing. The researchers suggested that one way to utilize students’ L1 background is to turn the writing class into a place where students research their own literacy and develop critical awareness about what they need to learn about L2 academic writing. The researchers also mentioned that in addition to the influence of L1 literacy, the kind of practice and experience students receive in L2 reading and writing could also affect the development of their L2 writing.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between reading short stories and writing?
2. Do students and teachers find reading short story a beneficial tool for improving writing proficiency?

It is hoped that the answers to the research questions of this study be useful for both teachers and learners. The answers may also help material developers in terms of choosing the best materials for learners. It is hoped that the results of the study will shed light on the related aspects of language learning.

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The participants of this study were 47 female students whose average age was 17. These students were selected from two classes at a pre-university school in Shiraz, Iran. The total population of the classes was 60. To choose a homogeneous group of students, the researchers obtained the scores of the writing section of the students’ 3rd grade English exam. The high school 3rd grade exam is a standard exam that is given and corrected in a standard method and is uniform all over the country.

After calculating the mean and standard deviation of the students’ scores of the writing section, those whose scores were within one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected (n=47). Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>score</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16.1458</td>
<td>2.88380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After choosing the total group of students, each student was given a number and then based on the systematic random sampling (i.e. odd and even numbers), they were randomly divided into two groups. The mean score of each group was calculated and as Table 2 represents, the mean scores were in the same range:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>scores</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16.7500</td>
<td>1.58629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.5000</td>
<td>1.61667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Therefore, it was assumed that both groups were at the same level. However, to make sure that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups, an independent samples t-test was run. The scores of the writing section of the students’ 3rd grade English exam were used in this calculation. The p-value was greater than .05; therefore the null hypothesis (i.e. there was no difference between the groups) was retained. The results are given in Table 3.
Table 3: Independent samples t-test of control group and experimental group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td>.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>.595</td>
<td>.25000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference</td>
<td>.46723</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error Difference</td>
<td>.25000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>-.69105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>1.19105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>44.825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>.595</td>
<td>.25000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>.46742</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Difference</td>
<td>.25000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Error Difference</td>
<td>.25000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>-.69154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>1.19154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of these groups served as the control group and the other one as the experimental group. The students of both groups had the same teacher. During the time of the study, both groups used the school book as the main input material. The students who were in the experimental group also read three short story books.

In order to check the effects of the treatment (i.e. reading short stories), pre-tests and post-tests were given to all participants. A paired-sample t-test was used to find out if the treatment had any effect. Then, the results obtained from the experimental group were compared with the results obtained from the control group. The procedures and the objectives of the study were explained to the students by the researchers. And all the students declared their willingness to participate in the process of the study. The school Principal had also agreed with conducting this study at the school.

**Instruments**

The instruments utilized in this study were as follows:

1. Tests of writing. At the very beginning of the study, a writing test (see Appendix A) was given to the students of both control and experimental groups. This writing test was the pre-test consisting of two parts. The first part was the free writing part. In the free writing part, two topics were given to the students. These topics were related to the topics of their school book. The students were asked to choose one of the topics and write three or four paragraphs on it. The instructions were printed in their exam paper and further explanations were provided by the teacher. The second part of the test was the controlled writing. This part was divided into two sections. In the first, the first two lines of a text were given to the students and then they were asked to continue the writing and add at least three sentences of their own. In the second part of the controlled writing, students were asked to write a paragraph using the given words. The paragraph had to have no more than ten lines. The instructions for the second part of the test were available in the hard copies that the students had and further explanations were provided by the teacher. Having given the test, the teacher evaluated the writings based on Jacobs et al.’s (1981) scoring profile (see Appendix B). Based on this profile a score was assigned to each testee. Since in this research two tests were needed, this test was repeated after about two months as the post-test. As for the reliability of the writing test scores, inter-rater reliability was used on the pre-test and post-test scores. All the writing tests were corrected by the teacher and her colleague. In cases where the ratings were different, the mean of the rating scores were used. To check the reliability of the tests, Pearson correlation was obtained between the ratings of teacher 1 and those of teacher 2. The results are presented in Table 4.
### Table 4: Correlation between two ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>Teacher1</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.978**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Teacher1</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.988**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The results of the correlation showed that the writing test was reliable. The reliabilities of the pre-test and post-test were r=.978 and r=.988 respectively. In the next step, to check the stability of the scores, the correlation values were checked by the inter-rater reliability formula. The results are presented in equation 3.1.

\[
\text{Inter-rater reliability} = \frac{Z_r}{1+r}
\]

Post-test inter-rater reliability = \(\frac{Z_{.988}}{1+.988}\) = .989

Pre-test inter-rater reliability = \(\frac{Z_{.978}}{1+.978}\) = .984

Based on the results of the inter-rater reliability formula, the scores had stability, and therefore the tests and the scores were reliable.

The writing test was constructed by the researchers and was checked by two other English teachers to make sure that it was assessing the writing production ability of the students based on the instructions and the writing exercises of the pre-university English book.

2. Short story book. Three short stories were used in this research. One week after dividing the students into two groups, the students in the experimental groups were given the first short story. The first short story was The Gift of the Magi by O.Henry. All the copies of the short story were online printable versions and were prepared by the researchers. Students had two weeks to read the first short story, and they could ask any question they had concerning the story. Then they had one week without any short story reading. The second short story was given to them at the beginning of the fourth week. The second short story was The Necklace by Guy de Maupassant. The same procedures were repeated for the second and third short stories. The third short story was The Lottery Ticket by Anton Chekhof.

3. Course evaluation questionnaire. After the post-test, the students in the experimental group were given a course evaluation questionnaire. The teacher also answered a course evaluation questionnaire. The aim of the students’ questionnaire was to find out whether the students of the experimental group thought that reading short stories had any effect on their writing ability or not. The aim of the teacher’s questionnaire was to look for teacher’s opinion about the program and the process of the language learning. The course evaluation questionnaires were two distinct evaluation questionnaires for both teachers and students that were provided by ministry of education and were given to schools. These questionnaires were used for class evaluation at the end of the school year. In the student questionnaire, the students were asked to evaluate the course and to highlight the strong and the weak points of the materials used in classrooms and also the teachers’ methodology. The teachers’ questionnaires gathered information on the materials used in classrooms, the class progress, and the students’ total accomplishment. Both students and teachers were asked to give their further suggestions.

**Procedure of the study**

At the beginning of the study, the researchers asked permission of the school Principal in order to conduct the study in the school. Then to choose a homogeneous group of students, the researchers obtained the students’ scores of the previous year final exam. After that the researchers calculated the mean and standard deviation of the students’ scores and those whose scores were within one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected (n=47). In the next stage each student was given a number and then based on the systematic random sampling (i.e. odd and even numbers), they were randomly divided into two groups. One group just received the teaching of school book (control group), while the students of the other group were reading three short stories in addition to their school book (experimental group). It took two months to conduct the study.
RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Paired-samples t-test

After dividing the students into two groups, one group was treated as the experimental group and the other group as the control group. The students of the experimental group were given three short stories during the time of the study. These students also received the pre-university English book as the main teaching material of the course. Since the students who were in the control group received the pre-university English book as well, the short story books were considered as the treatment materials of the study. The treatment of the study was reading short stories during the time of the study, and the aim was to check the effects of the treatment. Two writing tests (a pre-test and a post-test) were given to all the students. A paired-sample t-test was run to observe the effects of the treatment. Mean and gain scores were calculated to check the effects of the treatment. The descriptive statistics of the scores obtained from the writing pre-test and post-test of both groups showed that while the mean scores of experimental group’s pre-test and post-test were 65.58 and 71.29, respectively, the control group’s mean scores were in turn 70.13 and 72.91. These scores are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics on the writing scores of control and experimental groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experimental</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>65.58</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.958</td>
<td>2.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>71.29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.889</td>
<td>2.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>70.13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.563</td>
<td>2.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>72.91</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.876</td>
<td>2.059</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of the pre-test and post-test of the groups showed that the students’ scores had improved in both groups. To analyze the improvement and to check the effects of the treatment, a t-test was run and the results are presented in Table 6. Based on the information in Table 6, the significance of the tests of both groups was .000 and since it was smaller than .05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the writing proficiency of both groups had improved.

Table 6: Paired samples t-test of the scores of control and experimental groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Effect size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>-5.708</td>
<td>2.422</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>-6.731</td>
<td>-4.685</td>
<td>-11.545</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>-2.783</td>
<td>1.906</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>-3.607</td>
<td>-1.958</td>
<td>-7.002</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gain score

Based on the results of the paired-samples t-test, the writing proficiency of both groups had improved. The next step was to calculate the gain scores of each group and to run an independent samples t-test. The independent samples t-test would show us the effectiveness of the treatment. To calculate the gain score, the pre-test scores of the students...
of each group were subtracted from their post-test scores. Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics of the gain scores of both groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gain score</td>
<td>experimental</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>2.422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>control</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.906</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean of the experimental group’s gain score was 5.71, while the control group had a mean gain score of 2.78. In Table 8, the gain scores are compared, and results are presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>2.025</td>
<td>.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>4.612</td>
<td>43.385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The null hypothesis of this test was that the improvement of both groups would be the same and the treatment would have no effects on the improvement of the experimental group. Based on the information in Table 8, the significance value of the test was .000; therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that the improvement of the experimental group was not by chance, and in fact it was the result of the given treatment. Since the treatment was considered effective, the effect size of the groups was calculated in order to observe the effectiveness of the treatment. Equation 5.1 was used to calculate the effect size.

(5.1) \( \eta^2 \) = \( \frac{\tau^2}{1+\tau} \)

\( \eta^2 = \frac{4.589^2}{1+4.589^2} = 0.318 \)

The effect size was large (.31).

**Course evaluation**

At the end of the study, two questionnaires were used to find out about the opinions of the students who were in the experimental group and their teacher about the program and teaching materials that were used in the process of the study. The course evaluation questionnaire of the students consisted of twenty eight items. The answers of the students to these items were obtained and their total scores were calculated. According to the interpretation’s guideline of the questionnaire, the scores could be in the range of 28-140. Based on the guidelines of the interpretation, those who scored between the ranges of 20-65, believed that the course was not an effective course; those who scored between the ranges of 65-113 believed that the course was an ordinary course and the students who scored between the ranges of 113-140 believed that the course programs were effective (Figure 1).
Figure 1: The pie graph of the course evaluation of the students

Figure 1 shows that 79.17% of the students of the experimental group had found the program and the teaching materials of the study, as effective. None of the students of the experimental group were unsatisfied with the program or the teaching materials and 20.83% of the students believed that the course was like the other English courses. A comparison of the results of this questionnaire showed that most of the students were satisfied with the integration of short stories in the process of English learning program.

The course evaluation questionnaire that was given to the teacher had 16 items. Based on the interpretation guidelines of the questionnaire, a score in the range of 64-80, indicated that the program of the course was excellent; 48-63 indicated that the program of the course was good; 32-47 indicated that the program of the course was fair and 16-31 indicated that the program of the course was poor. As it is shown in Table 9, the score of the teacher was 72 and therefore the teacher considered the program of the course as an excellent one.

Table 9: Course evaluation of the teacher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation ranges</th>
<th>Teacher’s evaluation score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-31 poor</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-47 fair</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-63 good</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-80 excellent</td>
<td>72 (excellent)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION

Discussion and interpretation of the findings of the research

The answer to the first and second questions of the study was that: there is a positive relationship between reading short stories and writing proficiency and both the students and the teacher consider short story as a beneficial tool in the process of language learning. In fact reading short stories helped the students with their writing skill. Erkaya (2009) had also emphasized the importance of integrating short stories into the curriculum. Furthermore, Hajimaibodi (2009) considered short stories as a tool that could enhance the reading comprehension skill. The
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findings of a research by Hismanoglu (2005) were in line with the finding of this research. The result of the study was also in line with the findings of Cassell (2004); although the participants of his research were children, the findings were similar.

The findings of the study revealed that reading short story would have positive effects on the writing proficiency of English learners. The findings also showed that the students were satisfied with reading short stories; moreover the students believed that reading short stories would help them in the process of improving their writing skill. Based on these findings, the following conclusions were made:

- It was concluded that reading short story could enhance the writing proficiency of learners and thus it should be used as a teaching material of the ESL/EFL classes.
- It was concluded that since integration of short story was interesting and desirable for both students and teachers; therefore, it should be part of the teaching materials of all ESL/EFL classes.

The conclusions that were drawn about the integration of short story in the ESL/EFL classes, lead to the opinion that students, who received short stories as a reading material in addition to the main book, found it interesting. Thus it was suggested that the teachers should be careful about selecting the proper and interesting materials that could attract the students’ attention.

Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research
In this study all the participants were female students. Thus it would be beneficial to conduct further research with both male and female participants and to consider the gender difference effects. Also the population of the participants of this study was 47. Therefore, it would be beneficial to replicate this study with a larger number of participants and compare the results.

The short stories of this research were all classical short stories. Thus a further study, in which different genres of short story (for example fiction story or detective story) are used would be more desirable. Such study may help both students and teachers with the information about the effectiveness of selecting the stories according to the students’ interests.

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Appendix A. Writing test

Dear participant, the aim of this test is to evaluate your writing ability. In part A of the test, you are asked to choose one of the topics and write 3-4 paragraphs about it. In part B, two questions are asked. For the question number one, read the given sentences carefully and continue the text with 2-3 sentences of your own. For the last question, use the given words and write a paragraph.

Name ……………………

A. Free writing:
A1. Choose one of the following topics and write three to four paragraphs about it.
   - Child labor problems in Iran
   - Poverty

B. Controlled writing:
B1. Complete the following sentences with 2 or 3 sentences of your own.
   - You have certainly seen and used a computer. A computer is a programmable machine that accepts data and processes them into information we can use. Its purpose is to………..

B2. Use the given words and write a paragraph.
   Mother Teresa/ nun/ suffering/ poverty/ devote/ voluntary/ financial/ charity


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-27. Excellent to very good: knowledgeable, substantive, thorough development of text,</td>
<td>17-14. Good to average: somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>relevant to assigned topic</td>
<td>out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26-22. Good to average: some knowledge of subject, adequate range, limited development</td>
<td>13-10. Fair to poor: non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the text, mostly relevant to topic but lacks detail</td>
<td>sequencing and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21-17. Fair to poor: limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16-13. Very poor: does not show knowledge of subject, non-substantive, not pertinent,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-18. Excellent to very good: fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/supported, succinct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>well-organized, logical sequencing, cohesive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17-14. Good to average: somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-10. Fair to poor: non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9-7. Very poor: does not communicate, no organization, not enough to evaluate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-18. Excellent to very good: sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice and usage,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>word form mastery, appropriate register</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17-14. Good to average: adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>usage but meaning not obscured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-10. Fair to poor: limited range, frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice or usage,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meaning confused or obscured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9-7. Very poor: essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
word form, not enough to evaluate

25-22. Excellent to very good: effective complex construction, few errors of agreement/tense/number/word order/word function/articles/pronouns/proposition

21-18. Good to average: effective but simple construction, minor problem in complex construction, several errors of agreement/tense/number/word order/word function/articles/pronouns/proposition but meaning seldom obscured

17-11. Fair to poor: major problems in simple/complex construction, frequent errors of negation/agreement/tense/number/word order/word function/articles/pronouns/proposition or fragments/run-ons/deletions, meaning confused or obscured

10-5. Very poor: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, not enough to evaluate
AN OVERVIEW ON THE SECOND LANGUAGE WRITTEN ERROR TREATMENT

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Islamic Azad University of Takestan

ABSTRACT
Numerous studies have focused on L2 written errors and corrective strategies to improve learners’ writing accuracy, but choosing the best method or strategy to correct written errors has always been a topic of controversy, and still there is no solution that scholars can agree on.

The purpose of the current review was to study written errors, their causes, sources, types, and the types of error treatment methods. For treatment of written errors, it is suggested that teachers should pay attention to the error types, purpose and context of language learning, and affective factors influencing the process of learning. It is also discussed that the disagreement in the findings of the previous studies on the treatment of written errors are due to the methodologies used.

KEY WORDS: error, feedback, error correction, L2 writing

INTRODUCTION
Making errors is an inevitable part of life, and language learning, as a unique characteristic of human beings, is not an exception (Maicusi, Panayota, & López, 2000). Writing, like other language skills, has been a matter of concern in error correction studies. Error, error correction and the efficacy of written error treatment in L2 have always been a challenge in language teaching. There are various kinds of errors in L2 writings, and different strategies have been suggested for correcting these errors.

ERRORS
To find out about the best error treatment method, it is necessary to define error first. Different authors tried to define error and its type. Generally speaking, error means mistake, but in linguistic terms, the concept of error seems to be more complicated and different from error. McDonogh (2000) distinguished two situations to define error. In the first situation, learners may know a correct generalization or rule about the target language, but forget to apply it due to the stress or factors other than language factors. In the second situation, learners may have an incorrect rule in their mind, from whatever source. McDonogh (2000) calls the errors of the first situation ‘mistake’ or ‘lapse’ and errors of second situation as ‘error’. Corder (1967) distinguished errors as ‘errors of competence’ and ‘errors of performance’. He calls errors of competence ‘error; and errors of performance ‘mistake’. According to Corder (1967), discrimination between error and mistake is highly important; if learner can recognize that the form produced was incorrect, then it is a ‘mistake’ or ‘lapse’, if not, that would be an ‘error’. Self correction is another test to distinguish error from mistake. Learners are able to self correct mistakes, but errors would appear repeatedly in learners’ language. Lee (1990) discussed that definition of error in English language teaching is different from linguistics, and psycholinguistics definition. In ELT, error refers to the “pedagogical notion” of error and incorrect forms belong to competence and performance of L2 learners, but in the linguistic term error refer to the incorrect forms in the performance of native speakers (Lee, 1990).
ERROR CORRECTION AND FEEDBACK

Mistakes in spoken language may be allowed without being corrected because the message can normally be understood with the help of non-verbal cues and signals, but errors should be treated more carefully in written language, because unlike speaking they cannot be corrected after they are produced, or errors may hinder communication because the only means of conveying the message is the language (Lee, 1990).

There have been different views on the existence of the errors in learners’ language. Corder (1967) believed that errors occur because of the inefficacies in language teaching methods. So, for correcting learners’ errors, the inefficacies in teaching methods should be studied and treated.

Teachers play at least 4 roles when correcting L2 writings; they are a “respondent”, a “writing guide”, a “grammanner”, and a “judge” (Keh, 1990). In the respondent role, teachers show their position toward the content of the writing. As a guide, teachers have their respondent role and they also guide learners through some parts of the writing and may ask them to clarify or revise some parts, but do not correct the errors. As a respondent, teachers help learners to find the correct form themselves but help them to find the right forms. In the grammarian role, teachers present grammar rules and mistakes, and comment on the part that needs revision. And finally as a judge, teachers grade writings and evaluate the final product.

Zourou (2008) believed that the type of feedback provided to learners should depend on the learners’ purpose of studying and writing. The feedback, according to her, should be in harmony with the context that the learner is situated in, and the provided feedback has to be in accordance with what learners expect to learn and their needs.

Hendrickson (1984) believed that to choose the right error treatment method, teachers should have 4 factors in perspective:

1. Learners’ level of proficiency in the target language
2. Learners’ purposes of target language learning
3. Types of errors
4. Individual learners’ attitudes toward error correction

Enginarlar (1993) used a questionnaire to find out about the feedbacks that language learners found more effective. The result of the study showed that in students’ opinion “attention to linguistic errors, guidance on compositional skills, and overall evaluative comments on content and quality of writing” were the most beneficial feedbacks.
Direct, indirect, and metalinguistic correction

Teachers’ reaction to the learners’ errors is generally referred to error correction. Lee (1997) classified correction of written errors in terms of ‘direct’ and ‘indirect correction’. Direct correction is when the teacher tells learner that the form used is incorrect and tells the correct structure, and indirect correction is when the teacher shows learners that the form in their writing is incorrect and guide them to revise that. Lee (1997) also argued that indirect correction is not correcting the errors, but the “error feedback”. Error feedback differs from overt correction; feedback is a technique that enables learners to find out about their problematic structure, while correction is providing learners with the exact correct form. He also claimed that error feedback may help learners more in their writings.

Ellis (2009) classified corrective feedbacks provided by teachers in 3 groups: direct, indirect and metalinguistic. In direct method the teachers mentions the errors and provides the correct forms, but in indirect correction, the teacher locates the errors and guides the learners to revise the errors themselves and does not mention the right forms. In metalinguistic correction, the teacher provides description of the error and learners should read and correct their errors. Description of errors can be in the form of error code, or by giving numbers to the errors and providing the grammatical description at the bottom of the text.

Beuningen et al. (2012) studied the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedbacks and found that both direct and indirect corrective feedbacks helped writers to improve their accuracy. The outcome of their study showed that direct and indirect corrective feedback had short-time effect on accuracy of L2 writings, but only indirect feedbacks had long-term effect on learners’ writings.

Erel and Bulut (2007) in their study tried to find out which of two different error-feedback strategies, direct vs. indirect coded, would be more effective for learners with regard to the number of errors they committed in their writing activities. They found out that both students who received indirect coded feedback strategy and direct correction decreased their errors and there was no significance difference between them, but the average number of errors showed that indirect way was more successful in eliminating errors and learners committed fewer errors in feedback correction than in error correction.

Explicit and implicit error correction

Hashimoto (2004) presented another categorization for error treatment. He classified errors into explicit and implicit error correction; explicit correction was defined as a treatment in which the teacher directly mentions the incorrect form and provides the exact correct form, and on the contrary, implicit correction referred to a type of correction in which the teacher indirectly mentions the error and help learners to correct it on their own or by the help of other learners.

Focused versus unfocused corrective feedback

Ellis (2009) distinguished two types of error feedbacks according to the aspect of writing errors that teachers address; focused and unfocused feedback. In unfocused feedback, the teacher corrects all the possible errors while in focused feedback only certain types of errors are corrected. Providing correction for all errors could be time consuming and will put too much burden on teachers and language learners (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008), and according to Bitchener and Knoch (2009) correcting various linguistic categories can cause “cognitive overload” for learners.

In focused corrective feedback, the teacher selects only specific types of errors to correct (Ellis et al., 2008). Focused corrective feedback may be highly focused, which is limited to correcting a certain type of errors, or they may be less focused, which corrects more than one type of errors but still ignores some errors (Ellis et al., 2008). Ellis et al. (2008) believed that focused corrective feedback could be more advantageous than unfocused corrective feedback for it can help learners to concentrate on certain limited type of errors, and can learn more and better about that type of error and how correct or avoid that.
Several studies on the effectiveness of focused corrective feedbacks (like Sheen, 2007; Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch; 2009, Sheen at al.; 2009) showed that the writing accuracy of students who received written focused corrective feedback was improved more than the writing of students who received unfocused feedback or no feedback. On the other hand, Ellis et al. (2008) found both focused and unfocused feedbacks were equally effective.

Electronic corrective feedback
By development of science and technology, new ways of correcting learners’ errors have emerged. Electronic feedback, new electronic means for error correction, provides learners corrective feedback by computers (Ellis, 2009).

Yeh and Lo (2009) and Nagata (1997) found slightly better improvement in writing and correcting errors of L2 learners by online feedback than the conventional paper-based feedback.

One short coming of electronic feedback is that learners have to have access to the computer and they have to be able to use that, a necessary condition which some learners may not meet.

Reformulation
In this approach, a native speaker reads the learners’ writing and rewrites the whole text to correct the errors and modify the text to the extent that it sounds native like, without changing the tone and content of the L2 learner. In reformulation, the native speaker’s writing is a model for L2 students to use the proper forms and expressions, and to find about their own errors (Ellis, 2008).

In a study conducted by Sachs and Polio (2007) on the effectiveness of reformulation, it was found that traditional direct error-correction approach was more effective in improving L2 learners writing accuracy.

One problem associated with reformulation is that reading the whole text to rewrite all the parts is time consuming for teacher, and it may not be possible to have native teachers in some L2 learning contexts.

LEARNERS’ RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK
Error correction in EFL writing classes can be used as a consciousness-raising activity (Naeini, 2008). She believed that feedback on errors and form-focused instruction would draw learners’ attention to the form, and not only the meaning, of the language they are using for communication. Lightbown (1998) believed that focusing on form in the class can help second language acquisition. He suggested teachers that explicit explanation about the form of the language can be facilitative in L2 learning.

So, a successful corrective feedback can help learners to uptake and correct their uptake (El Tatawy, 1998).

EFFICACY OF WRITTEN ERROR TREATMENT
There have always been debates on the efficacy of written error correction. Valero et al. (2008) believed that errors should be corrected because if they are left uncorrected they become “fossilized”, and Antos et al. (2010) found positive effects of corrective feedbacks on learners’ noticing and feedback. On the other hand, Krashen (1982) believed that continuous correction can make affective filters which prevent L2 students to practice writing.

Grammar correction is an inevitable part writing correction for many teachers, but Truscott (1996) argued that correcting grammatical errors could be disadvantageous in improving learners’ writings. He then discussed that students whose errors are not corrected will develop more positive attitudes toward writing, and are willing to write more in comparison with students that every little grammatical errors of their writing have been corrected. This positive attitude encourages students to write more, and in long term they would make better writers than students who are corrected continuously and write less. Time is another important factor for language learners and teachers, so to save time Truscott (1996) believed that grammar should not be corrected in writing; learners whose grammatical errors are constantly corrected spend more time to think and correct their mistakes and will have less time to spend on “productive learning objectives”, and teachers who spend too much time correcting grammatical errors can use this time to focus more on “productive processes”. So, he suggested extensive reading and writing to practice grammar and to develop accuracy of L2 writers rather than grammar correction.
On the contrary, Ferris (1999) believed that error correction effectively improves learners’ writing accuracy, and what Truscott (1996) claimed to be harmful or ineffective is poor error correction, not the effective one.

Truscott (1999) in support of his previous findings claimed that no positive impacts of the error correction that previous studies suggested can help learners to overcome the negative effects of correction. Beuningen et al. (2012) studied the impact of error treatment on L2 learners’ writing and found that “comprehensive correction” can help students to improve their writing accuracy.

Hashimoto (2004) discussed that not all errors should be corrected. He believed that the focus of error treatment should be on frequent errors, the errors related to the topics that learners have already studied them in the L2, and the errors that correcting them would prevent communication failure. By frequent errors, he meant those errors that are repeated many times when learners are learning a new language, and emphasized that correcting repeated errors and allocating more time to these types would be more beneficial than correcting all errors. Errors which learners have already studied about should also be corrected by teachers. Hashimoto (2004) mentioned that students will be confused if teachers do not correct the errors learners have learnt their structure in their lessons. For the last factor in error correction, error gravity, he classifies errors to two categories of “local errors” and “global errors”. Local errors are the structures which seem correct according to the L2 rules, but not used by native speakers. And global errors are those structures that prevent successful communication and may cause misunderstanding. Then, it can be concluded that global errors should be prioritized to be corrected.

Studying the controversies in the outcome of different studies, Guénette (2007) argued that the conflicts in the findings can be due to the different methodology and the effects of the uncontrolled variables.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

In this review error, different systems of classifying them, errors of writing, and their treatments were studied. As different kinds of errors are committed in L2 writings, different ways are also available for correcting or treating these errors. Error correction should pay attention to learners’ affective factors, their purpose of writing in L2 and the context in which they are learning the language.

The impact of error treatment on students’ writing has been widely studied in the literature. Results of numerous studies ((Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener et al., 2005; Ellis et al., 2008, Chandler (2003) and Ferris (1999) showed that error treatment had positive effects on learners’ writing accuracy, and also helped noticing and uptake. There have also been studies (Truscott, 1999, 2004, 2007; Truscott, & Hsu, 2008) that argued against error treatment and believed that error correction can cause affective filters which is harmful for the process of learning to write.

It is also discussed that the disagreement on the outcome of the research may be due to the different research designs of the previous studies (Guénette, 2007).

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THE ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER, THE THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSLATORS AND THEIR PRACTICAL TRANSLATION SKILLS

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ABSTRACT
The present study, attempted to examine the relationship between gender and theoretical knowledge of translation and practical skills on translation in Iranian translators. For this purpose, 35 Master of Art students both males and females studying English translation were selected from Mashhad Ferdowsi University in Iran. In order to collect data two tests were applied: one made up of questions selected from the Ph.D and M.A entrance exams together with a test of actual translation from Persian to English and the reverse. Data analysis and statistical calculations through T-TEST, one way ANOVA and Pearson Correlation revealed that Gender was an important factor on theoretical scores, while it was not an important factor on practical translation (English to Persian and Persian to English translation).

KEYWORDS: Translation, theory, theoretical knowledge, translation Studies, gender

INTRODUCTION
Science and technology are developing rapidly and cultural, economic and political growths make some difficulties for human adjustment on information. The language barriers and assimilation of terms in different languages are some of these difficulties we can mention to. Overcoming these barriers is vital and translation can play this role. Entering globalization in modern world we can say that translation is a fundamental issue. In the process of exchange and cross communication translators are central. As Levy (1963) said translation studies have emerged as a new international and academic field. In the fifties and the seventies centuries translation studies shaped the basic part of applied and general linguistics which were seen as the only source of translation studies. Holmes (1988) was the first to offer a framework for this regulation. He divided translation into two principle area: translation theory and applied translation studies dealing with activities such as the training of translators and the condition of translation aids for translators as well as translation policy. The need for systematic study of translation comes directly from the problems happening during the actual translation process and it is essential for those working in the field to bring their practical experience to theoretical discussion.

Many scholars attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Today, the dominating view is that theory and practice should be integrated (Leinhardt et al,1995). According to Hill (2002) several models of professional education on the continuing cycle of interaction between theory, practice and reflection as the way to create changes in students’ thoughts and practices. Another effective new model of professional education is the ‘realistic approach’ that directs the theory towards the largest challenges of practice (Korthagen & Kessel, 1999; Korthagen, 2001). The increasing awareness of the new approaches in translation education has made us interested in the notion of relationship between theory and practice in translation. The study of translation and the training of professional translators is an important aim of scholars. The need to the process of teaching and learning is obviously felt in translator and interpreter training programs around the world.

This study will investigate on one hand, how academic theories and beliefs are reflected in the work place and in a translated texts, on the other hand, it investigates the effect of gender on translation of English to Persian and Persian to English. This study will help the students of translation to get familiar with the possible challenges like including theory into practice and the effect of theoretical knowledge on translation. The study is useful for the students
Studies”. This term was coined by Holmes in 1972, the use of a label that had proved productive in the field of translation theory and translation science transformed into “Translation Studies”. This term was coined by Holmes in 1972, the use of a label that had proved productive in the field of translation studies.

Statement of the problems
Problems encountered during the actual translation process show the necessity of systematic study of translation. It is essential for those working in the field to bring their practical experience to theoretical discussion. Separation of theory from practice is a problem for translation. Baker (1992, p.248) mentioned that as a discipline, translation studies has reached a stage where it was both ready for and needed the techniques and methodology of corpus linguistics in order to make a major jump from prescriptive statements, from methodologies to theorizing, and from individual and fragmented pieces of research to powerful generalizations. In that case the distinction between the theoretical and applied branches of the discipline will be apparent and believable.

The realization that translations are never produced in a vacuum, regardless of time and culture, and the desire to explain the time and culture bound criteria which are at play, result in a shift away from a normative and prescriptive methodology towards a descriptive methodology for a study of the subject (Hermans, 1985).

The situation for the realization of equivalence differs from one language culture to another. A valid strategy for translation in the past is not acceptable. Varieties of linguistics continue to govern the field in the 1990s. Students spend hours taking course but when they confront with direct situations, they are unable to use their learning in practice. “There is no balanced curriculum for translation theory and practice to provide a solid grounding in a professional setting. If a particular kind of source text couldn’t be interpreted accurately by a translator, the target text does not achieve its particular function. The gap between theory and practice is the main problem. There are big gaps between the needs of translation training and the points offered by theory. From one aspect, students are disappointed at being troubled with theoretical reflections (translation theory and general linguistics) which they feel have nothing to do with the activity of translating, and from another aspect, scholars talk irreverently of translators who are unwilling to investigate the theoretical basis of their work, therefore reducing it to a simple practical skill” (Snell-Hornby, 2006).

Toury (1995, p. 69) claims that achievements of actual studies can themselves supply us with clues as to necessary and possible methodological improvements’ and that if we hold up research until the most systematic methods have been found, we might never get any research done, the basic methodological problem is still unresolved. In general, translating needs to unite theory and practice in order to be successful.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Translation is a complex activity which requires both great patience and impeccable mastery. It can be a process or a kind of product. These two aspects of translation are interdependent and interrelated. Invisibility” is the term Venuti (1995, p.1) used to describe the translation and translator’s situation. According to him a translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic specialty makes it seem obvious giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer’s personality or intention or the essential meaning of the text (Venuti 1995, p. 1). According to Venuti (1998, p. 135) translation is powerful and it can represent foreign cultures. The selection of foreign texts and development of translation strategies can make domestic traditions for foreign literatures, therefore show access, exclusions and peripheries that deviate current in the foreign language.

The first efforts at theory can be traced back over 2000 years to Cicero and Horace. To the second half of the 20th century this discussion continued when more systematic analyses were undertaken by western European theoreticians. These systematic analyses, which raised translation studies from its role of being a language learning activity, centered on theories of translation in new linguistic, literally, cultural and philosophical contexts (Munday 2001, p.162).

In the 1970s, changes took place that translation theory and translation science transformed into “Translation Studies”. This term was coined by Holmes in 1972, the use of a label that had proved productive in the field of
humanities (Holmes, 1988, p. 70). Some scholars (Hermans, 1999, preface), for the first time looked at translation in a descriptive term, so translated texts were noticed as texts in their own right (Even-Zohar, 1978).

According to Benjamin (2008) there are many reasons to say that developing the pragmatic aspects of a linguistic theory of translation is important. First, pragmatic had been ignored by the linguistics who tried to create a general theory in the 1950s and the 1960s. Second,

A pragmatic theory can be used more than any other theories like semantic, syntactic or phonetic, because they are considered as a micro-linguistic theory and a micro-linguistic theory of translation is impossible, while micro-linguistic practice is best left to itself or to translator trainers and teachers. A pragmatic theory of translation must be illustrated, and illustration involves the micro-linguistic aspect. The terms of theory and practice are used frequently by scholars and translators. Some translation scholars maintain that they are working together while in the sight of some others there is a difference between theory and practice. Many studies suggest that there is a gap between what is taught by university and the action of translation.

An interesting discussion of the theory and practice is given by De Beaugrande (2000, p. 27). He declares that the relation between theory and practice should be dialectical by the nature, where the two sides interact and guide each other as they co-evolve in strategic contact. Several models of professional education focus on the continuing cycle of interaction between theory, practice and reflection as the way to create changes in students’ attitudes and practices (Hill, 2000, p. 54). According to Vreugdenhil (2000) the theory-practice problem is a ‘theory-student’ ‘teacher-practice’ problem. To deal with it he developed a schedule, including three components:

- The objective theories or, more in general, the information available;
- The subjective theories of student teachers;
- The everyday practice as experienced in schools. According to his assumption, two inter-linked process of adaptation between the three components will bridge the gap between theory and practice. The first process consists of student teachers restructing the theories that are instructed to them. Consequently, student teachers have to formulate for themselves meaningful knowledge they can apply in the classroom. They have to be trained to act in the class in accordance with their renewed knowledge. They can develop their subjective theories about teaching. The second process is matching their subjective theories to the particular situation. After investigating they can formulate a set of rules to act adequately. To bridge the gap between theory and practice we have to take into account what is already in the mind of the student teachers about the teaching (Vreugdenhil, 2000, p. 3).

Kiraly (2000), points out there is sufficient room for the more consistent accomplishment of social practical approaches in translator training, with large parts of the program still conquered by teacher-centered methods. He calls for a ‘much-needed’ shift in translator education (2000, p. 27). According to him the goal of translator education must be to help students develop their own self-concept and to help ‘in the mutual production of individually adapted tools that will allow every student to role within the language negotiation community leading graduation’ (Kiraly, 2003, p. 49).

Kiraly believes that learning should take place as a mutual social procedure in all translation relations, not just in special work assignments. In that environment, the trainer’s role is like a facilitator and should support students to find solutions. In translation teaching focus has been on the translation theory and translation practice. It means that Students became familiar with theories and then operated within a special theoretical approach for example functionalist approach. Translators produced a target text according to the source text and the culture and tradition in a country. Kiraly (2000) distinguishes between translation competence and translator competence. According to him translation competence signify all the specific skills need to produce a right target text, while translator competence means’ knowing how to work within the various overlapping communities of translators and subject matter expert for completing work mutually, to proper knowledge, norms and conventions; and to affect to the growing conversation that represents those communities’ (Kiraly, 2000, p. 13).

In Hong Kong and Taiwan, especially in Hong Kong, the teaching of translation as a university major began at an earlier time. The first translation program in Hong Kong started in Chinese university of Hong Kong (CUHK) in 1972. Li Defeng in Hong Long carried out interesting and critical examination of the curriculum design and teaching methodology of specialized translation courses (including courses on commercial translation, government document translation, science and technology translation, mass media translation, and legal translation). He made valuable suggestion on how to improve the course content and teaching methodologies along with educational curricular theories and thoughts on translation teaching (Li Defeng, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005). According to Sylvia Bernardini (2004, p. 19-22), people do not fully understand the important distinction between translator training and translator education. A vast expansion in specialized translating and interpreting programs has soared at both undergraduate and graduate level. These programs, which attract thousands of students, are mainly oriented towards training future professional commercial translators and interpreters in UK.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The following research questions are posed for the purpose of this study:
1. Is there any relationship between gender and theoretical knowledge?
2. Is there any relationship between gender and practical skill on translation?

METHODOLOGY

Participants
Participants selected for this study were chosen from M.A students of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. A total of 35 students including: 7 males and 28 females. The students who participated in this study were enrolled in the third semester so they had already passed two courses on translation. All the participants were Iranian and factors such as age and sex were assumed to be randomly distributed. Both males and females were given the same questions. Nearly 30 minutes was given for theoretical test. The questioner at the end included some questions showed participant’s interest in translation, their experience on translating and the years they have been translating. Participants were in different ages from 23 to 40.

Instruments
The results of this study have been drawn from two tests, theoretical and practical. The theoretical test, a collocation composed of 30 multiple-choice items adopted from M.A and PhD entrance exam, held in the years 2011, 2012, public and Azad University course in Iran. This test was chosen from M.A and PhD entrance exams, because they are made by the most qualified test makers and scholars of the country and altogether the test could be considered as valid. Selected questions were those only concerning translation theories and not linguistic or general proficiency. Students answered 30 questions related to theories of translation. The time given was 30 minutes for 30 questions. With this sample test just their knowledge on translation theories was examined.

A variety of texts on the scope of human science were selected to check the participants’ translation proficiency. Selected texts were about 40 lines including two parts, English to Persian and Persian to English translation. This practical exam was their term paper, so they answered carefully. Some parts of these texts were unseen and some others were seen because their proficiency on vocabulary was not important for this test and just the students’ proficiency in practical translation was the main point. They were free to use dictionary. Translation test was administered to all subjects at the end of the term. Their practical exam was written and scored by their professor considering the meaning and grammatical rules and instructions.

Procedure
In this study the performance of students in university course on theoretical and practical aspects was compared to assess the correlation between their theoretical knowledge and their practical skill in gender groups. Prior to the practical experiment on translation, the subjects were given a theoretical test as it was mentioned, a multiple choice test with 30 questions related to translation theories to evaluate students proficiency on theories, then at translation second stage at the end of the term they passed a practical exam to compare their dexterity on practice and theory.

A Practical test including Persian to English and English to Persian was employed to check their proficiency on both kind of translation. It consisted of 40 lines of a human science text to check just their ability on techniques of translation, not their vocabulary. The practical test was assigned by their professor considering grammatical points and meaning. Before the treatment of the participants (students), their professor and the researcher held a meeting and the researcher gave an overview of whatever needed to be done in the study helping them understand its core principle. The data were collected through these two tests. The purpose of this study was to help translators and students in translating field, using theory and practice at the same time specially theories which are more practical and functional. Munday (2001, p. 79) mentions that Skopos theory focuses on the purpose of the translation which establish the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed to produce a functionally adequate result. Therefore, in this theory we should know why a source text should be translated and why the function of the target text will be important for the translators. Munday writes that an important advantage of skopos theory is that it makes possible for a translator to translate the same text in different ways according to the purpose of the target text (ibid, p. 80). Functional approaches in translation studies can help translators to view the text as a kind of...
communicative unit and awareness of functional theories of translation make better the quality of students' translation.

RESULTS
To verify the scores of theoretical test and practical translation from English to Persian, a one-way ANOVA test was calculated.

Table 1: distribution of frequency and percentage of the sample scores according to translation from English to Persian and Persian to English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation scores</th>
<th>Eng. to Per.</th>
<th>Per. to Eng</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 24.9</td>
<td>5(14.3%)*</td>
<td>5(14.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49.9</td>
<td>9(25.7%)</td>
<td>10(28.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 74.9</td>
<td>13(37.1%)</td>
<td>12(34.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 100</td>
<td>8(22.9%)</td>
<td>8(22.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35(100%)</td>
<td>35(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number(percent)

The score is expressed in percentage to make all scores comparable. So the raw score is not important, only the percentage.

Table 2: English to Persian. * Persian to English. Cross tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per. to Eng.</th>
<th>0 - 24.9</th>
<th>25 - 49.9</th>
<th>50 - 74.9</th>
<th>75 - 100</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eng. to Per.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 24.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49.9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 74.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kappa Coefficient agreement and statistical result

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure of Agreement</th>
<th>Kappa</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kappa</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measure of agreement in Kappa in this study is (Kappa=0.096). In other words, the agreement between two variables is low so it is not significant (according to table 2).

Table 3: distribution of mean scores for theory in gender groups examined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25.70</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: the result of statistical exam, comparing theoretical scores in two groups by T-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-2.251</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>-7.10143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mean difference in gender groups (Male and Female) is compared. It is obvious from the table that mean difference of theoretical scores in females is 18.6±1.29 and mean difference for male is 25.7±3.7. Mean difference of theoretical scores in male and female is 7.101. According to the table there is a significant difference in theoretical scores between male and female, (p=0.031).

**Mean score of translation in gender groups**
Mean score of translation (from Persian to English and English to Persian) in males and females is presented in above table.

Tables 5 and 6 show the scores in two groups are very similar. Mean score of practical translation in females is 50.32±4.00, while this score in male is 50.30±6.39.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical translation</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>50.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>50.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: the result of statistical exam, comparing Practical translation scores in two groups by T-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>P value</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.002</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.999</td>
<td>.01571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result of these score makes clear that there is no significant difference in two groups. (p=0.999).

**Mean scores of English to Persian translation in gender groups**
As table 9 displays Mean scores of English to Persian translation in females are compared to the Mean scores of English to Persian in males.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eng. to Per.</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: the result of statistical exam, comparing English.to Persian scores in two groups by T-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.990</td>
<td>-.11929</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no significant difference in both groups. Mean score in females is 50.47±4.43, while this score in male is 50.59±8.97. Statistical test shows no significant difference in these groups. (p=0.99) p value is greater than 0.05.
Mean scores of Persian to English

Table 9: distribution of mean scores for Persian to English translation in gender groups examined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per. to Eng.</td>
<td>50.16</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50.01</td>
<td>6.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: the result of statistical exam, comparing Persian to English scores in two groups by T-Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-Test Result</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.988</td>
<td>.15071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table we can see that Mean scores of Persian to English translation in both gender groups are similar to their scores in translation of Persian to English, nearly 50. As it is shown in the table, comparison of translation scores in males and females, Mean scores of translation in females is equal to 50.16±4.77, while this scores in males is equal to 50.01±6.78. P-value of observed T-Testis (p=0.988), greater than .015, as a result there is no significant differences between two mentioned groups’ scores. According to the scores of practical translation (English to Persian and Persian to English) in both genders and T-Test was resulted that: Ho4 is accepted, because T observed is smaller than critical.

DISCUSSION
The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between gender, theoretical knowledge of translators and their practical translation skills (English to Persian and Persian to English). Consequently, a group of M.A students majoring in translation were selected. The finding of this study shows that students’ practical skill in translation was better than their theoretical knowledge. The result of students’ scores in practical translation was compared to their scores in theoretical exam in two gender groups in order to investigate, whether gender had any significant effect on students’ translation skill and their theoretical knowledge. This study shows that there was not any relationship between gender and translation capability, but there was a direct relationship between gender and theoretical knowledge.

CONCLUSION
This study attempts to undertake an approach seeking to know the difference between the translators’ theoretical knowledge and their practical skill in gender group, on translating field at the university level, undergraduate students. The finding of this study shows that students’ practical skill in translation both male and female was better than their theoretical knowledge, but male's theoretical scores were better than females.

Based on the findings of the present study, we can conclude, that gender is an important factor on theoretical scores.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
Like any other research, some unavoidable limitations, which may raise new questions for further researches in the same field in the future, will be imposed on this research. In addition to the small sample size and its short duration, some limitations are present in this study. Variables such as age and personal variables are not taken into account due to the limited number of the available participants. Another important restriction in this study can be related to the reliability of the theoretical test, due to lack of any other sources.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The researchers would like to thank all members who participated in this study. It is worth mentioning that this study has not received any funding from any sources except the researchers’ own financial sources.

REFERENCES
ABSTRACT
This study is an attempt to investigate the effect of weblogs on the improvement of Iranian EFL learners' writing skill. To achieve this goal, the researchers designed a weblog, which was shared by the treatment group of the study; the study had 50 EFL students divided into two groups of treatment and control. Mainly two steps were taken during the study, a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test administration was due to check the proficiency of the participants and the post to measure the impact of the study process. The data obtained from tests and questionnaires throughout the academic year 2012, and from comments made on the blog, revealed that the students responded positively to the use of the blogs inside a class. It was found that the blog helped them to improve their writing through the collaborative learning environment that was established and through the process of writing that was adopted. There was consensus that writing for an audience and peer review contributed to the development of the collaborative learning environment and this was conducive to developing writing skills.

KEYWORDS: Weblog, CMC (Computer Mediated Communication), Blogger, Webopedia, Blog

INTRODUCTION
The increasing use of the Internet over the past few years and its expansion to educational contexts has provided language learners with new opportunities for interaction outside classroom setting. Vygotsky (1978) confirmed this interaction as a key factor in enhancing language skills from a socio-cultural view of learning. Today, almost everyone has the experience of communicating with a peer via computer in one form of online communication or another, and in recent years, the use of such online communication has become very common in educational settings in general, and language learning in particular (Gorbanpoor, 2013). In language learning, online communication increases learners’ access to comprehensible input, and provides them with opportunities to practice producing the language (Warschauer, 1996). This is especially helpful in contexts where the foreign language is not widely used and learners do not have much exposure to language outside classroom setting. In addition to the mere provision of the learners with new opportunities to interact with others, online communication is said to have other advantages as well, which might make it more efficient in some aspects than the face-to-face communication taking place in the classroom.

Research by Bolke (2003) suggests that in online communication, participation on the part of learners is increased and involvement is more equalized among learners, unlike traditional classroom settings in which usually a small group of students tended to dominate the whole class interactions. The teacher’s role is not anymore one of the authorities disseminating knowledge, rather it changes to a moderator of discussions, thus increasing learners’ participation (Heift, 2007).

With the advent of computer-based technology, and its applications to teaching and learning, many students practice their writing skills synchronously as in chatting, instant messaging, and live discussion boards (Smith, 2006) or asynchronously as in emailing and blogging. Therefore, EFL teachers use these Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) platforms to develop and improve students’ English learning and collaborative skills in the cyberspace. The internet has provided a chance for writers to express their feelings and voice their ideas in a variety of ways such as
personal blogging, Face-book, Twitter, and other similar social networks. Bloch (2002) maintains that ELT research has tapped into the pedagogical implications of blogs for learning and teaching writing in English. Kim (2008), who has laid the theoretical foundations of blog use in educational contexts, has also underlined the significance of blogging.

Halik (2010) has considered blogs as an effective replacement for all CMC applications to English learning, taking into account socio-technical systems theory. In this concern, he has adeptly noted that the popularity of blogs among young people has made them interesting to educators seeking to integrate CMC tools at the university level. He has also asserted that these kinds of tools are seen as having the potential for enhancing student engagement and providing an environment for collaboration and creation of knowledge. Indeed, the emergence of these technologies encourages teachers to re-examine and redefine their goals for the classroom as king and demonstrating how established teaching practices can be expanded with the introduction of new technological practices. The interactive feature of blogging nominates it not only as a textually social environment, but also as a practice inducing a writing orientation embedded in a social network orientation. Based on the above-mentioned premises, the present paper aims to investigate the effect of using weblogs on Iranian EFL learners’ writing skill and their attitudes towards English learning.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
This study is designed to find out if the implementation of blog-based assignments as an extra and modern form of out-of-class activity would have any significant effect on learners’ writing ability. To achieve this goal, the researchers designed and launched a weblog for EFL learners participating in the study. The present study, thus, was an endeavor to explore how Iranian EFL learners responded to the use of blogs as a tool to improve their writing skill.

METHODOLOGY
This is a quasi-experimental study to examine the effects of blogging (blog-based writing activities) on the writing skills of the Iranian EFL learners. To accomplish the goals of this study, the researchers followed a number of steps. At first, in order to check the homogeneity of the participants, a standard proficiency test was administered to make sure the participants were homogeneous in terms of their proficiency level. Once the preliminary test was administered and the group members were selected out, the researchers designed a weblog called “Research.blog.com” which was launched in the Blogfa.com, a powerful service provider to design and manage personal weblogs. The main objective of this weblog was to compare the members of treatment group, as the main users of this weblog, with the members of the control group who received writing instruction through the traditional classroom-based method.

Participants
The participants of this study were 60 students (23 males & 37 females), all of the subjects majored in English Translation at Islamic Azad University (Islamshahr branch). In order to have the subjects fully accompany through the research, I tried to give a general explanation of what will be going on through the research at the beginning of the study. The participant’s age ranged from 20 to 27. The subjects were randomly divided into two groups of 30. The decision as to which of the two groups being experimental and which one as control was also made randomly; thus, the first group treated as experimental and the second one as control.

To make sure that the students placed in the experimental group would have no problem with blog-based activities, they were asked to check if they all had email accounts and access to the Internet at the beginning of the course. They, rather, all had the basic knowledge about using the Internet, and since signing up and checking email and blog do not require much techno-literacy on the part of users, they did not need any special instruction in this regard. In regard with the control group, they were supposed to do their writing activities as scheduled and submit their jobs to their teacher weekly. Simply put, the distinctive feature between the first and the second group was the setting of writing where the control group used the traditional paper-based writing methods while the experimental group employed the computer-based writing techniques.
**Instrumentation**

*Pre-Test:* An essay-type test was administered to check the general proficiency of the participants. As the test proved that the majority of participants were homogeneous, they were divided into two equal groups in terms of their scores on the test. All the way through the research, the students in the experimental group involved were in an active methodology in dealing with the writing course syllabus and participating in blogs to practice writing skills and the control group followed the traditional class-based instruction methods, such as using paper-based dictionaries etc. In sum, the purpose of pretesting students’ was to establish both groups’ equivalence on English proficiency before the experiment, and to use the pretesting information for later comparisons with the post test. The test was administered in 50 minutes.

*Class blog:* The blog created in this website was accessible to the participants, but as for posting new topics and even for commenting on the posts, the blog provided a feature which let the administrator customize the people who were allowed to contribute to the content by posting new topics or comments. In other words, the administrator could choose to allow everyone to post on the blog, or else, he or she could moderate the privacy of the blog and let only the invited people who were members of the blog to submit new posts.

The main posts of the blog started by the administrator (i.e. one of the researchers), stating the topics about which the participants were supposed to write. They were required to write and submit their writing activities in the comment bar of the blog. The participants were also asked to check their classmates’ activities and send their comments as well. The editing window of the blog comment section included a spell-checker feature, which prevented the participants from doing probable spelling errors by underlining the misspelled word. However, it did not have the more complex features included in word processor programmers such as Microsoft Office Word, which provides users with more advanced writing features like grammar checker, thesaurus, etc.

Since the research was already programmed for eight weeks, eight topics were uploaded on the weblog screen by the researchers. Before choosing the topics, there was a consultation between the researchers and the participants, because the motivation of the participants was important to the researchers, as a result of our consultation, the topics were mostly dominated by social topics. The given topics were as bellow:

- Write about your last trip
- Write about your city
- How can we make good friends?
- Regarding genders, which one is adept at language learning, males or females?
- Write about your social troubles.
- Where do you wish to spend your next vacation?
- What is the dress code in your country? (Clothing do’s and don’ts)
- Is staying in shape important to you?
- What do you usually do to keep fit?

The mentioned topics were presented to the experimental group within eight weeks. At the beginning of each week, the researcher started a topic in a new post and students were to contribute it by writing their own posts. They needed to submit at least three posts for each topic, either replying to the teacher’s original post at the beginning of the thread, or commenting on their other friends’ postings.

Since the blog featured threaded (nested) comments, students were able to choose to write in response to the original post by the teacher at the top of the thread, or else to write a comment in response to other classmates’ posts (comments and sub-comments). This way they were encouraged to read all the posts by other members, which was a very effective strategy to make reading and writing connections. It should be mentioned that the treatment group was not limited only to a certain number of topics. They were also asked to surf the Internet and share the interesting materials they found with the whole group. This method proved to be very useful, since the participants in treatment group were engaged in different techno-based activities, like emailing, commenting, chatting and so on.

*Post-Test:* At the end of the course, learners in the two groups took a writing test around the topics and grammar points covered during the treatment. The purpose was to check if there was any significant difference between the average scores of the two groups’ performance on writing test, and if the treatment had any effect on the writing proficiency of the learners in experimental group. This test also was designed to find out the extent of advance in the
control group who had been receiving the traditional classroom-based writing instruction. The post-test required the participants to write a paragraph of at least eight sentences long. The whole test-time was about 50 minutes.

During the study, the participants in both groups were to write on the same topics that the researchers uploaded for the experimental group through the weblog and the control group through the class sessions respectively. But, the differentiating border between the two groups was in the process of writing and the sources that they could refer to.

As part of the post-assessment, the researchers also tracked the quantity of group posts and comments, considered the quality of writing and effort and assigned grades accordingly. All the posts and comments were later analyzed in class for linguistic accuracy. Together with the experimental group instructor, the researchers also organized in-class discussion encouraging participation reflecting on the content of the flow of messages exchanged what they had learned through specific entries and the impact of the entry on its readers. To raise the reliability of the results, essay writings were judged by two instructors.

**Procedure**

The researchers conducted the proficiency test on the same day for both groups. The T-test was carried out to investigate the difference in performances of both groups, which indicated almost similar performances for the two groups. To remove any contingent test ambiguities, the participants were asked to raise their questions before test administration. The research was conducted during the second semester of Iranian Academic year of 1391 coinciding with the second half of 2012 and it took a period of eight weeks as I presented a topic for a week.

At the start, the participants in the experimental group were told they would be participating in a Weblog-based writing research activity, consisting of some topics presented by the researchers on the weblog, which was shared between the researchers and the treatment group. The participants in treatment group were to log on the Internet and check for the topics to do their writing activity using their EFL knowledge. Since the main goal of the study was to investigate the development of writing skill for the treatment group, therefore they were told to get their best to use computer software’s like “Word spell checker” and Internet as well. Besides, the control group was given the same topics to write about without using computer and Internet and they were asked to write just using their own knowledge and paper-based dictionaries.

In order to keep the research atmosphere as real as possible and to motivate the participants, we allocated 10% of their final writing score for this study. To make the participants familiar with the whole procedure of the study, the instruction was orally given in both English and Farsi. For the sake of eliminating any sort of probable misunderstandings, illustrative examples were given prior to the study.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

*How did Iranian EFL students respond to the use of blogs as a tool to improve their writing skill?*

**Pre-Test of Writing:** An independent t-test was run to compare the treatment and control groups’ mean scores on pretest of writing in order to prove that the two groups enjoyed the same level of writing ability prior to the main study. As displayed in Table 2, the mean scores for treatment and control groups on pretest of writing were 68.40 and 68.20 respectively.

| Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Pretest of Writing by Groups |
|------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| Group            | N  | Mean  | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Treatment        | 25 | 68.40 | 15.028        | 3.006        |
| Control          | 25 | 68.20 | 15.177        | 3.035        |
The results of the independent t-test (t 48 = .047, P = .96 > .05, r = .007) indicated that there was not any significant difference between treatment and control groups’ mean scores on the pretest. Thus, it can be concluded that the two groups enjoyed the same level of writing ability prior to the main study. The details for the independent t-test pretest mentioned on Table 2 and Graph 1 bellow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Independent t-test Pretest of Writing by Groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>t-test for Equality of Means</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Equal variances not assumed"
| .047 | 47.995 | .963 | .200 | 4.272 | -8.389 | 8.789 |

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene’s F = .007, P = .935 > .05). That is why the first row of Table 2, i.e. “Equal variances assumed” was reported.

Graph 1: Pretest of Writing by Groups

Post-test of writing: An independent t-test was run to compare the treatment and control groups’ mean scores on posttest of writing in order to probe the effect of using blogs on the improvement of their writing skill. As displayed in Table 3 the mean scores for treatment and control groups on posttest of writing were75.12 and 64.76 respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Descriptive Statistics Posttest of Writing by Groups</th>
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<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
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</table>

The results of the independent t-test (t (48) = 2.63, P = .011 < .05, r = .35 it represents a moderate to large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between treatment and control groups’ mean scores on the posttest of
writing. Thus the first null-hypothesis as using blogs does not have any significant effect on the improvement of the writing skill of the students was rejected. The treatment group following blogs writing outperformed the control group on the posttest of writing. The details for the independent t-test posttest elaborated on Table 4 and Graph 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Independent t-test Posttest of Writing by Groups</th>
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<tr>
<td>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene’s F = .01, P = .922 > .05). That is why the first row of Table 4, i.e. “Equal variances assumed” was reported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graph 2: Post-test of Writing by Groups</th>
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<tr>
<td>75.12</td>
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Reliability Indices

Table 5 indicates the reliability of the test based on K-R21 reliability indices.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 5: reliability indices</th>
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<tr>
<td>N of Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
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</table>
DISCUSSION
The feedback that the researchers received through having interviews with the participants indicated that web-blog was an appropriate media to use to improve the students’ motivation in writing. It was because the web-blog can challenge students to write texts and its use was not complicated for the students. This statement is in line with Carreira (2006) who points out that the challenging materials that suit the learners’ capability are important for motivating students.

There was also a set of facilitating factors that played an important role in mediating the motivation of the student teachers. First, the prior experience and habit of individual students regarding blogging determined their readiness for blogging. Those who already had the habit of sharing their daily life and thoughts in personal blogs seemed likely to embrace blogging. Second, the social and environmental conditions could also affect the level of engagement in class blogging. Since the students were already well acquainted with each other, there was a strong sense of community and social relationships among classmates, which served as an effective channel for doing blog-activities to share and communicate with one another. In this respect, this study supports the idea that the pre-existing social relationship can provide an impetus for online engagement (Kavanaugh, Carroll, Rosson, Zin & Reese, 2005). At the same time, the social resources available in one’s immediate physical environment can encourage the adoption of academic blogging. For those students who were not familiar with blogging, a fellow student who was able and willing to provide help and support could be a valuable resource. On the other hand, lack of social support in one’s physical context could serve as a strong impetus for using blogging as an alternative outlet for emotional release and reaching out for support. In this respect, our findings are in line with previous studies that show that inadequate social support available in real life engenders increased motivation and engagement with online groups (Turner, Grube & Meyers, 2001).

CONCLUSION
In this study, the use of the blog encouraged the development of improved teaching and learning strategies to approach the skill of L2 writing and it is apparent that the benefits outweighed the drawbacks and challenges in the TEFL L2 classroom. The blog created an innovative, more engaging and more authentic experience for the students. Despite the issues surrounding confidence and trust, it was proved a user-friendly communication tool that was useful in the development of students’ critical thinking skills through analysis of comments made from other students. The collaborative learning environment established allowed students to learn through modeling and through exposure to other students’ opinions, ideas and perspectives. Furthermore, writing for an audience and the process approach to writing incorporating peer review, self-editing and revising undoubtedly affected the students writing quality.

The study confirmed the benefits of blogging in the language classroom mentioned by Arena (2008) regarding the students’ choice of more appropriate language and the motivational aspect of realizing that one’s voice echoes in distant parts of the globe. Writing for a purpose, i.e. self-expression and self-reflection in blogs for professional development has encouraged them to produce language more fluently. Although the purpose of the activity aimed at improving writing skills, readings skills are likely to have also improved. As Thorne and Pyane (2005) suggest, creative guidance from the instructor and collaboratively chosen activities are needed to integrate online writing in the university syllabus. This new learning environment and the meaningful context have raised high motivation in the students and will help them become life-long and more efficient learners.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
The current study had the following limitations:

Lack of blogging skills among Iranian learners. While almost all of the Iranian students are familiar with the basics of computer and the internet skills, not everyone may be familiar with blogging. Therefore, this may introduce some problems during the program implementation.

Log on difficulties in Iran. There is always log on difficulties here in Iran, connecting to Internet is not feasible wherever and whenever the users wish. This may potentially hamper the implementation of this piece of blog-based research.

Time limit of the study. Due to educational limitations, the time limit of the study could affect the written production of the students. If the study time had been longer, the results might have been different.

Gender imbalance. The number of female and male students in language classes was not balance i.e. females outnumbered males.
REFERENCES


Halik et.al, (2010). *To blog or not to blog: Student perceptions of blog effectiveness for learning in a college-level course.*


EFFECTS OF A BLENDED LEARNING MODULE ON EFL STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES IN AN INTRODUCTORY READING COURSE IN AL-QUDS OPEN UNIVERSITY SETTING

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of using blended learning (BL) in teaching/learning a reading comprehension course on English as a foreign language (EFL) students’ attitudes and motivation. Twenty-seven students taking Reading I class at Al-Quds Open University (QOU) participated in the study. The class received instruction through a blended learning module (i.e. a mix of both conventional and computer-assisted methods). Participants were required to complete pre-and post-questionnaires to track their attitudes and motivation before and after employing computer-based activities. After the implementation of the intervention, comparison of the students’ mean scores of the pre-and post-questionnaires showed a statistically significant improvement in the students’ attitudes and motivation toward learning English and employing computer-based activities.

KEYWORDS: blended learning; e-learning, attitude, motivation, computer-assisted language learning.

INTRODUCTION
The delivery of higher education nowadays is mired with challenges, foremost that of the need to teach more learners more efficiently, more cheaply, and with less staff. This has driven many institutions toward new technology, which – with its different forms of discussion boards, weblogs, synchronous chat environment, e-mail, instant messaging, online learning environments as well as social media Internet – has opened up new horizons in the world of education in general and language education in particular (Connell, 2006; Farmer, 2004; Fichter, 2005; Richardson, 2008). This has also offered learners a wide range of learning options and allowed them to easily exchange information and ideas, which is consistent with the growing interest not only with what people learn but also with how they learn. While some prefer to study on their own, others choose to study with peers. Some people favor using print materials; others prefer multimedia, which involve all the senses. That is, different learners enjoy different ways of learning which are widely known as “learning styles” or “learning preferences” (for more see Celce-Murcia, 2001).

In the same vein, Bates (1993: 221) stresses the need to choose the medium which best suits the given mode of presentation and the central composition of the subject matter. Learners may not always get equal benefits as some media may suit one group of learners but not suit another group, depending on their educational, social backgrounds, experiences, wants, needs, and cultural orientations. Despite their widely acknowledged advantages, for socioeconomic, pedagogical, psychological, or technical considerations, neither conventional face-to-face learning per se nor e-learning per se can be an exclusive path for effective learning. Al-Shaer (2011) recommended Al-Quds Open University (QOU) combine new technologies with the conventional mode of teaching and learning on the assumption that using such a blend can give the students the freedom to choose their preferred media.

Accordingly, all courses offered by QOU are taught using optional modern electronic learning tools as a supplement to the conventional methods of teaching through the academic portal, instructional materials, the Moodle system of administering learning, the system of virtual classes - Blackboard, and videostreaming. The university academic portal provides all electronic services and tools of communication for the electronic parts of the university courses via the synchronous and asynchronous forums of each course in addition to e-mail, file management, and announcement services which enable faculty members and students to communicate together on the one hand, and the faculty members and students with the university administration, colleges, and educational and technological centers. On the other hand, these conventional courses, which have an optional electronic component implemented through the electronic portal, are still evaluated in the traditional way in which students have paper assignments and exams.

More recently, QOU has adopted blended learning, a combination of e-learning and conventional face-to-face learning, to accomplish feasibility and maintain flexibility in time and place of learning. It is meant to establish an interactive multimedia environment in addition to the face-to-face meetings that suit learners’ different wants, needs, and expectations. Therefore, QOU has introduced a new mode of electronic courses that embraces video streaming.
courses; electronic template courses; and blended courses (electronic activities). The video streaming courses incorporate both conventional and electronic teaching. The conventional part has face-to-face classes while the electronic part has classes transmitted via video streaming technology either directly or through recorded videos. They follow a timetable prepared at the beginning of each semester and are available for the students on the academic portal. The video streaming courses have paper assignments; some courses, such as History of Jerusalem, are designed in the form of interactive electronic courses.

The electronic template courses are designed electronically using Moodle technology to administer the learning process. The course is completely designed by using various technologies such as video, audio, PowerPoint and templates.

The blended learning courses follow the units specified in the textbooks, which have been developed to facilitate interaction. The ease and clarity of these courses make the content absorbable. The course includes course management, study units, first and second activities, forums, and self-assessment questions. Some study units are electronically designed to be interactive by using tools to compile the content and the multi-media instruction. Due to the significance of reading in the learning process, program designers give the most attention to claims that blended learning offers supplementary and/or alternative options to develop EFL students’ reading skills.

The system of virtual classes enables students to attend lectures synchronously and record them. Students can access these recordings later through Moodle. The electronic activity English courses offered in the current semester (1121) are reading (1); writing (1); ELT (1); and the Twentieth Century American Literature. To clarify the characteristics of this mode of courses, take for example Reading I which is offered for first year English major students who, despite studying English for at least eight years at school, still have problems with certain basic tasks such as finding the main idea of paragraphs, discovering the relationship between paragraphs in a text, providing a summary of a passage, or guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words. The new students’ poor reading skills are among the concerns of administrators and tutors at QOU. It goes without saying that reading skills are very important in the context of language teaching and use. It is widely known that, as Durukan (2011: 102) suggests, “In the learning process there is a high correlation between reading comprehension and academic achievement.”

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
QOU has recently opted for combining conventional learning with e-learning in various modes (e.g. virtual teaching/learning, video streaming, etc.) in certain English language courses offered for English major students. As stated above, this mode of learning is defined as ‘blended learning’. The attitudes and motivation of EFL students who were used to conventional EFL learning at school need to be taken into account. As Tselios et al (2011) put it, “Little is known about students’ perceptions in a blended learning setting”, and as far as I know, no studies have been conducted in Palestine to investigate EFL students’ attitudes toward blended learning. Therefore, this study will examine the impact of combining e-learning with face-to-face meetings in a reading comprehension course on those EFL students’ attitudes and motivation.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND/ LITERATURE REVIEW
Blended Learning
Blended learning is generally defined as a mix of e-learning and conventional face-to-face learning (Young, 2002; Usta, 2007). Thorne (2003) views blended learning as a means of facing the challenges of modeling learning to suit the needs of learners by combining the best benefits derived from technological developments with the best advantages of interaction and participation obtained from conventional learning. In the same vein, Bersin (2004) takes blended learning as a way of supporting conventional education with electronic learning. It is meant to employ computer-assisted activities embedded in a conventional learning environment in order to help learners do the work to the best of their abilities. Bodie et al. (2006) describe blended learning as a method of teaching that makes the most of two or more complementary means to instruct the same content. In their view, the tutor is “experimenting
with blended learning” through mixing traditional classroom meetings with activities, discussions, and/or web-based modules.

Using blended learning in EFL has been the subject of much research, which has not produced consistent results. Some studies present a positive image of blended learning. For example, Burgon and Williams (2003) claim that blended learning helps boost students’ satisfaction with and interest in learning. In a comparative study of an accounting principles course, Vamosi et al. (2004) concluded that students’ satisfaction with online courses increased as the course proceeded as a result of getting more acquainted with the e-learning scheme, and their reactions toward the online courses were positive in the post course assessment. Similarly, in comparing a group of 251 students’ learning performance and satisfaction in a blended learning general health course with traditional face-to-face classroom instruction, Melton et al. (2009) found that students following a blended learning scheme significantly outperformed those following traditional instruction and expressed higher satisfaction levels.

In a similar study intended to investigate Greek university students’ attitudes toward blended learning, by using the Moodle learning content management system, in the context of a university course offered using a blended learning approach, Tselios et al (2011) found that both ease of use and perceived usefulness have positive effects on students’ attitudes toward use. In an investigation of students’ views on a blended learning environment, Akkoyunlu and Soylu (2006) found that students’ achievement and positive attitudes toward blended learning increase as a result of enjoying participation in the online discussion forums. The study also concludes that both face-to-face meetings and online activities enrich the learning process. Cottrell and Robinson (2003) examined the students’ attitudes toward the application of blended learning in an accounting course and concluded that students opted for the blended learning approach. In a study conducted by Humbert and Vignare (2005) investigating students’ perceptions toward introducing blended learning into their courses, students showed inclinations toward the blended learning approach. Similarly, in an investigation of the students’ satisfaction with a blended course, Chen and Jones (2007) found that students showed more interest in registering for a blended course than a traditional one. Brown (2003), Osguthorpe and Graham (2003) and Graham (2005) have all agreed that blended learning has a potential to enrich pedagogy, boost cost-effectiveness, accessibility, flexibility and reconsideration.

Other studies on blended learning give a more tentative stance regarding blended learning. For example, Pereira et al. (2007) found that learners expressed equal satisfaction with conventional and blended learning models. Jones and Chen (2008) concluded that the students on a blended course preferred traditional classroom meetings because they offered better contact with their teacher. The students also expressed their concern that one or two students had to take on the burden while doing group work online. In the same vein, Parkinson et al. (2003) concluded that the students in the traditional classes expressed satisfaction with the class atmosphere and criticized the blended learning contexts for lacking class community.

As far as the EFL context of this study is concerned, following Dziuban et al. (2004) blended learning will be used as a pedagogical approach that synthesizes the merits of effectiveness and socialization derived from the actual classroom with the technologically developed learning prospects of an electronic environment.

QOU, as a pioneer in open learning in the Middle East, is bound to select a combined set of media that suit a large number of learners taking into consideration their experiences, backgrounds, ages, and accessibility to selected media. With combined media the learner should be at ease in using at least one of them, which works in harmony with the essence of open education. As Rowntree (1992: 9) suggests, if various media are put together then there may be an additional possibility that all will find at least one of their favorite mediums.

Although the bulk of given a rather encouraging indication of the merits of e-learning (Murray, 2001; Nicol and Anderson, 2000), much still remains to be done to investigate students’ attitudes toward blended learning which integrates e-learning with traditional learning. Consequently, employing blended learning with these students should be carefully scrutinized. Cohen (2003) stressed the significance of assessing factors associated with the students and the learning process. When it comes to blended learning, Miller et al. (2003) and Freddolino and Knaggs (2005) also observed the importance of taking into account the students’ motivation and their needs for guidance and technical backing.

**Attitudes and motivation**

It has been widely acknowledged that a student's attitude and motivation play the most important role in success within computer-assisted language learning settings (Warschauer, 1996a, 1996b; Gilbert, 2001; Brandl, 2002; Desmarais, 2002; Murday & Ushida, 2002).
Eagly and Chaiken (1998) describe an attitude as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor.” Dornyei and Otto (1998:65) define language learning motivation as “the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalized and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out.” According to Crookes and Schmidt (1991), motivation involves interest, relevance, expectancy of success or failure, belief in forthcoming rewards, decision to be involved, persistence, and high activity level.

Drawing upon social psychology, Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) argue that motives for learning a given language split into two types. The first are the “instrumental” motives which represent the tangible gains derived from the mastery of that language, and the second are the “integrative” motives which subsume the learners' positive attitude toward the native speakers of that language and their interest in their culture. These correspond to the two types of motives proposed in the self-determination theory, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic. While an intrinsically motivated activity stems from the inner self and is featured by the pleasure and satisfaction of engaging in an activity, an extrinsic motivation hinges upon realizing an instrumental outcome, such as gaining a reward as a result of engaging in an activity. This boils down to saying that an intrinsically motivated learner would most likely persist on learning a language even without external incentives, and an extrinsically motivated learner would most likely give up language learning as soon as the sought-after goal is realized.

In an investigation of 79 Iranian undergraduate students’ integrative and instrumental motivation toward learning English as a foreign language, Vaezi (2008) points out that the two types of motivation affect the learners’ focus regarding what aspects of a second language (L2) to study. She argues that learners motivated by an integrative approach are more interested in knowing about the culture and community of the foreign language (FL). However, instrumentally motivated students have different considerations and purposes; they learn L2 to help them find a job or make a living. Vaezi (2008: 54) notes, “For a long time, integrative motivation was regarded as superior to instrumental motivation for predicting the success of second language learning”, but then she refers to Dornyei (1996) as opposing this “by claiming that instrumental motivation and the learner's need for achievement are more important than the integrative motivation”. Although Vaezi's study reveals that integrative motivation on the part of the Iranian students was high, she concludes that the Iranian students were more instrumentally oriented. This result is in line with the opinions of many researchers who believe that in an EFL situation students are instrumentally oriented.

Ardito et al (2006:271) maintain that the degree of the student's motivation and attitude is a key predictor of the success of any medium. If an inadequately designed medium leaves students feeling baffled or lost, it will inhibit efficient learning. Similarly, Spencer and Jago (1951) and Gardner and Lambert (1959) view motivation as an important factor in language learning. MacIntyre et al. (2009: 44) go further to describe it as “the engine that drives the system”. Noels (2001) and Ryan and Deci (2000) stress the need for identifying the students’ motivational orientations in order to set the language learning goals, and check the classroom environment as a prelude to defining the degree of dependence or independence needed for educating autonomous, self-regulated learners. Brown (2005: 467) argues that the time spent by students on using e-learning can be predicted by the students’ motivation.

Hwang and Arbaugh (2006) conducted a study of students’ feedback on a blended management course and concluded that those students who responded positively toward the blended learning material participated more in the discussion forums. In contrast, those whose responses were negative were not active in the online activities. That is why Mantyla and Woods (2001: 330) stress the idea that e-learning courses need self-motivated and independent learners.

Following Newcomb (1950), the ‘motive’ in this study will be taken as an element of the concept of attitude which will be seen as a state of readiness that stimulates the motive. More specifically, the terms ‘attitude’ and ‘motivation’ will be used in the following senses. The term ‘attitude’ will be used to describe QOU EFL students’ beliefs about English and its general impact on them, as well as their views about the reading module course they attended as part of this study. Following Noels et al. (2000:59-60), the term ‘motivation’ will be used to describe the incentives – whether integrative or instrumental, including the reward value of developing their skill in the target language.
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS
This study is meant to examine the extent to which using blended learning as an EFL learning/teaching method can affect students’ attitudes and motivation. More specifically, this study attempts to investigate whether teaching reading skills through computer-assisted activities embedded in a conventional mode of learning affects students’ attitudes and motivation. In other words, the study attempts to answer the question: Is there a statistically significant difference in attitudes toward learning English language between EFL students before and after receiving instruction through blended learning?

METHODOLOGY
Participants
The population of the study included 27 students enrolled in Reading I (5150) at the Bethlehem branch of QOU. Twenty students were female and seven students were male. The participants were all Palestinians and were all native speakers of Arabic. Their median age was 22 years, and the range was 18-30. They all had eight years of EFL instruction in grades 4-12 prior to their admission to QOU. Most students were concurrently taking listening I (1 hour weekly), structure I (one hour and a half biweekly), writing I (1 hour weekly) courses as part of their English language program at QOU.

Questionnaire
The selection of the dimensions to be included in the questionnaire (see Appendix I) was inspired by the original 7-point Likert Scale format of Gardner’s Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (Gardner, 1985). For the purposes of the current study, additional dimensions were included on the basis of a thorough review of theoretical literature pertaining to blended learning and EFL as well as on the researcher's personal experience as a tutor and an administrator dealing with issues related to the implementation of blended learning at QOU. Statements in the questionnaire were categorized into seven main domains. The first eight items identify the students' attitudes toward learning English (ALE), and the second eight items identify the students' attitudes toward computer use (ACU). The items (17-21) address the students’ confidence in computer-based English class (CCOMC). The items (22-27) address the students’ confidence in conventional English class (CCONC). The items (28-40) address the students’ attitudes toward using computers in learning English (ACLE). The items (41-49) deal with the students’ attitudes toward ease of using electronic assignments (ELCASS). The rest of the items (50-55) are related to the domain of students’ attitudes toward handwritten assignments (HWASS). The scoring for the questionnaire was established as follows: A seven–Likert scale was used: (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = somewhat disagree; 4 = neutral; 5 = somewhat agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree).

The motivation scale was presented to a panel of experts to eliminate any threats to its validity. To make sure that the questionnaire is valid, expert opinions were taken into consideration. With regard to the reliability of the questionnaire, the overall Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.913, as shown in Table (1) below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Reliability of Motivation Scale.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s alpha</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALE</td>
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<td>ACU</td>
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<td>CCOMC</td>
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<td>CCONC</td>
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<td>ACLE</td>
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<td>ELCASS</td>
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<td>HWASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Motivation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For the purpose of measuring the participants’ attitudes and motivation, before the students in received any instruction, they all completed the researcher-made motivation scale. In order to guarantee that students understand the items, Arabic translation was provided beside each item. Before starting to fill out the questionnaire, the English teacher explained to the class the procedure, and stayed in the classroom to answer any queries the student might have.
The students were asked to register in the online part of the course in addition to the face-to-face meetings. That is, they received instruction through computer-assisted activities embedded in a conventional EFL learning. One student who declared that she could not participate in the computer-based activities on a regular basis due to work commitments was exempted from participating in the study. Another student who signed up for joining the study missed three sessions. His account was automatically disabled and he was restricted from participating in the whole process; therefore, the total number of the students who actually participated in the study was twenty-five.

**Intervention (blended learning)**

The Reading I course is a basic one tailored to develop students’ reading comprehension skills, vocabulary recognition, retention and use, as well as developing critical thinking through discussion and evaluation exercises. The book contains seven chapters. Each chapter consists of three interrelated reading passages, and each reading passage comprises three subsections on reading comprehension, vocabulary, discussion and evaluation. The three subsections of the unit consist of integrated exercises, self-assessment questions, activities and puzzlers.

Reading I, as a blended course (or electronic activity-based course) was offered to the class in a manner incorporating both conventional and electronic style. In accordance with the system of virtual classes, students were required to attend lectures synchronously and record them. The Reading I course, which was taught in Fall 2012 for sixteen weeks, needed sixteen classes per semester, eight classes of which were virtual and eight were face-to-face. That is, 50 percent of the meetings were face-to-face, and the remaining 50 percent were virtual classes using Blackboard system. It was easy to use. The students were free to use their own PC’s and the Internet either from home or on campus. The students were given the class key and they enrolled themselves. Prior to online instruction, the students’ computer literacy skills were assessed by a questionnaire. A tutorial was given to them for reference. The components of the online reading course were described and instructions on how to use certain course components were also posted in the conferencing area. Online instruction was initiated by posting a welcome note and by starting a discussion topic. Throughout the semester, a lab technician provided technical support on using the different components of the online course, and responded to individual students’ needs, comments and requests for certain sites. For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of the virtual classes using Blackboard system, which was scheduled by the university. In addition to face-to-face meetings, the researcher kept in touch with students through e-mail and other electronic tools. The researcher also used the discussion forums in the Moodle learning system and uploaded different reading tasks in accordance with the course objectives. Such tasks were taken from the students’ textbook and the students had to read and answer short questions on condition that they use two or more of the vocabulary items used in such passages or from the related articles they were required to read from the textbook in relation to the topic in question. Some tasks were optional, and there were online quizzes about the reading passages they should have read. The teacher served as a facilitator and sent public and private messages to encourage the students to interact and communicate. He searched for relevant websites and posted them in the “link sharing” area. He also posted questions and discussion topics, wrote model responses, and advised students to correct each other’s mistakes.

The students were expected to start chatting on the forum by exchanging ideas based on the passages of their textbook. It is also worth mentioning that the students could upload and download exercises, sample tests, and related information such as dates of exams. They could also stay in touch with the teacher and, at the same time, comment on their classmates’ answers. The main aim behind using such tasks was to help the students to employ the integrative approach to learning in which they could read, listen, and comment orally or in writing at the same time in line with the course intended learning outcomes. In this course, there were asynchronous chatting sessions, which had no marks. This course, which was divided into study units, had many resources to enrich learning, and the virtual classes were central and accessible by all students enrolled in the course. As for evaluation, instead of paper assignments, the course contained electronic activities for which 10 percent of the total grade was allocated. The activities, including reading comprehension questions and answer sheets, were attached to the e-mail. In the body text, the students were asked to read the assigned material and then individually write down two or three paragraphs as summaries and send them back through e-mail. All the interactions with the teacher were done electronically. The teacher corrected the answer sheets, scored them, and sent them back through e-mail to each student. The same procedure was followed for other lessons. The mid-term exam covered 35 percent and the final 55 percent. The total mark was 100 percent.
DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the purpose of conducting statistical analyses, the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) was employed. In addition to the descriptive statistical analyses of the data (means and standard deviations), a paired samples t-test was performed to compare the students’ mean scores of the pre- and post-questionnaires.

In order to measure each aspect, several parameters were devised. The overall mean or “grand mean” for the whole dataset of each aspect was calculated by taking the mean of the means of the individual parameters. The third column of Table (2) below presents the overall means (degrees out of 7) with respect to a (1-7) point Likert scale.

Students’ Attitudes (before intervention vs. after intervention)

As shown in Table (2) below, a paired samples t-test performed on the mean scores of the students’ attitudes before and after the trial showed statistically significant difference at the level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The p-value is 0.000, which gives overwhelming evidence that the students’ attitudes significantly changed as a result of employing computer-assisted learning in their reading comprehension classes with the exception of their attitudes toward two aspects of conventional classes and handwritten assignments, for which the p-values obtained were (0.232) and (0.194) respectively.

| Table 2: Paired samples t-test to compare means for the class before and after. |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                                | Mean difference | std    | t     | df   | Sig.  |
| ALE                             | after      | 5.87   | 1.54  | 2.20 | -3.529 | .001  |
|                                 | before     | 4.33   |       |      |       |       |
| ACU                             | after      | 4.91   | 0.85  | 1.17 | -3.429 | .001  |
|                                 | before     | 4.06   |       |      |       |       |
| CCOMC                           | after      | 4.34   | 1.08  | 1.89 | -2.963 | .005  |
|                                 | before     | 3.26   |       |      |       |       |
| CCONC                           | after      | 4.62   | 0.59  | 2.41 | -2.110 | .232  |
|                                 | before     | 4.03   |       |      |       |       |
| ACLE                            | after      | 4.43   | 1.20  | 1.26 | -4.147 | .000  |
|                                 | before     | 3.23   |       |      |       |       |
| ELCASS                          | after      | 4.66   | 0.99  | 1.50 | -3.780 | .000  |
|                                 | before     | 3.67   |       |      |       |       |
| HWASS                           | after      | 4.83   | 0.46  | 1.37 | -1.318 | .194  |
|                                 | before     | 4.37   |       |      |       |       |
| Overall Motivation              | after      | 4.80   | 1.00  | 0.94 | -5.030 | .000  |
|                                 | before     | 3.80   |       |      |       |       |

That is, these two exceptional results show that the students’ attitudes toward conventional learning and toward using paper assignment did not change. Having experienced computer-assisted learning, students gained a more positive attitude toward using computers but they retained their confidence in and positive attitudes toward conventional learning. This suggests that EFL students at QOU have a tendency to get a mix of both e-learning and conventional learning in their English language classes.

As shown in Table (2), a paired t-test performed on before and after results of the students’ attitudes gives overwhelming evidence that there is a highly significant difference at the level of $\alpha = 0.05$ between their attitudes toward language learning; computer use in general; learning English; electronic assignments; and their confidence in computer class (p-value = 0.005). Nevertheless, the t-tests performed indicated that the difference was nonsignificant (p-value = 0.232) with regard to the students’ attitudes toward handwritten assignments and their confidence in conventional class (p-value = 0.194). Interestingly, the p-value here represents the highest non-significant value obtained for all results.

The mean score of the students’ attitudes increased from pre-questionnaire to post-questionnaire. This suggests that students’ experience in computer-assisted learning positively affects their attitudes toward computer-based education but does not negatively change their attitudes toward conventional education.
DISCUSSION

According to the results in Table (2) above, after the trial, no statistically significant difference was observed in the students’ confidence and ease in conventional English class (CCONC) and attitudes toward handwritten assignments (HWASS). It can be easily understood that nothing noteworthy changed regarding these two issues.

However, after experiencing blended learning, the students expressed more positive attitudes toward learning English (ALE) in the post-questionnaire. This suggests that computer-based classes embedded in a blended learning module succeeded in offering a dynamic and interesting learning/teaching style, which made students show better attitudes.

Moreover, as shown in Table (2), the students demonstrated more positive attitudes toward computer use in general (ACU) after trial. This may be attributed to their realization of the potential benefits and applications of the computer in their English language learning. Similarly, when asked about their attitudes toward learning English in general, they gained, after experiencing computer-based learning, more confidence and ease in the computer-based English classes as shown in Table (2) above. Further, the students’ attitudes toward electronic assignments increased positively.

These positive attitudes and improved confidence can be attributed to paying attention to the participants’ technical concerns lest they inhibit them from engagement in the different online options. As mentioned earlier, throughout the semester a lab technician provided technical support on using the different components of the online course. As Purvis et.al. (2011: 98) put it:

“Online discussion in groups of any size is dependent upon the confidence of the learners to post messages and share information with fellow learners…. Many of the issues were confidence related and focused on the students’ perceived ability to comment on their peers work…. Giving students the support, guidance and confidence to contribute effectively to online discussion should be of most importance to the online facilitator using this type of learning and assessment model.”

Undoubtedly, lack of comfort and anxiety could deter the students from successfully performing the required language tasks, which stresses the need to provide a comfortable blended learning experience. This shows that blended learning, if properly and carefully implemented, produces a positive impact, or at least does not yield any negative effects on the students’ attitudes. Although the students had to work hard to adjust to the new learning experience, they yielded more positive attitudes toward blended learning. Despite these positive attitudes, the levels of confidence in conventional class and handwritten assignments remained the same.

The results presented above have shown that when students go through a credible, dynamic, and effective learning experience, their attitudes do change positively. The benefits of blended learning seem to extend beyond an improvement in students’ attitudes to other important gains. Undoubtedly, students who are not used to e-learning might find some aspects of blended learning challenging, but a positive change in their attitudes as a result of a successful experience in a blended course of reading could be the first step toward more active, responsible, and self-dependent language learners. This is consistent with Doob’s (1947) conclusion that ‘learning’ can account for the largest part of people’s attitudes, which, unlike personality, are expected to transform as a function of persuasion and experience.

The effectiveness of blended learning largely hinges upon the extent to which the participants academically and emotionally get involved in their learning project. This involvement requires devoted and capable tutors. During the implementation of this study, participants who volunteered to help their peers gained the experience of being a student tutor. They clearly built up knowledge by developing not only skills related to reading ability, but also skills vital for EFL learning/teaching practices. This might have contributed to increasing their motivation to work harder to become effective tutors.

Since the main objective of the English language program at QOU is to train English language teachers, the activities involved in blended learning could help students to understand more intentionally practical issues they might encounter in their following EFL courses. As a tutor of the course, I observed that some student teachers took
responsibility and felt empowered by the experience of teaching their peers. By the same token, many students reported that they benefited a lot from their peers during the on-line sessions (or virtual classes) and the discussion forums taking place at different times. They valued employing an integrative approach to learning in which they had the chance to read, listen, and comment orally or in writing at the same time.

From a pedagogical point of view, this study concludes that the more varied the teaching/learning styles, the stronger the attitudes of the learners and thus the better the learning outcome. This study has shown that blended learning, which combines e-learning and conventional classroom meetings, is rewarding as a means of increasing students’ attitudes and motivation, which in turn gives a better learning outcome. This indicates that a difference in the learning/teaching method spells a difference in the learning outcome.

More importantly, these results should be rightly interpreted that without the tremendous efforts paid by the tutor and the lab technician to give the participants the needed technical and emotional support to contribute effectively to online discussions this scheme would not have succeeded. Admittedly, there is much more to a blended learning endeavor than simply having computers or, as Galloway (2008: 6) suggests, knowing how to merely perform discrete mechanical operations in a program. Perkins (1986) argues that knowledge is not something teachable in the traditional sense, but is a process of design that entails taking decisions on the part of the learner as to which part of the information is to be transformed, highlighted, internalized, and represented.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS
This research represents an attempt to measure students’ attitudes toward a blended course module. After having experienced a blended course module, the EFL students registered statistically significant progress in their attitudes toward English language learning and computer-based activities from the pre-questionnaire to the post-questionnaire. But their attitudes toward handwritten assignments and their confidence in conventional class remained almost the same.

The EFL students, whose attitudes positively changed regarding all aspects of blended learning, comfortably accepted making the switch to blended learning. This could be attributed to the circumstance whereby they had to play a more active role in the classroom, which gave more weight to dialogues and interactive activities on their part. This is in keeping with Colesca et al.’s (2009) assertion that an important function of blended learning is to transform students from inactive note-takers to dynamic learners capable of gaining more from their learning.

These results show that blended learning with its two components (i.e. conventional classroom meetings and e-learning activities), when properly implemented, represents an effective avenue for helping EFL students develop more positive attitudes toward their learning. Clearly, technology, which is at the heart of blended learning research (Ayala 2009), plays a key part in the prospects of blended learning. To investigate the implications of our findings for practice and policy, to explore the immediate and long-term impact of using blended learning, and to examine its effectiveness and popularity for the purpose of facilitating the creation of the most effective course module for EFL education, future follow-up studies need to be conducted.

The fact that the present study relies on data collected only from a special group of EFL students at QOU in a given semester places restrictions on the kind of conclusions that have been drawn. It is not clear how these conclusions can be extended as to how other EFL students’ attitudes in other contexts can change under the given trial. It would be unlikely that what applies to the EFL students at QOU in this particular reading course also applies to other EFL students in other contexts. Thus, it appears that it is worth conducting similar studies on the basis of data collected from other contexts.

REFERENCES


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www.ijllalw.org


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Appendix I

Survey Questionnaire (English-learning Motivation Scale)

INSTRUCTIONS
The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine your attitudes towards learning English via face-to-face meetings and computer-assisted activities. Below are a number of statements with which some people agree and others disagree. We would like to you to indicate your opinion about each statement by ticking the boxes below which best indicates the extent to which you disagree or agree with that statement. We would urge you to be as accurate as possible since the success of this investigation depends upon it.

There are no right or wrong answers. We want you to indicate your own ideas and impressions. If you have any questions, please ask them now. In answering this part of the questionnaire, work quickly and don’t stop to think about each scale. It is your immediate impressions in which we are interested.

Gender:……………………… Age:………………………

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat Disagree; 4 = Neutral; 5 = somewhat Agree; 6 = Agree; 7 = Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attitudes toward Learning English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studying English is an enjoyable experience.</td>
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<td>English is an important part of the university program.</td>
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<td>Knowing English is really an important goal in my life.</td>
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<td>I feel very much at ease when I have to use English.</td>
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<td>If it were up to me, I would spend all of my time learning English</td>
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<td>I love learning English.</td>
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<td>If there were an English Club in my university, I would be most interested in joining.</td>
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<td>Using English anywhere makes me feel happy.</td>
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<td>2. Attitudes toward Computer use</td>
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<td>Computers are important for communication.</td>
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<td>Computers are important for acquiring knowledge</td>
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179
I keep up to date with computer by working on it almost every day.
Computer use is an important part of the university program.
Using computers is important because I will need it for my career.
I feel very much at ease when I use computers.
I love working on computers.
Using computers allows me to meet and converse with native speakers of English.

3. Confidence and Ease in Computer-based English Class

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<tr>
<td>I enjoy the computerized activities of our English class much more than the conventional classes.</td>
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<td>Computer-based classes offer a more dynamic and interesting teaching style than conventional classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel more secure when I do English activities via the computer than in face-to-face classes.</td>
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<td>I feel more confident when asked to participate in computed-based classes than in my conventional English class.</td>
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<td>I never get embarrassed when I have to answer a question in a computer-based English class.</td>
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4. Confidence and Ease in Conventional English Class

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<tr>
<td>I would rather spend more time in my conventional English class and less on computer-based classes.</td>
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<td>I feel more active in the conventional English classes than in computer-based English classes.</td>
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<td>When I have a problem understanding something we are learning in English class, I immediately ask the teacher for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel more confident when asked to participate in my conventional English class than in computed-based classes.</td>
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<td>I never get nervous when I am doing language activities in my conventional English class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think my conventional English class offers a more dynamic and enjoyable experience.</td>
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</table>

5. Attitudes toward using computers in learning English

Using computers to learn English is useful.
Learning English through computers is an enjoyable experience.
I feel happy when I am using the computer to learn English.
Using computers allows me to interact with native speakers of English.
Studying English via computers enables me to become teacher-independent.
Using computers can be important for me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of new technology.
Virtual English classes are useful for developing my language skills.
I prefer to use a mix of face-to-face learning and computer-based learning in my EFL classes.
If it were up to me, I’d rather have more computer-assisted learning in my English class.
Computer–based activities increase my English class participation.
In Internet-based learning, I can save time of traveling to campuses and also save transportation costs.
I feel more confident to participate in the computer-assisted learning than in face-to-face classes.
I accept computer-based learning as an alternative to face-to-face meetings.

6. Homework and Assignments: Electronic assignments

I prefer to hand in my assignments via the computer rather than in person.
When I have a problem understanding something outside my English class, I immediately resort to my computer.
I find computer-based English assignments more useful than paper assignments.
If my teacher wanted someone to do an extra computerized English assignment, I
Electronic English assignments allow me to work faster and more carefully than written assignments.

During the English language course, I prefer to get feedback from my teacher via electronic media.

Computerized assignments are more enjoyable to deal with than written ones.

When I have a problem understanding something in my English hand-written assignments, I prefer to send an email message to my teacher.

What I like about electronic assignments is the immediate feedback I get from my tutor.

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<tr>
<th>7. Homework and Assignments: Hand-written assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I have a problem understanding something in my English assignments, I prefer to see my teacher in office.</td>
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<td>With paper assignments, I can sit anywhere, change reading positions, and move easily from place to place.</td>
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<td>Paper assignments are easier to deal with than computerized ones.</td>
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<td>I prefer paper assignments as a medium for learning because they are more familiar, more practical and cheaper.</td>
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<td>I prefer to print out the content of electronic assignments because I get tired reading onscreen.</td>
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<td>My problem with print-based assignments is the delay in getting the tutor’s feedback.</td>
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THE EFFECTS OF TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES ON READING COMPREHENSION OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
There have already been different perspectives on the use of translation in the second language classrooms. Almost all procedures and approaches in teaching and learning a language have their opponents and proponents, and this approach is not an exception. When it comes to using translation in the language 2 reading classrooms, some scholars and teachers like Avand (1993) concentrated on it as a facilitative tool in the process of comprehending a text. This is while other scholars like Cook (1995) gave the prescription to totally ban the use of translation in an language 2 classrooms, no matter if it is a speaking, listening, writing or reading class. Therefore, the present study was carried out to investigate the relationship between the use of translation and EFL learners reading comprehension, i.e. to determine whether or not making use of translation has any effect on the EFL learner’s reading comprehension.

KEY WORDS: Translation, reading comprehension, teaching technique,

INTRODUCTION
Reading is probably the most important skill for second language learners in the academic contexts. In other words, in the academic settings, reading is supposed to be the central means for acquiring new knowledge and gaining new access to alternative explanations and interpretations (Grab & Stoller, 1997, cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001). If a student cannot read and comprehend a written language, they cannot be expected to be good in other content areas which will indispensably require some reading ability (Decker, 2007). As Rivers (1981) asserted, among the four second language skills, reading is the most stable and durable one. There has been a great deal of research about the different aspects of reading comprehension (Ediger, 1993, cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001), (Kasmer, 1999); however, little has ever been done on the effect of translation on more efficient reading comprehension. Translation has been used by many language learners to facilitate language learning for centuries but, under different language teaching methods, it has played different roles. The teaching of foreign languages in general, and the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL) has undergone many changes over the past decades. From the end of the 19th century until the beginning of the 20th century the Grammar Translation Method of teaching a foreign language was the widespread method (Titone & Danesi, 1985). Very little attention was paid to the content of texts or to communication skills. This lack of attention resulted in the unpopularity of the Grammar Translation Method, paving the way to new methods of foreign language teaching. However, translation is regaining its respectability in the language-learning classroom (Malmkjær, 1998), not essentially as an end, but as an additional aids towards language learning.

Teaching reading skills to nonnative speakers of English includes unique problems and challenges at all conceivable levels of instruction (Celce-Murcia, ibid). It is certain that every teacher has their own way of teaching reading comprehension. The fact is that the methods for teaching reading have subjected to substantial changes over time.
The term translation itself has different meanings: It can be referred to as the general subject field, the product (the text has been translated) or the process (the act of producing translation, known as translating). The translation between two separate languages includes the translator rendering an original written text (the source text or ST) into the original verbal language (the source language or SL) into a written text (the target text or TT) in a different verbal language (the target language or TL) (Munday, 2001).

One of the most important aspects of translation, requiring careful and skillful handling, is that translation is “not just transferring of information between languages, but a transfer from one culture to another” (Hervey et al., 1995, p.20). It necessarily involves the treatment of cultural issues. Although the relative importance will vary depending on text as well as on the reader and functions of translated text, among other considerations.

Miremadi (1991) held that “translation is a two way process from one culture to the other, and from one culture into one’s own culture”. Generally speaking, a give and take procedure involved (Miremadi, 1991, p.23). The main purpose of translation is to use it as a cross-cultural bilingual communication vehicle amongst people. In the past decades, this procedure has promoted because of the rise in international trade, increased immigration, globalization and the expansion of technological and scientific knowledge.

In a recent survey in Birbeck College in England Sewell (1996) searched to determine what transferable skills and knowledge could be improved in a translation studies class, presented as one of the eleven courses needed to complete a BA. It was concluded that translation could be taught as a means of developing students' linguistic ability, as it involved the following transferable skills: The ability to read correctly, perform efficiently on a socio-linguistic level, i.e. awareness of register, text-type, comprehend theory of communication, use contextual knowledge efficiently, work to a brief, perform instructions, see when further research is required, prioritize, do in a steady way, post-edit one's own work, figure out what makes the two languages work, produce unspoken assumptions. Students indicated that they were gaining insight in both their mother tongue (English), and their second language (French), into which they translated. They also found that translation is a "good intellectual training." The prominent courses in the foreign language were reading comprehension and textual analysis during the first two years of this foreign language course, so the students were expected to become competent in these two skills – skills which shaped the foundation of the translation course. They were required to consider metalinguistic dimensions, e.g. reading correctly, socio-linguistic awareness, register, and text-type, contextual knowledge, editing, and producing unspoken assumptions.

**Translation and formulaic language**
Collocations, fixed expressions, lexical metaphors and idioms can all be considered as examples of formulaic language (Howatt,1998; Wray, 1999), in which word strings occurring together tend to convey holistic meanings that are either more than the sum of the separate parts, or else depart substantially from a literal, or word for word meaning and perform as a single semantic meaning(Gairns and Redman, 1986, p.35). The nature of formulaic language makes resistant to literal translation; the target language may not use lexical formulas that are directly equivalent to those used by the source language to express the same meanings, or at least not with the same frequency. Thus a literal translation of formulaic language may at best sound unusual or marked in the TL, or else fail to convey one or more of the intended dimensions of meaning.

**Translation in the foreign language classroom in the past**

The Grammar Translation Method

The Grammar Translation Method was implemented in the latter part of the nineteenth century as a method of teaching a foreign language (Howatt, 1984) for students that interested in learning classical languages, such as Greek and Latin (Brown, 2000). Its purpose was to teach students a foreign language using intense grammatical analysis and to familiarize them with the grammar of their native and the foreign language, and introducing lists of...
vocabulary items in order to teach them to read and write classical materials in a foreign language and to pass standardized exams (Zimmerman, 1997). It was also believed that this comparative method of languages might have an impact on the students' comprehension of their native language. Students were given either literary or religious texts and with the help of a dictionary were required to translate the texts according to the grammar structures they had acquired. Sometimes they were given isolated texts that had little purpose other than the task at hand – which was to compare grammatical structures and improve vocabulary. The Grammar Translation Method was viewed as a scientific approach, in which the students acquired grammar and vocabulary explicitly, they couldn’t discuss about possible alternatives. Teachers elicited the "correct" answers from students and there was little or no discussion of alternatives among the students. The most of these students usually had a high level of analytical proficiency and could easily perform these tasks, therefore this method was not regarded suitable for the less motivated or gifted student.

The use of translation in the language teaching and EFL
Despite the wide spread popular assumption that translation should play a major role in the field of foreign language, the recent theories of language teaching and learning have at best disregarded the role of translation, and at worst repressed it. From the beginning of twentieth century onwards, almost all famous theoretical works on language teaching have assumed without argument that a new language (L2) should be taught without reference to the student’s first language (L1).

Needless to mention that most modern and so-called innovative methods have their roots in the former traditional or old-fashioned methodologies; however, these new approaches have often resulted in throwing out well-established procedures instead of rethinking of them. It may be some comfort for the experienced teacher to be aware that yesterday’s ‘old-fashioned’ method has come back, albeit in a slightly different form.

Farrand-Rogers (1996) reported that the practice of using translation in English classes of university in Tolca-Mexico, proved to have been very successful. He has concluded that translation as a teaching technique is enjoying a return as an “innovation”. Based on Pieneman’s teachability hypothesis (1989), there are two sequential dimensions of language learning relevant when teaching translation as a tool to enhance language ability and not for the sheer purpose of teaching a separate skill (Azizinezhad, 2007):

1. Progressive sequence takes place regardless of the learner or the method of teaching and is controlled by the inherent nature of each learner's language acquisition scheme, which is ordinary to all language learners.
2. Variational sequence explains the language-learning process using different methods in which language learners acquire language skills, according to the relationship between them and their individual situations, i.e. level of intelligence, ability to acquire a foreign language and socio-economic status.

Reading comprehension
The importance of reading comprehension:
The importance of reading comprehension in a foreign language was stated by Alderson (1984) which the foreign language in many parts of the world's knowledge is often important to academic education, professional success and personal improvement. This is potentially true that so much technical, professional and scientific literature is written in English today. In fact, it is common that English reading comprehension ability is required of students by their subject departments often evaluated by a test of reading comprehension. A reading ability is often all that is needed by learners of English as a foreign language. Reading probably is the most generally needed skill in learning a second or foreign language (Robinson, 1991).

Teaching translation to develop skills in L2 reading comprehension
Bassnett (1998) believed that "translation offers a crucial lesson in how to read, since it is a critical way into the text." She saw it as an effective means of forcing students to read texts thoughtfully and to concentrate on the lexical, grammatical and textual levels, and improving general knowledge, while "unveiling students' problems in comprehending (English) texts" (Brini, 2000). Teachers can stimulate the development of students’ awareness by paying attention to terminology, register, slang, expression and idioms that may characterize an individual text (Petrocchi, 2006). Translation can be a useful tool to analyze comprehension pitfalls, which may lead to problems in discourse processing (Abdrabou, 2003). Reading comprehension exams are demanding to assess because they do not allow the instructor to find out how students have gotten their answers, and they don’t take into account students' comprehension or interpretation of the comprehension questions themselves (Mahmoud, 1998). In the English matriculation exam in Israel (Garb, 1997), tests that were once designed to have students read the texts in English at first, and then answer the comprehension questions in their L1 were put an end on the grounds that experts believed
that these kinds of the tests did not provide the tester with enough evidence to assess the students' level of language production.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample selection
The initial population for the study was 90 students. To get more homogeneity, the subjects were selected from those who were studying in second year of university in EFL major. They were male and female students. They were all from Azad university of Hamedan. They were majoring in EFL and the range of age was 19-21. At first, a standard proficiency test (TOEFL) (60 questions, Reading comprehension test, and multiple questions) was administrated to 90 students. Some of them quitted to collaborate with the researcher. So, the number of participants decreased and out of them 60 was selected on the basis of the mean score as the sample of the study. The rest were excluded. Then, they were randomly assigned to two groups of thirty. The following is matching of the students in these two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male and female</td>
<td>19-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male and female</td>
<td>19-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Instrumentation
In the current study, a TOFEL reading comprehension tests were selected to be given to the participants to measure their level of proficiency in the form of a pretest. Five reading comprehension texts were selected from the TOFEL (Reading comprehension test, 2005) reading to be administrated to the participants during the course of study. The rationale behind selecting the passages rested upon the fact that the level of the difficulty and the content validity of the passages were suitable for the participating students, so it was possible to apply them for the participants. At the end, the same type of text in a controlled way was administrated to participants to see how they would perform on the posttest.

Data collection
Since the participants were assigned in different groups by the faculty, a standard proficiency test (TOEFL) (15 questions, Reading comprehension test) was administrated to the participants to make sure that the two groups were at the same level of proficiency. The allotted time for the participants to answer the TOFEL test was 70 minutes. The mean score of the two groups and the T-test showed that the two groups were nearly at the same level of proficiency. The experimental group received the treatment-instruction through native (Persian) language translation as a medium of instruction whereas; the control group went through regular instruction without translation. The course went on for five sessions of instruction. Each session took about 90 minutes. In each session 10 minutes of the class was allotted to asking and answering about the words and expression of the previous text. In the first session, the researcher handed out one of the reading comprehension texts to the both groups. The process was introduced to them. The participants in the control group were told to read the text and comprehend it just through the second language. They were not allowed to make use of any bilingual dictionary. What could be of help to them was just monolingual dictionary, of course, in the case of necessity. On the other hand, the experimental group received the same text but they were supposed to read and comprehend it through their first language. Where necessary, they were allowed to use bilingual as well as monolingual dictionaries. During the course of instruction, the instructor asked participants some questions related to the vocabulary part. The control group was supposed to give the definition of the words in English or through some examples while the experimental group was supposed to give equivalents of words just in Persian.

The second proficiency test or the posttest was given to the participants at the end of the course of instruction to compare the two groups’ grades and to see the effect of using translation on their learning and comprehension process.
Data analysis
In order to statistically analyze the results of the two proficiency tests, the software statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was of great help in this research. The first step was to conduct two independent T-tests to compare the results of the pretest for two groups so as to make sure that there was no significant difference between the groups before they underwent the experiment. In the end, two independent T-tests were administered to compare the results of the control group with those of the experimental group of posttest.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Pretest of Reading Comprehension
An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on pretest of reading comprehension in order to prove that the two groups enjoyed the same level of reading comprehension ability prior to the main study. As displayed in Table 3 the mean scores for experimental and control groups on pretest of reading comprehension are 30.43 and 29.73 respectively.

The assumption of homogeneity of variances will be discussed when reporting the results of the independent t-test although in case the group sizes are equal there is no need to test this assumption (Bachman 2005).

The results of the independent t-test (t (58) = .64, P = .52 > .05, R = .08 it represents a weak effect size) indicated that there was not any significant difference between experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the pretest of reading comprehension. Thus it can be concluded that the two groups enjoyed the same level of reading comprehension ability prior to the main study.

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is met (Levene’s F = .441, P = .509 > .05). That is why the first row of Table 3, i.e. “Equal variances assumed” is reported.
**Research Question**

Does using translation as an ELT technique have a significant effect on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL?

An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups’ mean scores on posttest of reading comprehension in order to probe the effect of using translation as an ELT technique on the improvement of the Iranian EFL learners reading comprehension ability. As displayed in Table 5 the mean scores for experimental and control groups on posttest of reading comprehension are 32.70 and 30.30 respectively.

![Graph 1: Pretest of Reading Comprehension by Groups](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32.700</td>
<td>3.7060</td>
<td>.6766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30.300</td>
<td>4.0527</td>
<td>.7399</td>
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The results of the independent t-test (t (58) = 2.394, P = .02 < .05, R = .30 it represents a moderate effect size) indicate that there was significant difference between experimental and control groups’ mean scores on the posttest of reading comprehension. Thus it can be concluded the null-hypothesis as using translation as an ELT technique does not have any significant effect on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL is rejected. The experimental group – after receiving translation techniques – outperformed the control group on the posttest of reading comprehension.

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It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances is met (Levene’s F = .293, P = .591 > .05). That is why the first row of Table 5, i.e. “Equal variances assumed” is reported.
Discussion
As it can be derived from the above-mentioned data, the experimental group which was being taught through using translation has performed better. Thus, it can be concluded that the treatment (taught through translation) was more effective. Due to the fact that the control group also underwent a course of instruction, it makes sense that at the end of the course, they have made some progress. But the point is that the control group has made little progress compared to the experimental group which is certain proof of effectiveness of treatment. The finding of the study answered the research question by rejecting the null hypothesis. All the details related to the results of pretest and posttest proved the effectiveness using translation in teaching and learning reading comprehension since the mean difference of the two groups 2.4, it can be concluded that the experimental group has made a significant progress compared to the control group, and then the null hypothesis for the research question is rejected.

CONCLUSION
As mentioned earlier, the present study was supposed to answer a question regarding the effect of translation on the reading comprehension. Before the outset of the study, a null hypothesis was developed. It was hypothesized that making use of translation has no significant effect on the students reading comprehension. Surprisingly, the result of the study revealed that making using of translation as a channel of instruction had a significant facilitative role in students reading comprehension; thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. In this study, the mean scores of the two groups were compared and the mean difference 2.4 was observed. The P value was 0.02 which is less than 0.05. All in all, because of the observed mean difference and because the P value less than 0.05, it is concluded that translation seems to be effective and can play an important facilitative role in Iranian EFL students’ reading comprehension process. Although the results of this study indicated the efficacy of translation in the reading comprehension classes, this study may have suffered from some pitfalls. First, conducting the research in five sessions of 90 minutes might not be a reliable estimate of the effectiveness of the experiment. Second, there is no guarantee that the experimental group might not have consulted with each other in Persian in the class. Third and most importantly, the students in the experimental group might have used bilingual dictionaries out of the classroom. It is true that reading comprehension is the goal; still, the integration of all four skills in any class activities is an undeniable fact.

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E-ASSESSMENT: A REQUIREMENT FOR POSTMODERNIST DIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACT
During the last decade, much attempt has been made to integrate computers, electronic devices, and Internet technologies into educational settings to provide a new, rich and integrated environment with a variety of systems and contents that help learners learn and assess their learning simultaneously. Test, measurement and evaluation were concepts, already been well defined and employed for estimating learners’ achievement in traditional teaching and learning settings. Postmodern era with the dominance of constructivism learning approach and increasing use of information technology has offered new concepts to instruction such as teacher-facilitator, learner-centered, knowledge-centered and learner autonomy scales. Shifting from teacher centered instruction to learner centered setting necessitates the learners take the responsibility of assessment as well. Consequently, the concept of assessment needs to change to meet the requirements of new instructional setting. Whereas traditional testing can be formative or summative, postmodernist assessment tends to be spontaneous. To materialize recent concept of assessment in e-learning instruction-based setting (E-assessment-based instruction), the present study has focused on two surveys: Primary data elicitation was an oral interview with five language testing researchers via video conferencing. They expressed their expertise opinion on the spontaneous assessment and the extent to which it is in line with instruction and provides supportive feedback for instruction. They significantly believed that the e-assessment models introduced are unprecedented successes in postmodernist digital age. But the study seems to suffer from shortcomings in the instrumentation. The secondary data elicitation from IT-literate teachers, learners and administrators favored to pave the path to that end.

KEY WORDS: E-assessment, E-learning, Digital age, Web 2.0, Assessment 2.0

INTRODUCTION
The external environment has transformed during the last 30 years, but teaching has resisted change. ICT is more than a tool, but fundamentally alters what and how we teach. Therefore, both teaching and assessment need to be modernized. There is no e-pedagogy, but we need one, and we need a new approach to assessment.

The recent advances in technology have necessitated both new approaches and new methodologies in the field of foreign language learning and thoroughly teaching. Internet and the virtual learning environments have diversified the opportunities for school teachers, instructional developers as well as learners by varying and broadening the alternatives for learning and teaching of languages. Implementing tools and applications, instead of classroom and course books, in the learning of foreign languages necessitate reconsidering the pedagogy, approach, applications, instructor roles, interaction forms, and teaching setting itself.

Learning and assessment are closely related to each other. Learners learn more in classes in which assessment is a central part of education than in those where it lacks. Brief assessment, which offers regular and enlightening feedback about learning advancement, is more effective than long, infrequent ones with judgmental feedback, like once-a-term tests.

Different types and approaches to assessment are described with numerous terms. Though somewhat subjective, it is useful to these various terms as demonstrating dichotomous poles (McAlpine, 2002).

Formative <------------------------> Summative
Informal <------------------------> Formal
Continuous <----------------------> Final
Process <-------------------------> Product
One of the constructivist principle of assessment in their classroom is not to isolate evaluation as a single exercise. Learning is perceived as a cyclical process in Constructivists setting. Since the form of a circle has no beginning and no end, therefore the point of where to assess could become blurry. Constructivists do not perceive assessment as an ending activity, but rather an continuing process that helps the learner continue to teach themselves how to learn (Holt & Willard-Holt, 2000).

Therefore, assessment on constructivist learning environment has different assumptions and forms from traditional instructivists’ approaches. Since constructivists believe that individual learners construct their own learning, they are interested in assessing their learning process rather than explicit knowledge and skills we can easily see (Jonassen, 1992; Choi & Hannafin, 1995) indicate that traditional tests and testing methods fail to measure important educational outcomes because they emphasize homogenized recall of memorized factual knowledge and procedures rather than unique, and highly differentiated reflections. Based on this notion, they propose student-centered assessment, emphasizing the ability to diagnose and manage students' cognitive growth rather than evaluating student achievement.

Shepard (2000) claims that we need new frameworks and theories for assessments. In constructivist paradigm, we are sharing principles of curriculum ideas, psychological philosophies and assessment concepts affected by constructivist's epistemology and need to emphasis on improving students' actual learning instead of judging and ranking their achievement.

Jonassen (1992) shows us several criteria to evaluate students' meaningful learning and knowledge construction in constructivist learning environments - goal-free evaluation, authentic tasks, knowledge construction, experiential constructions (process versus product), context-driven evaluation, context-dependent evaluation, multiple perspectives, multimodal, and socially constructed meaning.

**E-ASSESSMENT**

The use of computer technology in educational assessment has decades-long history. Computers were firstly used for assessment in the 1970s to reduce human raters’ scoring load. Since that time, assessment has progressed in relation with technological developments. Computer-based assessment has become extended in large-scale assessments, for instance language testing and college entrance examinations, because of its convenience and accuracy. The terms “computer-adaptive testing” and “web-based assessment” are used interchangeably with “computer-based assessment”, however they are actually two distinct cases of computer-based assessment. Specifically, computer-adaptive testing has a stronger stress on nonlinear item selection by quickly estimating the examinee’s ability based on his/her preceding replies. Web-based assessment denotes to computer-based assessment that is normally distributed through online learning management systems.

Though improvements in computer-based assessment offer the technological basis for e-assessment, the present focus in e-assessment is in exploring the opportunities of the progressively widespread amusing digital media, such as web 2.0 tools and video games. Also, mobile and tablet devices are offering new occasions for e-assessment. For instance, the personal response systems (also known as clickers) have significantly simplified formative assessment in large classroom environments. We should be cautious that the main emphasis on e-assessment is not developing new assessment tools but refining learning by means of new assessment technologies. Consequently, educational benefits and drawbacks of e-assessment technologies need to be cautiously considered. An extensively dispersed report by the Joint Information Systems Committee [JISC] (2007) also highlights that “e-assessment, in fact, is much more than just an alternative way of doing what we already did… Assessment is perhaps the best way of identifying the support needs of learners and can instill a desire to progress further if linked to appropriate resources, good quality, timely feedback, and to challenging but stimulating ways of demonstrating understanding and skills.”

Traditionally, e-assessment makes use of computer and information technology for the purpose of making the assessment process more effective by computerizing functions that would otherwise need human evaluators. These functions consist of item creation and selection, assessment distribution, item analysis, interpretation, scoring, and score presentation (Baker & O'Neil, 1995). Currently, though, e-assessment refers to present efforts within the
educational community to take benefit of technological developments. These efforts are promoted by the need to go further than “fill-in the bubble” tests and move toward authentic assessments of complex skills and knowledge (Pellegrino, Chudowsky, & Glaser, 2001).

STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES FOR ONLINE ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING

(E-) assessment for learning
Plenty of attention has been paid in the last decades to various forms of outcomes-based assessment, or assessment of learning. However, there has been a simultaneous increase of research on process-based assessment, or assessment for learning, which can be defined as ‘any assessment for which the first priority is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning’ (Black et al, 2003). Assessment for Learning (henceforth AfL) therefore refers to ‘a set of practices and methodologies that might be used by both teachers and students to understand what students know and are able to do so that instruction and learning can be regulated more effectively’ (Bennett, 2010).

Student-involved assessment
That is, an assessment, which provides learners “with a clear insight of the learning target from the beginning of the learning, along with samples of strong and weak Work.

Effective feedback
In E-learning environment, providing clear and informative (rather than judgmental) feedback, which can be used to revise learning goals (Stiggins, 2005). Feedback on assessments is an integral feature of effective and efficient teaching and learning, and can be one of the most influential methods to improve and strengthen student learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Feedback enables learning by providing information that can be used to improve and enhance future performance. This paper explores current literature around the appropriate use of technology in the production and delivery of feedback. It was anticipated that the literature would support the hypothesis, based on which technology has the potential to enhance student engagement with feedback.

(Self-) assessment skills
By engaging the learners in self-assessment, “they can watch themselves successfully negotiating the road to competence. [and ultimately] learn to generate their own descriptive feedback and to set goals for what comes next in their learning” (Stiggins, 2005).

Self-monitoring, a skill necessary for effective self-assessment, involves focused attention on some aspects of behavior or thinking (Schunk, 2004). Self-monitoring students pay thoughtful attention to what they are performing, often related to external standards. Thus, self-monitoring concerns awareness of thinking and progress as it occurs, and as such, it identifies part of what students do when they self-assess.

A second component of self-assessment, self-judgment, involves identifying progress toward targeted performance. Made in relation to established standards and criteria, these judgments give students a meaningful idea of what they know and what they still need to learn (Bruce 2001).

The third essential step is that students choose subsequent learning goals and activities to improve partially correct answers, to correct misunderstandings, and to extend learning. Because students at this stage need skills in determining learning targets and further instruction that will enhance their learning, they should be aware of options for further goals and instruction. Once the appropriate "instructional correctives," as they are referred to, are complete, students resume self-monitoring.

The growing literature on formative assessment has implications for self-assessment. Formative assessment can be defined as employing appropriate activities to provide feedback to enhance student motivation and achievement during instruction- as students learn. Providing helpful information as learning occurs contrasts with providing feedback solely after instruction. There is substantial evidence that appropriate formative assessment activities relate positively to student motivation and achievement (Black and William 1998). In addition, self-assessment is a valuable skill in effective formative assessment. Both Sadler (1989) and Black and William (1998) contend that self-assessment is essential to using feedback appropriately.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Traditional assessment (Assessment 1.0)
‘Assessment 1.0’, also known as traditional assessment is the form of assessment applied from 618 AD to today. It is recognized with the following characteristics:

- Mostly paper-based
- Mostly classroom-based
- Very formalized (in terms of administration)
- Highly synchronized (in terms of time and place)
- Highly individualized
- Highly controlled (in terms of contents and marking).

**Computer based assessment (Assessment 1.5)**

Computer based assessment (CBA) or computer based test (CBT) is a more up-to-date form of assessment, which has appeared in the last ten years, replicates the traditional assessment, using computers and modern technology in the assessment process.

‘E-testing’ (a form of on-screen testing of knowledge) and ‘e-portfolios’ (a digital repository of assessment evidence normally used to assess practical skills) are examples of CBA. Learning management systems (LMS) and virtual learning environments (VLE) are templates, which provide conditions for implementing these forms of assessment.

**Problems with assessment 1.0 and 1.5**

In spite of that traditional tests need a lot of time and energy to be spent for their preparation, carrying out, and marking, learners fail to gain the skills like problem solving, innovation, collaboration and creativity needed in the modern external environment.

Proponents of computer-based testing systems boast about assimilation of paper-based assessment in the virtual environment, while E-testing is not more than imitating traditional assessment and a limited number of question types (almost always selected response questions) and, at best, simple reproductions of traditional tasks are supported by computer-based testing systems. Similarly, most current e-portfolio systems assimilate the existing approach to assessment, which is highly focused on content rather than student and process. Consequently, it is also nothing more than online storage for students’ work.

Students’ feelings are not encouraging both paper-based and computer-based assessments, because they perceive them as something external to them; something over which they have no control; something that is “done” to them. In addition they consider the assessment instrument something unnatural and artificial, just a barrier to be leaped over, not as a part of their learning. Or, worse, they perceived it as the only purpose of their learning, which they should focus all their efforts and attention on, to pass the test instead of the acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

Traditional and computer-based assessments are highly individualistic; i.e. assessment activities should be done individually; as a result, competition is encouraged and collaboration (or cheating in the lexicon of traditional assessment) is forbidden. Virtual learning environments (VLEs) also tend to assimilate the traditional classroom, lecture hall, instructor’s office and the pupil common room. While some teachers with the familiarity of VLEs tried to implement them, it has been proposed that the use of VLEs can reduce innovations in the classroom because the classroom time is wasted in practicing into traditional (classroom-based) and new approach, (VLE-based), instead of implementing and exploring the full potential of e-learning.

The use of current e-assessment systems also inhibits progress in assessment by similarly replicating practice to traditional (paper-based) assessment with the limited form of computer-based assessment, made possible by these systems.

Pellegrino (1999) rightly believes that “in 21st century learning environments, decontextualized drop-inform-the-sky assessments consisting of isolated tasks and performances will have zero validity as indices of educational attainment.” Based on the foresaid concepts, the present study intends to shed some lights on certain research questions such as: Which e-assessment templates better satisfies the following ideals in real life situation.

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**
Both the ministry of education and higher education of Iran have shown some symptoms of understanding the emergent implementation of e-assessment in education and emitted several circulations to this end, but in action, what is done is nothing more than assimilation of traditional form of testing in virtual environment, which unveils some misunderstanding of the issue. This article tries to highlight the new concepts of e-assessment to help teachers and administrators take the right direction to the end.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**
How familiar are teachers and learners with the E-assessment concepts?
How much workable is the scheme?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Survey**
Survey was supposed to be the usual and desirable method, based on the literature, to elicit data from the following participants. TAP was also favored by some teachers to talk about their own personal understanding of the agenda, but they are not significant enough based on certain limitations, which come later.

**Participants**
Candidates, 28±1 in each stratum, were selected based on stratified sampling model among high IT literate university and school teachers, key administrators and university students, from a variety of disciplines in Fars province universities & educational organizations. According to Kothari (2004), stratified sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous groups containing subjects with similar characteristics. Gender was out of control for academicians and administrators but equal size samples of male/female learners took part in the data elicitation procedure.

**Instruments**
To this end, a synchronous Likert 5 items online/offline questionnaire- ranging from perfectly agree(5), agree (4), perfectly disagree (3), disagree (2), no idea (1)- charged with interview- web-based / in-person- was used. Eight items were selected based on Richards (1995) four related maxims: the Maxim of Accuracy, the Maxim of Efficiency, the Maxim of Conformity, and the Maxim of Empowerment. Twenty other items were taken from related texts in the literature, based on Kothari's (2004) stratified Sampling Model. Hence, probability sampling was avoided to minimize the risk of chance. These twenty eight items were calculated in split-half format to test their validity, reliability and viability.

**Materials**
For practicality purposes and to test the viability of the hypotheses, the sample template was driven from a general English book, entitled: ESAP, whose materials were to be covered for university candidates, but for high school students, their centralized textbook, developed by the ministry was the basis for the purpose.

**Procedures**
The learners, from the university/school students stratum discussed above, were asked to work out the task for a four-month period of time or one semester and other candidates (teachers and administrators) followed the URL, designed for the purpose. They were supposed to be familiar with the practicality aspects of e-assessment concepts.

At the end of the one semester period, candidates were invited to complete the questionnaire, (mostly, supporting the rationale behind the e-learning and e-assessment concepts) while receiving descriptions and instructions, without which almost all were unable to respond.

Data elicited were put into Effects Matrices in order to be statistically analyzed and be interpreted. A t-test was favored to compare our two means, calculated based on two halves of items in the questionnaire and a chi-square test, based on the same split-half procedure to compare variances. That technique is reported to be effective in identifying Brown and Richard's (1997) triangulation model in which reliability- internal / external; validity- internal / external; transferability; credibility; dependability- internal / external; objectivity; conformability and viability are parts and parcels.

**RESULTS**
Items were analyzed in a split/half procedure to measure their reliability. Reliability indices are analytically measured. Results derived from the survey are as follows:
### Table 1: Item-Total Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</th>
<th>Cranach’s Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>74.03</td>
<td>102.240</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>74.00</td>
<td>103.586</td>
<td>.704</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>73.60</td>
<td>96.938</td>
<td>.872</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>103.459</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>73.23</td>
<td>101.978</td>
<td>.620</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>73.90</td>
<td>102.162</td>
<td>.762</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>73.60</td>
<td>101.903</td>
<td>.635</td>
<td>.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>72.97</td>
<td>103.764</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>.879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>73.90</td>
<td>102.162</td>
<td>.762</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>73.67</td>
<td>99.747</td>
<td>.733</td>
<td>.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>73.40</td>
<td>100.386</td>
<td>.657</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12</td>
<td>72.17</td>
<td>112.282</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13</td>
<td>73.57</td>
<td>98.461</td>
<td>.546</td>
<td>.867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14</td>
<td>73.93</td>
<td>101.857</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15</td>
<td>73.93</td>
<td>102.409</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q16</td>
<td>73.83</td>
<td>99.868</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>.862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17</td>
<td>73.20</td>
<td>108.303</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q18</td>
<td>72.63</td>
<td>120.723</td>
<td>-.522</td>
<td>.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19</td>
<td>72.53</td>
<td>114.602</td>
<td>-.184</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20</td>
<td>72.53</td>
<td>121.016</td>
<td>-.546</td>
<td>.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21</td>
<td>73.37</td>
<td>102.585</td>
<td>.563</td>
<td>.867</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q22</td>
<td>73.03</td>
<td>104.930</td>
<td>.551</td>
<td>.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q23</td>
<td>73.63</td>
<td>108.102</td>
<td>.230</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q24</td>
<td>73.30</td>
<td>103.321</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q25</td>
<td>73.97</td>
<td>102.102</td>
<td>.806</td>
<td>.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26</td>
<td>74.13</td>
<td>110.947</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q27</td>
<td>73.37</td>
<td>108.102</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q28</td>
<td>73.77</td>
<td>102.392</td>
<td>.701</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Case Processing Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases valid</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.
Table 3: Statistic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>76.1667</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>72.5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>68.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>10.60281</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>112.420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>2285.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentiles</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>115.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Reliability Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N of Items</th>
<th>Cranach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from that level of Cranach’s Alpha scale of reliability statistics, the split-half procedure in the design of the item is reliable enough to be generalizable. Hence, one can simply rely on the elicited data via that type of instrument.

Table 5: One-sample Statistic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mean</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.7202</td>
<td>.37867</td>
<td>.06914</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: One Sample Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mean</td>
<td>3.186</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.2204</td>
<td>.0788 to .3616</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Sum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68.00</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.00</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>56.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION

To materialize the new concepts of e-assessment, a primary study focused on a survey using oral/online interview with five testing experts. Although, they all proposed that e-assessment as a requirement not a need for digital age theoretically, they also acknowledged that it should be researched in action.

To this end, the present study focused on administrators, teachers and learners who were regarded the stakeholders of education.

Although results, derived from the questionnaire statistically seem to lend support to the hypothesis one and show that participants have high relevant literacy but it should be noted that participants answered the questionnaires while receiving instructions and explanations. More problematic questions were those related to personalization, collaboration and goal free concepts of e-assessments.

Core concepts of Assessment 2.0 (E-assessment)

Web 2.0

Current state of web development is called web 2.0. It is believed that there are the following six big ideas behind web 2.0

1. user-generated content
2. the power of the crowd
3. data on an epic scale
4. architecture of participation
5. network effects
6. openness.

For the e-assessment purpose four of them are relevant.

1. User-generated content refers to the easiness of producing content. MySpace, Blogger and YouTube are the examples of Web services, which have made it possible to create content without a need for much effort.

2. The power of the crowd refers to the shared intelligence that can be connected to large collections of people. The basic idea is that, a large group of well-informed (but non-expert) users can make better decisions that any individual expert. Web services like Digg and Wikipedia are instances of this collective intelligence.
3. **Architecture of participation** is founded on the undistinguishable philosophies that Web services must be easy to use (in this manner promoting participation) and must be organized in such a way that the more they are used the better they will improve. Google Search is a good case since it is very easy to use and its search algorithms improve, based on the results of previous searches.

4. **Openness** refers to both the use of open source software for many Web 2.0 services and the idea of the free sharing of information and resources among users, which make it possible to access and share information or resources easily, like embedding a YouTube video in a blog.

**Digital natives**

Today’s students are living and learning in an era called digital age. Prensky (2003) claimed that there is a major dissimilarity between today’s learners and those of the past regarding “the arrival and rapid spreading of digital technology… a phenomenon, which alters things so fundamentally that there is totally no going back”. He called these new learners “digital natives” and contrasted them with “digital immigrants”. He claimed that: “The single biggest problem facing education today is that our digital immigrant instructors, who speak an outdated language (that of the pre-digital age), are struggling to teach a population that speaks an entirely new language”.

Digital natives are characterized with the following common set of learning styles as follows:

- skilled use of tools
- active learning rather than passive receiving of knowledge
- authentic learning experiences rather than contrived tasks
- construction rather than instruction
- task-based (not product oriented one)
- just in time learning
- searching not memorizing
- utilizing social networks
- not knowing the answer but knowing where to find it
- Google not libraries
- Collaborating not competing.

When a digital native learner faces a problem, at the first step he/she is likely to explore the Google for appropriate information, look up wikis or send an email to a friend for help. Finally, he/she will organize the consequential information into a comprehensible document by means of a range of web-based and desktop applications.

**Assessment 2.0**

Assessment 2.0 is an alternative form of assessment 1.0, which embraces the modern technology including internet and more specifically, web 2.0, as illustrated above, with the four big ideas related to assessment. Assessment 2.0 is in fact seeking the way to bring the 21st century’s technology into examination room and therefore speak in a language that is known to digital natives, assign them the tasks that they are familiar with in their real life and provide them activities adapted with their ability and digital age learning styles.

The type of assessment activity best suited to the digital native would exhibit some or all of the following characteristics. (Elliott, 2007)

- **Authentic**: involving real-world knowledge and skills.
- **Personalized**: tailored to the knowledge, skills and interests of each student.
- **Negotiated**: agreed between the learner and the teacher.
- **Problem oriented**: original tasks requiring genuine problem solving skills.
- **Socially constructed**: using the student’s social networks.
- **Collaboratively produced**: produced in partnership with fellow students.
- **Recognize existing skills**: willing to recognize the student’s existing work.

And the types of evidence that best fits this form of assessment would be(Elliott, 2007):

- **occurring naturally**: already in existence or generated out of personal interest
- **offering multimedia**: existing in text, audio and video format
- **using modern technology**: such as e-mail, instant message logs, blog posts, wiki contributions, audio and video recordings
- **distributing via different channels**: may be distributed across various sources (such as web sites, blogs, inbox, iPod).
Comparing these two alternative forms of assessment will illuminate the new concepts of assessment more. It can be summarized in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment 1.0</th>
<th>Assessment 2.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given</td>
<td>Negotiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Done alone</td>
<td>Done collaboratively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Researched/Deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Text/audio/video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed book</td>
<td>Open web</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Done in class</td>
<td>Done anywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher assessed</td>
<td>Self- and peer-assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized</td>
<td>Collaborative work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly controlled</td>
<td>no control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artificial /unnatural</td>
<td>Authentic /Natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialized</td>
<td>Personalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory based</td>
<td>Problem-based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consequently, results derived from the survey via oral interview performed in chat format or in-person one seems to be supportive to the speculation of Illium, et al (2010). According to them, when candidates are not perfectly familiar with core rationales behind the items or they have low literacy to certain concepts, the driving force for their responses will be the researchers' descriptions. Hence, one easily witnesses a discrepancy between what goes on in their mind as universe and their responses to items in reality. Consequently, surveys are not mutually exclusive enough and they should be avoided in such social contexts.

CONCLUSION
Assessment, test and measurement are the terms which are used for years in educational settings with clear concepts for all. They are also separated from teaching and learning process. Postmodern digital age with its new approaches to learning, posed new concepts to the previous existing terms. It has also integrated teaching, learning and assessment arousing some resistance due to accepting previous terms with their new concepts. As, new concepts are accepted and learned more easily with their own new terms, generating new terminology for digital age educational concepts seems vital.

On the other hand, administrators and teachers are needed to equip themselves with new educational concepts knowledge as soon as possible, since they are far away from learners who are just now using and learning via web 2.0 tools in variety of disciplines which shows emergent embrace of relevant and enlightening workshops for teachers and administrators to this end.

Due to the methodology, the concluding word is that based on Illium’s, et al (2010) speculation, survey is workable when there is no discrepancy between what goes on in the mind of the researcher – cognition - and what goes on in the mind of the respondent- simple mind, which is packaged, not open to criticism and in short based on Low literacy. Hence, in such contexts, survey does not work and exploratory or descriptive scheme seems to work.
LIMITATIONS & DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1- The subjects participating in this study were selected from learners, teachers and administrators from schools and universities of Shiraz, Fars, Iran, because they were the only available sources for the researcher. Therefore, the findings are limited to them and it might ruin the generalizability power. Because of IT literacy problems, the researcher seems to have been biased in his sample selection as well as treatment manipulation.

2- Low IT literacy of teachers and administrators was a problem, but misunderstanding of E-assessment by those supposedly IT literate was a hindrance, which couldn’t be removed easily by the explanation of e-assessment concepts, since there was a discrepancy between what they had in their mind and what went on in researcher’s cognition.

The same research is required to be replicated on different sample sizes in a variety of environments to add to its consistency.

REFERENCES


The next issue to be published in September 2013